

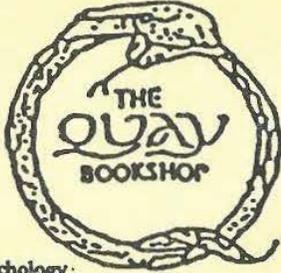
THE HUMMADRUZ ● GODDESS SILLINA ●
TERENCE MEADEN'S CORNISH DIARIES ●
HOLY WELLS & SACRED SITES ● RITUAL ●

CONTENTS

Editorial p. 1
 Cornish Earth Mysteries Group p. 2
 Cornish Sacred Sites Group etc. p. 3
 The Hummadruz at Zennor Quoit- Andy Norfolk p. 4
 In Search of Cornwall's Holy Wells (6) - Cheryl Traffon & Caeia March..... p. 8
 Lesser-known sites in West Penwith - Raymond Cox p.12
 Traces of the Goddess Sillina - Chris Jenkins p.14
 Terence Meaden's Cornish Diary p.17
 Cerridwen's Cauldron - Sheila Bright p.20
 Book Reviews p.22
 The Pipers Tune/Fair Exchange p.24

All articles and artwork copyright Meyn Mamvro or the authors and may not be reproduced without permission. Contributions are welcome and should be sent to:- Cheryl Traffon, Editor, Meyn Mamvro, 51 Carn Bosavern, St.Just, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7QX. Thanks as always to Andy Norfolk for front cover artwork.

MM is currently available in the following outlets: Newsagents & Tregeseal Craft Shop (St.Just); Quay Bookshop, Richards & Adventur-ine (Penzance); Tourist Information Centre & Em-gems (St.Ives); Men-an-Tol Studios; Wayside Museum (Zennor); The Mousehole; Lamorna Pottery; Land's End; Truro Museum; Granny's Attic (Mevagissey); Mystical Place (Boscastle) Dragon's Breath & King Arthur Bookshop (Tintagel); Gothic Image (Glastonbury); Atlantis (London).

Earth Mysteries		
Megalithic Science		
North American		
Native Culture		
Ancient Egypt		
Mythology		
The Celts		
Fourth Way		
Underground Lit		
Shamanism		
Art	Parapsychology	Philosophy
Travel	Astrology	Yoga
Sufism	Dreams	T'ai Chi
Tibet	Jungian Studies	Tantra
Taoism	New Age	Meditation
Zen	Cornwall	Arthurian
Mysticism	Matrifocal Culture	Esoteric
Tarot	and the Feminine	Ooook
I Ching	Alternative Health	

**16 QUAY STREET
 PENZANCE, CORNWALL
 TR18 4BP
 Near the Harbour
 Telephone (01736) 369446
 Open Monday - Saturday (All Day)**

**DISCOUNT
 BOOKS BY MAIL ORDER**

COVERING ALL ASPECTS OF
 MIND/BODY & SPIRIT.
 MOSTLY AT DISCOUNT.
 MANY AT HALF PRICE OR LESS.
 for catalogue send
 4 x 1st class stamps to.

**MERCURY BOOKS
 The Council Offices
 College Rd
 Camelford
 Cornwall. PL32 9TJ
 Tel: 01840 212667
 (Callers by appointment)**

Meyn Mamvro

STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

**EARTH ENERGIES * ANCIENT STONES * SACRED SITES * PAGANISM * LEYPATHS
CORNISH PRE-HISTORY & CULTURE * MEGALITHIC MYSTERIES * LEGENDS & FOLKLORE**

It is good to be able to report some positive news on the ancient sites front. Thanks to Andy Norfolk's good networking, a group of representatives from interested parties have come together to form a Protection of Sacred Sites Group, as reported in the previous MM. The first meeting was held in the Autumn of 1997, and is fully reported on p.3. This Group provides an excellent forum for co-operation and sharing of ideas, and for facilitating active and responsible management of the sites, and some procedures have already been set in motion. One outcome of the meeting is that we can say with some confidence that Boscawen-un stone circle will not be fenced off to the public, but that other ways are being looked at to protect this increasingly vulnerable site.

Another issue to arise at the Meeting was the provision of information boards at ancient sites. The CAU are generally not in favour of placing anything intrusive at a site, and rejected the idea for the Merry Maidens stone circle. However, a board has been placed at Duloe stone circle in SE Cornwall in a rather insensitive position on the perimeter of the circle, though it has to be said not at the CAU's behest. They were however responsible for the wording of the information on the board, and it is very refreshing to see how much of the 'new' archaeological/earth mysteries approach has now been incorporated into the text. It speaks of stone circles as "ritual centres, used for seasonal gatherings and ceremonies", and that the four quarter stones in the circle are "aligned to the points of the compass, indicating astronomical use". With this kind of approach to the sites by the archaeologists, we seem to be truly entering a new era where archaeology, earth mysteries, and the sacred sites approach are at last converging.

An awareness of the special nature of many of the Cornish sites also seems to be growing. MM's editor is involved with increasing numbers of tours every year that have been set up, not just to clock up as many sites as possible, but to allow the tour members to really connect with the sacred nature of the sites in ceremony, ritual and meditation. MM readers who live in the area covered by Westcountry TV could also look out for an edition of the On Foot TV series due to be broadcast at 6pm on Sundays in January. One of the programmes features the Three Wells Walk, with MM editor Cheryl Traffon talking about the Walk and the sites, together with a motley crew of friends and walkers! To coincide with this, MM Publications have produced a 12 page illustrated booklet on the Three Wells Walk, giving the full route and information about the sites. If any reader would like a copy, please send cheque/PO for £1.50 to the MM address.

STOP PRESS: PROGRAMME IS SCHEDULED TO BE SHOWN ON FEBRUARY 1st (ZIMBOLC!)



The 1997 Autumn series of talks at the Acorn in Penzance began on September 25th with a talk by **Craig Weatherhill** based on his forthcoming book "The First and Last Wilderness". Accompanied by slides, he took the audience on a journey from the east part of the Penwith moors across the top of the peninsula to the first and last hill of Chapel Carn Brea. Along the way he stopped off to look at the legends, folklore, sites and stories that make up that most magical part of Cornwall. It was a talk much appreciated by all those who came and got the new season off to a fine start.

October 30th brought a visit from **Dr. Ken George** of the University of Plymouth who gave a session on "Megalithic Astronomy", a subject that the CEMG had long wanted to feature. Dr. George brought the facility of making the complicated calaculations involving the passage of the sun and the moon understandable, and he presented an interesting overview of the astronomical research of Alexander Thom and Christian O'Brien on the sites in Cornwall. There was scope was further investigations, and the talk was an encouragement for the CEMG to do more research in this field.

The November meeting on the 27th featured **John Downes** from the Centre for Fortean Zoology in Exeter, who gave a timely talk on "Morgawr, the Owlman and other Fortean Animals". He explained crypto-zoology, and mentioned the sightings of beasts and other anomalous animals before going on to look in depth at the Mawnan Owlman and its sightings in Cornwall, particularly in 1976 and 1989, which he described as a "three-dimensional poltergeist". This was an unusual and intriguing subject, and questions went on until quite late.

Finally, the annual December gathering took place on 20th at Chûn Quoit to view the winter solstice sunset alignment over the notch in Carn Kenidjack. Afterwards all gathered in St. Just for the now-traditional feasting and Celtic storytelling, rounding off what had been a very well-supported (50 or more people on average) series of meetings.

FRIENDS OF THE WITCHCRAFT MUSEUM Graham King & Liz Crow, together with the Friends of the Museum at Boscastle have been busy transforming the premises, sorting out the old exhibits and improving the displays for the 35,000 annual visitors that the Museum receives! An inaugural meeting of the Friends in December included a talk from Ronald Hutton on traditional witchcraft, and a ritual up at St. Nectan's Kieve. To become a Friend contact the Museum at The Harbour, Boscastle, Cornwall PL35 0AE. Tel: 01840-250111.

SACRED SITES GROUP FORMED

A new Protection of Sacred Sites Network Group has been formed to bring together interested parties and liase over issues such as damage to the sites and management of them. At the first Meeting in October 97, the National Trust was represented by John Brookes, the Cornwall Wildlife Trust by Trevor Edwards, the Bolitho Estate (who own much of the land on which many of the sites are located) by Keith Hargreaves, the Pagan Moot by Cassandra Latham, the Cornish Earth Mysteries Group by Andy Norfolk, the Cornwall Archaeological Unit by Ann Preston-Jones, the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids by Barry Reilly, and Meyn Mamvro by Cheryl Straffon. The Penwith Countryside Officer Mike Rosendale was unable to attend.

The Meeting was extremely fruitful and useful, and covered areas such as possible solutions to the damage and increasing use of the sites. No-one was in favour of fencing off sites, or of erecting warning notices 'on site', but there was general agreement that noticeboards at the entrances to access points could incorporate general advice about use. Cassandra suggested a 'Sitewatch' along the lines of Dolphinwatch or Coastwatch, in which members of the local pagan community would undertake to monitor the use of sites at key times, and if necessary speak to the users/abusers there, with a back-up from the CAU. There was discussion about assembling a volunteer force to help manage the sites, and to clear overgrowths of bracken; and there was also discussion about how potential conflicts with the Methodists at sites like the Holy Wells could be avoided in future. Many of these ideas look like having follow-up action in the coming months, with further Meetings of the Group planned for 1998.

HALLOWED GROUND 2000

Another new initiative to come is a Project co-ordinated by Andy Norfolk and Clare Prout of the *Save Our Sacred Sites* Group, the intention of which is to get a snapshot of the state of British sacred sites and how they are used. The information will be used to highlight the problems of poor access or lack of care, and the intention is to promote a guardianship scheme in which local volunteers will keep a close watch over sites. A Pilot Study has been running in Cornwall, with people being asked to complete Record Sheets, and it is hoped to extend this to the rest of the country. If you think you can help please contact Andy at The Cottage, Crowan, Praze, Camborne TR14 9NB.

TOTAL ECLIPSE OF THE SUN 1999

As most people who live in Cornwall now know, the total eclipse of the sun will take place on August 11th 1999, the totality visible only in the U.K from west Cornwall. Something like an extra 500,000 visitors are anticipated on top of annual influx at the peak of the tourist season, and all 250,000 available holiday beds in the county have already been earmarked for the occasion. Many people will of course want to see the rare event (the first in Britain since 1927, and the last until 2090) from an ancient site, and there are tremendous implications over traffic,, parking, crowds and free movement of people. The totality begins at 9.56am, with total darkness just before 11.10am, with full daylight not returning until 12.31pm, that is, assuming it is not raining at the time!

THE HUMMADRUZ AT ZENNOR QUIT

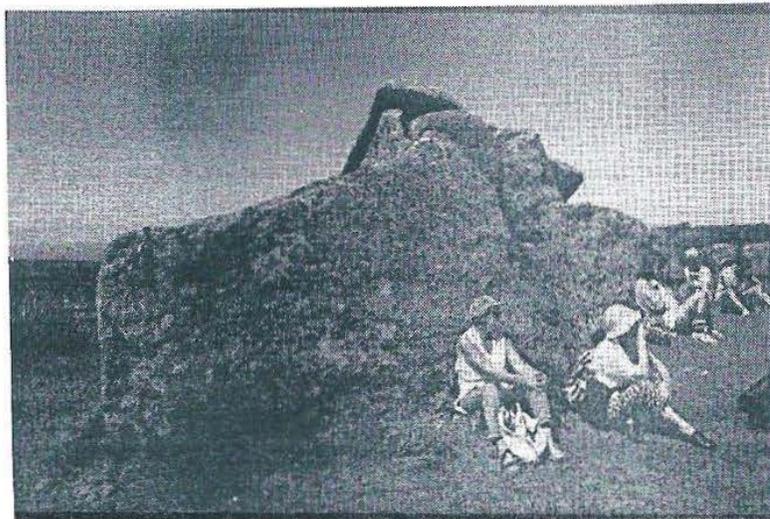
by ANDY NORFOLK

I heard the hummadruz the other day! What strange Cornish word is this? Well *hummadruz* is a name coined in the 19th century for a strange humming noise heard in the country, usually in still summer weather, and with no apparent source. A few of us heard it on the CEMG visit to Zennor Quoit and Trendrine Hill last July. It was a glorious sunny day with a cloudless sky and no wind. We walked up to the Quoit and when we got there it was quite quiet with no noise, except a lot of chatter. Most of us walked on to Sperris Quoit and then to the top of Trendrine Hill where there is a trig. point at 247m above sea level. Carol, who stayed on her own at Zennor Quoit, heard a loud humming/buzzing noise as if there were large numbers of bees or other insects flying around, but there were hardly any to be seen. Dionne, who walked to Trendrine Hill, was very aware of this noise all the time we were on the top of the downs.

Earlier in 1997 there had been a severe fire in that area, as a result of which the heather was destroyed and had not yet regrown. There was a very sparse cover of grasses and some small shoots of gorse among the ash so there was nothing in flower over a large area where the hummadruz was heard. We were able to see some impressive hut circles which are not normally visible and some interesting upright stones which might possibly be the remains of a stone circle. Zennor Quoit and the cairn on Trendrine Hill stands are on a classic ley linking to, for example, Boswens menhir.

Anyway, back to the noise. There were a few light aircraft flying nearby at various times but very little traffic noise. There was no wind. Although there were a few insects, they were noticeable as they flew by as distinct from the background noise. Dionne and I walked back to collect Carol from Zennor Quoit and all three of us heard the noise very clearly. It was quite different from the aircraft noises. Dionne thought it sounded like the sound of a motorbike race, but there was no modulation of the tone which you would hear as the bikes changed gear and moved around the circuit. Carol and I have kept bees in the past and the noise was very like a contented hive but there were no bees nearby. The noise was all around and it was impossible to locate a source. There seemed to be no difference between the noise in badly burnt areas and those where the heather was in flower. As we walked back down off the top of the downs the noise faded away disappearing as we got below approximately the 200m contour, to be replaced with the more usual noise of crickets and other insects - quite different.

Strangely, John Billingsley had just published an article on the hummadruz in the summer 97 edition of *Northern Earth*, in which he describes hearing the hummadruz in 1978. Billingsley quotes Gilbert White, author of *The Natural History of Selborne*, who described this loud humming in 1769 as if it were a regular occurrence on the downs. He also refers to Maurice Hewlett who heard "the expectancy of an air" near Chesilbury Camp near Salisbury. He described it as a "very shrill, piercing, continuous music", yet without melody. He saw oreads dancing in the same place the following year.



Zennor Quoit, location of the hummadruz, on the day of the CEMG visit

Some people have been quite disturbed by their experience of the hummadruz. Peter Hannah wrote to *The Ley Hunter* 88 in 1980, describing a visit to Arran in 1972. "The day was warm and still..... When we reached a spot that we later discovered was the site of an old monastery, a sudden violent buzzing began, vibrating the earth under our feet. We immediately took this to be an enormous swarm of bees, angry at our treading on their underground hive. Expecting to be stung to death by this swarm, which seemed about to burst from the ground, we ran. The trouble was that everywhere we stopped the same angry buzzing emanated from the ground, threatening at any moment to erupt in a mad flurry. The strange thing is that we never actually saw any bees, which to judge by the noise they made, should have been huge and numerous.

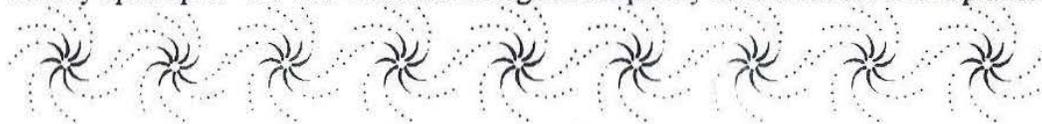
A similar thing happened to John Merron, who was looking for sacred sites on 'The Circle of Perpetual Choirs' described by John Michell in *City of Revelation*. In 1984 he visited Allt-yr-Ancr, "the hill of the ancients" near Meifod. On the way down he stopped by the hillfort on the SW flank of the hill. "After a few moments I became aware of a humming sound, rather like an enormous swarm of bees. At first I panicked, looking for a pond I could dive into should they attack! After scanning the immediate area and deciding that I would rather brave the bees than jump into the stagnant pond nearby, Carole caught up and I mentioned the bees, and could she work out where the sound was coming from? After a moment she said 'That's not bees. That's the sound of the Perpetual Choirs'." Charles Hay followed up this article in a letter to TLH by describing his visit to White Sheet Hill. He stopped the car half a mile from the hill after the ruts in the track got too deep. Despite the strong wind, as he started to reverse, his wife said "Aren't those bells nice?" He slammed on the brakes and asked "What bells?" They decided that this was also the sound of the Perpetual Choirs.

This sounds very like something described by "AE", George Russell, in W.Y. Evans Wenz' book *The Fairy Faith in Celtic Countries*. AE described meeting one class of the Sidhe, the shining ones "It is very difficult to give any intelligible description of them. The first time I saw them with any great vividness I was lying on a hill-side alone in the west of Ireland, in County Sligo: I had been listening to music in the air, and to what seemed to be the sound of bells, and was trying to understand these aerial clashings in which wind seemed to break upon wind in an ever-changing musical silvery sound. Then the space before me grew luminous, and I began to see one beautiful being after another." Such noises do seem to be related to what we would now call altered states of consciousness and are apparently associated with ancient sites.

Robert Hunt, writing in *Popular Romances of the West of England* tells the tale of "a covetous old man of St. Just" who heard beautiful music and saw fairy revels on the Gump. He was about to use his hat to cover the prince and princess and their table covered with gold plate, when he heard a shrill whistle and everything went dark. "Whir! whir! whir! as if a flight of bees were passing him, buzzed in his ears. Every limb from head to foot was as if stuck full of pins and pinched with tweezers". He woke at dawn tied down with cobwebs. So hearing the hummadruz could be a warning of a nasty encounter with the fair folk.

The Silver Branch, which is the branch of an apple tree bearing blossoms, fruit and bells appears in many Celtic tales. It is owned by Manannan Mac Lir but is also given as a passport by the queen of faery to those mortals whom she wishes for companions in the otherworld. The branch is described as producing music so soothing that mortals who hear it forget all troubles. John Matthews in *The Celtic Shaman* describes its present-day use in rituals to cross over to inner worlds.

Philip Heselton in *Earth Mysteries* describes Jimmy Goddard's experiences at Gill's Lap pine clump. He realised that the sound of the wind in the trees was very similar to the sound of a rushing stream and also to a roaring fire. He found out that they were all within the frequency range of 256 to 320 cycles per second and speculated that such sounds were capable of being transduced to boost the earth current. Heselton suggests that they may also have been used to help induce altered states of consciousness Paul Devereux, John Steele and David Kubrin in *Earth Mind* suggest that in certain mental states our brainwaves are resonating with the rhythms of the Earth, and say that activity in the hippocampus in the brain is affected by electromagnetic stimulation, with the largest effect at the 'Earth Frequency' of 10-15 Hz. Alpha and theta brainwaves are encouraged, for example, by gazing at the flickering flames of a fire, or by listening to the roar of a waterfall, or wind in the trees. These brainwaves are associated with visionary and paranormal experiences. They suggest that in certain states we can directly open up to "the vast ocean of biological-frequency natural forces of the planet".



This idea underlies Serena Roney-Dougal's book *Where Science and Magic Meet*. She points out the effect of the earth's magnetic field on human consciousness and says that some noises associated with electrostatic phenomena, such as clicks, swishing and hisses, are likely to be the effects of electromagnetic energy impinging on the eardrum and being heard as noises. She also notes the correlations between ancient monuments, electromagnetic anomalies, UFO sightings, fairy lore and geological faulting. She draws attention to the sounds of rushing water and the sea which Thomas the Rhymer hears constantly as he travels to the otherworld.

Other examples of strange noises at ancient sites have been recorded. Paul Devereux, writing in *Places of Power* describes how at about 9.15pm on 1st March 1980 four people who were doing round-the-clock monitoring of various instruments at the Rollright Stones heard "very pronounced" ticking noises and a humming noise coming from near The Whispering Knights. This was precisely at the time of the full moon. These noises seem to be distinct from the hummadruz in having a definite origin. Michael Wolfe and Rachel Garcia wrote to *Meyn Mamvro* about hearing "earth thunder" at sunset at the Blind Fiddler. As they watched the sun set "there was a momentary stillness... then a muffled thunderclap, audible but emanating from below the earth. It did not shake the ground, but seemed to alter the air pressure, the way explosions do." I can't help thinking that this sounds very like Concord. However, the day before our recent earthquake, I heard some loud subterranean rumbles at Boscawen-un circle. This seems again to be a different phenomenon from the hummadruz, but moaning in the air has apparently been associated with earth tremors in Perthshire.

So what is the hummadruz? It seems to be quite distinct from the various hums heard near defence establishments, or attributed to noises from gas and other pipelines, or power lines. In the 1970s S.L. Birchby suggested that it might be linked to "ley energy", but as Billingsley points out this is what you would expect given the views about leys current at the time. However we were walking along the ley connecting Boswens menhir and Trendrine cairn. Other people have suggested that it could be related to seismic activity, but the most charming explanation, put forward in the 19th century, was that it was the sound of the earth spinning. Billingsley has written more about it in *Northern Earth 71*. Meanwhile I am left wondering whether Dionne, Carol and I narrowly missed a trip to the otherworld. Perhaps if we go back next year we will see oreads.

"Coincidentally", just after Andy wrote this article Westcountry TV did a programme on mysterious humming noises experienced particularly in Cornwall, followed by a feature in the Western Morning News. They stated that, although heard quite widely, the noise seems to be most apparent in a triangular area covering Hayle, Penzance and Praa Sands. One theory was that certain people who have very sensitive hearing at low frequencies pick up electrical microwave signals. Various correspondents wrote to the paper confirming that they had heard the hum, and one, who had been in engineering, suggested that it had a low note between 15 & 20 Hz, together with a higher note less than 40Hz, and sometimes a third harmonic of just over 50Hz.

IN SEARCH OF CORNWALL'S HOLY WELLS - 6

In the 6th of the series on Cornwall's holy wells, Cheryl Traffon & Caeia March spent a beautiful Autumnal day on a circular tour around the rivers, creeks and estuaries formed by the mouths of the Fal, Truro, Tresillian and Percuil rivers that flow into the Carrick Roads estuary and lap the shores of the Roseland peninsula.

We drove first of all to **MYLOR** churchtown where the church looks over the creek and from the sloping churchyard glimpses could be seen of the estuary and the boats moored by the Quay. The well lay at the bottom of the church yard (SW820 353) a square slate surround whose water flowed into the harbour below.



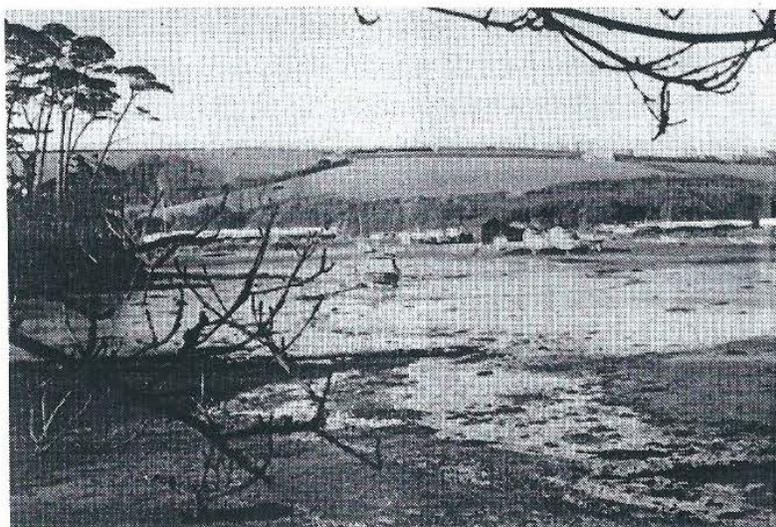
The church above was most interesting, with a tall cross inscribed with a pagan sun-symbol by the church door and 18thC mystic sigils carved over the door surround. St. Mylor is one of those shadowy Celtic saints whose origins are lost in the mists of time: he could have sailed here from Brittany in the 5thC where there is a church dedicated to him, or he could have been Melorus, son of Melianus Duke of Cornwall. Either way, they both existed at the time of the interface between paganism and Christianity: Melorus' uncle was a pagan who unsuccessfully pressurised his nephew to revert to the earlier faith. On this warm Autumnal day in this peaceful churchyard by the water's edge the pagan and Christian seemed to blend easily one into the other.

From Mylor we drove past Restronguet creek to Feock to catch the King Harry Ferry across the River Fal. The sleepy nature of the day was echoed in the time it took for the ferry to clank back across the river from the other side before we could drive on and move slowly to the other side. In a world where people are used to driving a mile a minute, the 20 minutes or so it took us to cross the river was a salutary reminder of a more gentle pace of life. At the other side we turned left off the road into the American concrete road that ran down through Chapel Woods to the river at Smugglers cottage. Had it been summer we could have gone there for a cream tea, but we were glad for the absence of tourists and visitors, and parked our car at the roadside at the beginning of the woods. We scrambled through a fairy glade filled with dappled light to find a copse at the east side of the wood. Here was supposed to be **TOLVERNE** spring well and the foundations of a chapel (SW845 397), but the undergrowth in the copse had run riot and the site was completely overgrown. Nevertheless, it was a lovely peaceful spot with glimpses of the Fal from gaps in the hedges and fields.

Back on the B3289 road, we drove on down the Roseland peninsula to St. Just-in-Roseland. Here there were 2 holy wells. As we took the turning that ran to the west off the road at St. Just Lane there was the holy well of **VENTONGASSICK** (SW854 356). This lay beside the road down some steep and slippery steps, and was a quite unexpected place for a holy well, though there was formerly a chapel and burial ground across the road. We wondered how many people driving down to St. Just church in their cars were aware of this holy well on the way.

ST. JUST CHURCH itself, another 1/2 mile down the road, is of course the impossibly pretty place so beloved by visitors to the Roseland. It lies beside the creek that leads off the Carrick Roads, almost opposite to Mylor church that we had first visited that morning. The churchyard, located on a similar slope, was full of exotic plants and trees that flourished in this sheltered spot, and the atmosphere of peace and tranquility was pervasive.

To find the well (SW 849 358) we walked right through the churchyard and out again by the lower lychgate that lay above the creek. The well was outside the church, about 50yds further on along the path that wound around the creek, at the end of a small right-hand curve. It was quite hidden and secret, and would have been easy to miss if we had not been looking for it. The well, with its flat slate roof and cool clear water, must have pre-dated the Christian church and grounds, which had not been able to enclose such a liminal place. The waters of the Earth spirit flowed very powerfully here in the well and into the creek.



The well itself (above) and view from the well path (below)

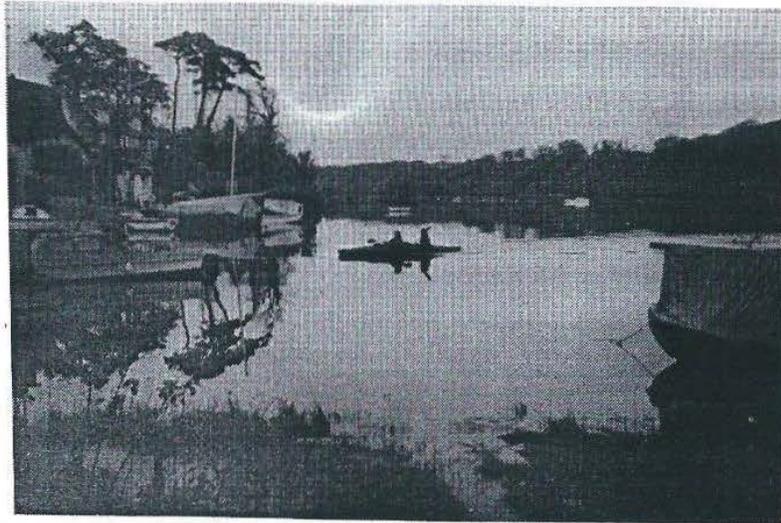
From St. Just it was but a short drive down the Roseland to **ST. MAWES**, a key harbour that in ancient times was probably an entry/exit point for travellers from Wales, Ireland and Brittany. Saint Mawes was certainly well-known in Brittany where dust from one of his shrines was reputedly a cure for snake-bite, and he was supposed to come from either Ireland or Wales. All this may be a memory of the interaction between the Celtic peoples from these countries. His holy well (SW847 332) lies in the older part of the town away from the water front and near to the Victory Inn. The Well has a door but it is kept locked and, set as it is amongst the buildings and streets of the town, it is rather lacking in atmosphere. There was a former chapel and shrine nearby but that too has gone, converted into a house. St. Mawes is a town well in a not very attractive setting

In the summer it is possible to go on the passenger ferry across from St. Mawes to the headland of St. Anthony to the west, but in winter one has to drive north back up the Roseland and then down south again to St. Anthony, as the Percuil river cuts the peninsula into two. St. Anthony itself is on another tidal creek of the Carrick Roads, and here Place House, an old stately home, runs right down to the water's edge. Behind the house, a footpath winds its way through St. Anthony's Church and up to St. Anthony's Head. We took this path into the churchyard as we hunted for the holy well of **ST. ANTHONY** (SW855 321) which apparently lay at the bottom of the graveyard slope near to the wall that backed on to Place House gardens. However, for a second time that day we were thwarted, this time by a large growth of rhododendron bushes that obscured the ground along by the wall. Inside there we reckoned lay the small stone well building, although the unchecked growth of the large tree roots may well have cracked and crumbled the masonry. It certainly seemed a pity that such a beautiful location for a well had been so neglected.

We now turned back north and drove towards Truro. Soon we turned off the A3078 at Ruan High Lanes for Ruan Lanithorne, another small place that lay beside a river creek. At the church we took the minor road heading westwards and just round the corner was a water shute out of which water was flowing fast and clean into a stream that ran into the Ruan river below. This was the site of the holy well of **ST. RUAN** (SW894 421), the ruins of which lay in rough ground below. The stream and rivulets of this tributary of the Fal were now filling up with flowing water as the tide came in, and further on the road crossed the river at an attractive bridge which led into a wood resplendent with autumnal colours. The whole scene was quite beautiful as the low sun glistened on the running waters.

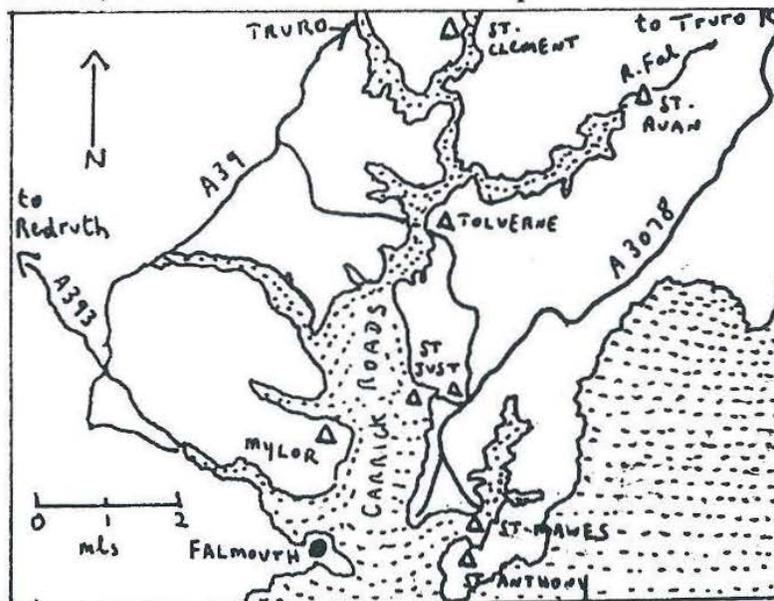
We could have lingered here a long time, but time was getting on and we had one more well to visit before sunset. We drove on across the bridge and through the wood, and along minor roads until we joined the A390 at Tresillian. After about a mile or so, we turned off again for the settlement of St. Clement, like all the others on the side of a river or creek, this time the Tresillian river, a branch of the Fal. In this idyllic spot there was only a church, a few picturesque houses, and pathways along the river banks. The sun was setting through the clouds, turning the water pink and orange in its relection, as canoeists paddled in from an afternoon on the river, and the smoke started pouring out of the cottage chimneys.

We didn't have far to go to find the well of **ST. CLEMENT** (SW 853 438) which lay right beside the river next to the path that runs towards Malpas, the scene of the Tristan and Iseult story. The place would have been at a very early crossing point of the river and it has been suggested



that the church here was pagan in origin,¹ and the holywell site one of the most ancient in Cornwall, pre-dating the settlement at Truro. The well itself proved to be a very pretty stone surround with clear water inside. There were steps down to the water, but nobody but a pixie could have got down there! Truly a well of water spirits and elementals.

The well was a most fitting end to our day of well-hunting around all the rivers and creeks of the Carrack Roads estuaries. It had been a day of glimpsed vistas of water under a blue sky, golden reds and browns of the autumnal trees, and holly bushes full of winter's red berries. We had found beautiful wells by the water's edge, and not-so-beautiful ones beside roads and streets, and some had still remained hidden from us. As the dark quickly settled, we bid farewell to the delightful spirit well of St. Clement and turned homewards, our circular tour of the wells complete.

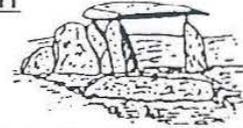
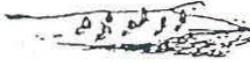


¹see J. Meyrick *A Pilgrim's Guide to the Holy Wells of Cornwall* (1982)

LESSER-KNOWN SITES IN WEST PENWITH

WEST AREA (1)

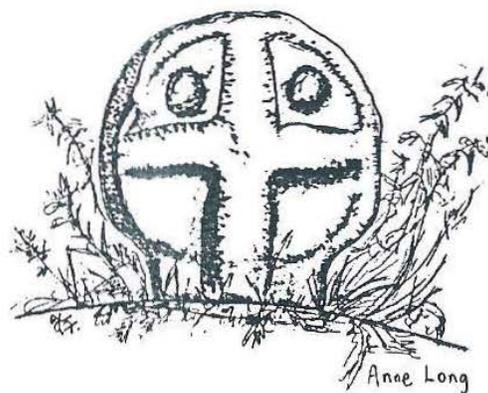
by RAYMOND COX



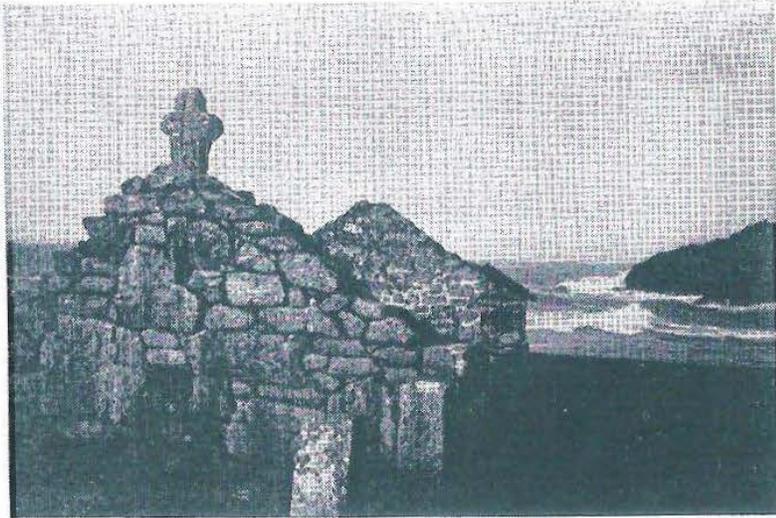
The Botrea complex of sites (SW c404 308) lies on a sloping hillside of fields and open common land between the main Penzance/St. Just road and the hamlet of Botrea. It certainly is little known and remarkably isolated with fine views to the southeast. It is worth seeking out, especially when one finds some yards along the quite secret public footpath to the right of a bungalow (at 404 304) a seat waiting for the traveller, before the remainder of the climb over the gentle slopes to the site. (It is advisable to ask at Botrea Farm for permission to explore these fields off the footpath). It is an easy climb as the brambles, gorse and other isolated bushes are thinly spread out. If you go in springtime there will be the added pleasure of bluebells.

There is, albeit, only one courtyard house here, together with a single round house to the NW, yet roam about the area to find the well-preserved remains of the associated field system. And there is more. Continue up the slope northwards to find the large disc barrows, of which there are four, from 53ft (16m) to 118ft (36m) across, and up to 5ft (1.5m) high. They are almost in a line. Just to the SE are three bowl barrows. Cists containing urns and some arrowheads have been found at this site. One must always be careful not to confuse a grouping of different features at one location as one collective unit. The barrows of the Bronze Age would, of course be earlier than the Iron Age Courtyard house. This brings its own fascination, the contemplation one partakes in at such sites. How would the later people have regarded these barrows here, if at all? Indeed, perhaps one reason for the location of their settlement was this proximity of earlier people. For those interested in alignments, there is the link, by map, and, better still, with the mind's eye, with the E side of Caer Bran fort, Branc cross, Goldherring Courtyard House Settlement, Boscawen-un Stone Circle and Boskenna Gate cross, no less.

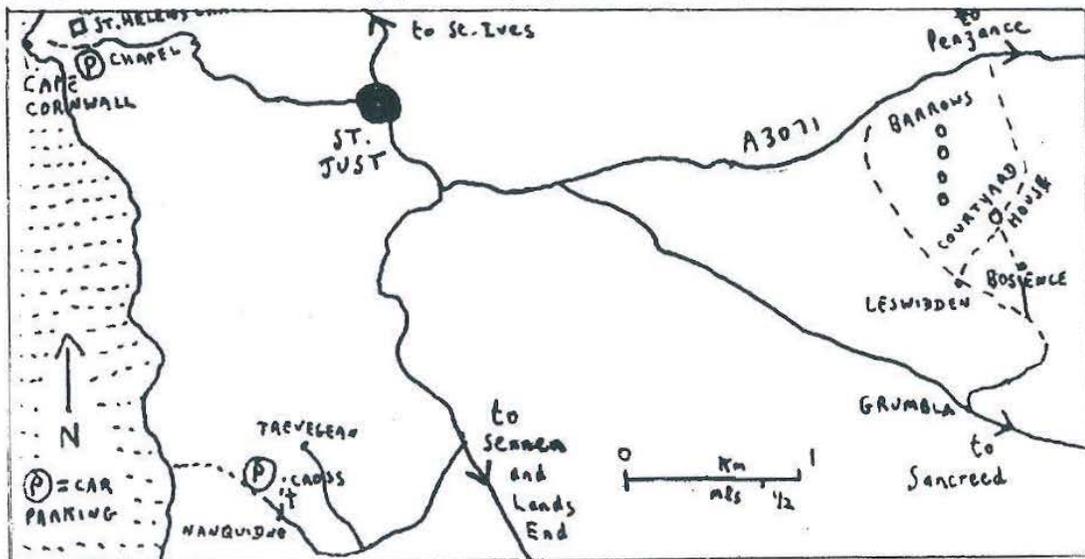
The Nanquidno valley is another of those which belie the open, more sparsely vegetated areas of West Penwith. It's here yet again, as always, the luxuriant growth hiding the little stream heard rippling over the boulders, with the air almost of the subtropics, until it reaches the Nanjulian Mill and turns left into more open country strewn with boulders, the path following the stream to the sea. Nanquidno Cross (SW364 291) sits on the wall to the right of the track to Nanquidno Farm. Langdon states that it was found in the spring of 1894 on the site of an ancient baptistry "by the side of a stream which divides the parishes of St. Just and Sennen". To see this cross is to look upwards in spirit to the contemplation of the people who lived and worshipped in this beautiful valley whose stream runs now as it did then, at an older time than the old pretty cottages and the mill.



By contrast, in a wild open place in the sweep of the concave field sloping away from Cape Cornwall, a few miles to the north, sits the ruin of St. Helen's Oratory (SW353318). This is almost certainly Celtic, but it has been rebuilt and altered more than once. Close by are the ruins of a priest's house, and in the part



of the north wall, still standing, are two semi-circular recesses. The chambered jamb of a doorway was unearthed from a nearby hedge. In St. Just vicarage garden are some pieces of 15th century tracery or ornamental stonework thought to have come from the oratory. The cross which now stands on the oratory was found by a local farmer while plowing a field some years ago. The then vicar thought the cross should be in the church, believing it to be an old cross from the chapel thought to have been thrown down the vicarage well by a previous vicar (though this was not found when the well was subsequently drained). But the farmer reclaimed the cross one night and cemented it back at the oratory - where it now resides. Another cross, bearing the Chi-Rho symbol, was found here in the mid-19th century and placed in the church, but that too has since disappeared. The mysteries, whims and intrigues of men and women were not left behind when this wild and open site became the place of abode for the old saints, brought from Ireland and Wales by the rough Atlantic waves, eternally profound, mysterious and beyond all human affectation.



Traces Of The Goddess Sillina

by CHRIS JENKINS

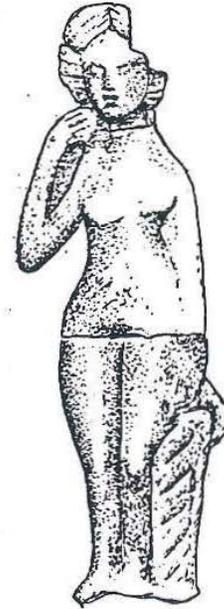
It may seem obvious to say so, but the most striking attributes of Cornwall are its shape and position in the British Isles. Cornwall, ancient Kernow, was a part of Dumnonia; both names being similar to other south-western areas in Celtic lands, and all are female-based names. That Cornwall is shaped like a horn is fairly obvious on the map and *Kernow* means horn. In its feminine form, a horn or cornucopia represents the fertility of Mother Earth with all her fruits and flowers. To be horned in Welsh is Corniog or Cynrig. Likewise, this attribute of female fertility is reinforced in folklore by the Kern Baby and the Corn Dolly.

Dumnonia and Dyfneint give their names to Devon or Devon, but the ancient divisions between Dyfneint and Kernow was not the same as today, for Tintagel was said to be in Dyfneint. This implies that Dyfneint was really Dumnonia, and Kernow was strictly speaking a region within Dyfneint, corresponding more or less to modern Cornwall. Being furthest south west in England, Cornwall serves the same function as outlined in Alwyn & Brinley Rees' book *Celtic Heritage*, that is, the area of Matriarchy and the Otherworld. This is why the greatest concentration of fairy and female based legends in England takes place in Cornwall.

Dumnonia and Dyfneint are derived from the same root at the Demetae tribe in Dyfed, S.W Wales. They are the Mother tribes, linked to Demeter or De-Mater in Greece, a Mother Goddess whose Latin counterpart was none other than Ceres, the Corn Mother. In S.W Scotland, the Damnonii tribe occupied an identical position to the Dumnonii in S.W England. The same is true of the Domnonia in Brittany, which lies just behind Cornuailles in the furthest south-west. Meanwhile in SW Ireland the Mamu (Mother) tribe were in Munster.

The Isles of the Blessed for Cornwall are of course the Scillies, called Sylinarees in 400 C.E/A.D, and also Sylina Insula. This name is derived from a Goddess called Sillina. As we would expect for islands of the dead, the Scillies are covered in the remains of burial cairns. Indeed we find there are more burial chambers here than in all of Cornwall. There is a vague reference to an island off the west coast of Britain where nine druidesses were said to live, almost certainly referring to the Scillies. Here the druidesses would receive the bodies of the dead, despatched from West Penwith. Medieval tradition has it that Morgana, half sister to King Arthur, reigned as Queen here over her sisterhood of nine druidesses, skilled in healing and magic. Indeed, there is a Cornish tradition that Arthur came here after the battle of Camlann, escaping from Mordred, whom Merlin destroyed in an earthquake which engulfed him. This equates with the Isle of the Dead in SW Brittany, where there were also nine druidesses who cared for the dead, shipped out by the folk of the nearby mainland.

Again, the Isle of Nornour, where a votive shrine with many pseudo-Venus figurines was found (*see drawing right*) reminds one of the Norns in Nordic myth, the female Fates whose number was 3 x 3. In Roman times Nornour had a shrine to Minerva in which there was an oil light burning continuously for passing ships to mark the shrine. Its position, in the NE of the Scillies, is interesting and equates with Bath and its shrine to Minerva in furthest NE Dumnonia, which likewise had its oil light burning continuously. The Celts called the druidesses sisters, just as we call nuns now. The Isles of Scilly are Matriarchy supreme, for the islanders were renowned for their healing ability and clairvoyance. Furthermore tradition states that many fine warriors and chieftans were taken to the Scillies either to be healed or to be laid out for burial by these sisters.



Originally, all the islands of the Scillies had female names, or so it is said. The largest two on the Isle of Great Arthur had a female femur bone immured, no doubt the remains of one of these sisters, who would have met her demise when this island was united with Nornour and its shrine she tended. Since then the sea level has risen splitting that island in two. The Nine Sisters in legend are divided into three aspects: Maiden, Mother and Crone. In each aspect there is therefore three, which can be shown as follows:-

1) The Hag - the southernmost area is where we find the Old Woman's House, a rock by the Hellweathers. Above this is Annet, obviously linked to Anu or Anne, and once more it lies just to the south of the Maiden area. St. Agnes reminds me of the St. Agnes Well at Rhoscrowther in the Hag area of Pembrokeshire, but here the well was dedicated to St. Warna and had a sinister cult attached. On St. Distaff's Day (distaffs are associated with old women in folklore) January 7th, crooked pins were used to invoke storms, whereby the island inhabitants could wreck passing vessels. The islanders were particularly unscrupulous and they paid for it dearly: all of them were drowned, returning from St. Marys one day by a sudden storm, after the preacher there had castigated them for their wickedness. After that, the wreckers cult at St. Warna's Well was discontinued.

2) The Maiden - the Isle of Maidens Bower is to the west of Bryher. Nearby is Scilly Rock from the maiden goddess Sylina. The isle of St. Marys, anciently called Ennor, also has a powerful Maiden legend. Holy Vale, according to the Rev. J. Whitfield, is named from a nunnery built around a sacred rose bush.

It was consecrated by the Virgin, i.e Maiden, and in the Middle Ages Demoiselle Maude, a sister nun, tended this sacred rose. She was of unknown parentage and name; yet she was treated with uncommon respect. She had a peerless beauty, the simplicity and purity of a child. Her works were exquisite, including an illuminated Bible which "surpassed the limits of old world lore". Her only true occupation however was tending this rose bush. One of its flowers could, if worn, preserve the wearer from mortal sin, and she always wore one of its crimson buds on her bosom. Indeed the rose bush was always in bloom; the "gift of eternal spring", entirely appropriate for a sacred flower growing in the Isles of the Blest. This unnamed lady was probably a representation of Sillina.

3) The Mother - Nornour has 3 prominent cairns on the island, with its shrine to Minerva and an eternal flame. The cult of the Eternal Flame in Rome was tended by Vestal Virgins, dedicated to Hestia, Goddess of hearth and home. This cult was therefore a combination of Maiden Virgin and Mother domesticity. Nornour is probably named from Nurcho, the old name of St. Martins and the Eastern islands, at one time all one.

The foremost haunt of witches on the Scillies was at Tresco Abbey. A man who saw them on their broomsticks was warned to hold his tongue and not reveal their secret, but much later told his wife, unable to bear the secret, whereupon the witches turned his black hair to white. Tresco Abbey had a 4ft standing stone with 2 holes in the top. This was a Druid betrothal or wishing stone used before the monks built the abbey. Young engaged couples would pass their hands through the holes and join them together to plight their troth. Its position between Maiden and Mother is therefore most appropriate.

In the next issue Chris Jenkins continues to look for traces of Sillina on the mainland of West Penwith. Drawing of the Sillina figurine on p.15 by Glen Leon.

FURTHER READING ON SILLINA

THE EARTH MYSTERIES GUIDE TO ANCIENT SITES ON THE ISLES OF SCILLYMeyn Mamvro Publications £2.95

Includes section on Nornour and the Arthurs and the Ritual Landscape

PAGAN CORNWALL:LAND OF THE GODDESS

CHERYL STRAFFON.....Meyn Mamvro Publications £9.95

Includes chapter on Scilly: Isles of the Goddess

THE EARTH GODDESS: Celtic and Pagan Legacy of the Landscape

CHERYL STRAFFONBlandford Books £16.99

Includes entry for Isles of Scilly and information on Sillina

All titles available from all good booksellers or direct (postage included) from Meyn Mamvro Publications, 51 Carn Bosavern, St. Just, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7QX.

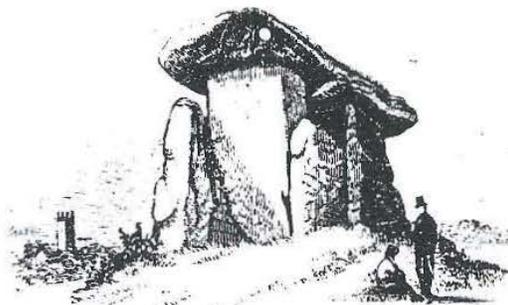


TERENCE MEADEN'S CORNISH DIARY

*Terence Meaden is a physicist and meteorologist who has extensively researched the phenomenon of crop circles and has published several books on the archaeology and prehistory of ancient sites, including *The Goddess of the Stones*, *The Stonehenge Solution*, and most recently *Stonehenge: The Secret of the Solstice*. Last year he came to Cornwall to speak to the Cornish Earth Mysteries Group on the Goddess symbolism of megalithic monuments, and kept a record of his visits to some of the local ancient sites.*

Invited to talk to the CEMG in Penzance on Thursday 24th April 1997. I took the opportunity to do some megalithic sightseeing in Devon and Cornwall on the journey there and back. Two and a half hours by car from West Wiltshire and I was on Dartmoor at Merrivale, one of Devon's best megalithic sites and charged with archaic religious symbolism. After an hour there I continued to the southern edge of Bodmin Moor where I began with **TRETHEVY QUOIT** (SX2594 6881), a tall structure of portal-dolmen type whose 10-tonne capstone soars three metres towards the sky. The 'cutaway' offset on the SSE closing slab of the ante-chamber is curious for being perhaps a form of creep passage or entry-exit point in a fashion not usual in dolmens.

Also puzzling is the pierced capstone. Unlike sarsen, which I know so well, holes are not natural to granite so deliberate piercing may be inferred. Sometimes a perforation can have the significance of a cupmark that has been taken to its limit by total piercing, in which case the hole may share the feminine-vulva, or soul-symbolism of the cup. On the other hand, a sky directed hole might have the objective of permitting a particular stellar, lunar or solar observation to take place.



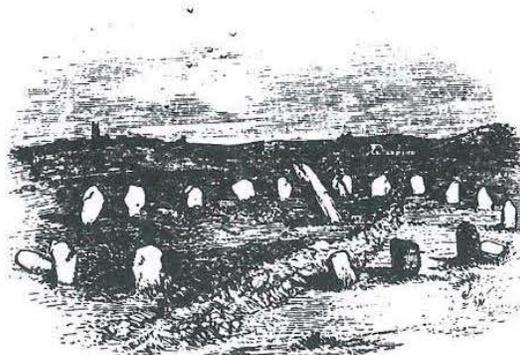
A further 15 minutes by car and I was at the triple rings known as **THE HURLERS** (SX259 714). Here the skylarks were singing, the gorse flowering yellow, and the bracken unfurling its virgin-green coiled shoots. The sky was overcast, but occasionally there was a flash of light as a golden arrow pierced the gloom to illuminate a patch of purple-grey moor. After carrying out some analysis, I went to the neighbouring Pipers which interested me too. In his excellent book on Cornish ceremonial monuments, John Barnatt reflected on whether the Pipers might not be ancient, because he said they look rather square in section. I can assure him they are ancient all right. The one furthest from the Hurlers I can prove was erected with both solstitial sunrises in mind; and the other was linked to the solstitial sunsets.

Friday 25th April was a day of touring monuments in the Lands End area with Cheryl and Caeia. In thick wind-driven sea-fog we started with the **PENDEEN FOGOU** (SW381 356) and spent some 15 minutes inside. On coming out we found that the fog had flown and the sky was improving. **CARN EUNY FOGOU AND COURTHOUSE SETTLEMENT** (SW402 288) came next. The Iron Age fogou [right]



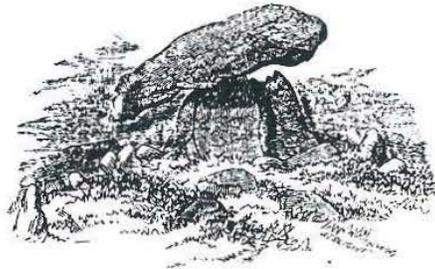
is an impressive construction but the best feature does not belong to it, strictly speaking, for what appears as an appendage in the form of a circular mundus is, we are told, a construction of earlier date. The purpose of this stone-lined chamber is obscure but its design and situation below ground-level renders it well suited for rites involving a symbolic entry to the underworld - much as Aileen Fox suggests for Carn Gluze barrow. Hence it could have served as a rite-of-passage mundus, or just as likely, as Cheryl proposed, for birthing occasions. It was typical of early pagan thought that an underworld mundus was the place from which the ancestors came, by virtue of it being a genital shrine. American-Indian myths, for instance, relate how the ancestral people and animals emerged from Earth's vulvar hole. What more appropriate place for birthing can there be than the earth-womb of the Goddess? Of course, but not everyone will agree. Instead, when male-chauvinist archaeologists and academic historians speculate, they talk ridiculously about storage pits, for that is about the best they could suggest for Cornish fogous.

After lunch at Lamorna Cove we reached the 19-stone **MERRY MAIDENS CIRCLE** (SW433 245). To the west was a splendid outlier, the **GUN RITH** standing stone (SW429 245) and an obviously significant perforated prehistoric stone standing by the roadside, unhappily doing duty as a gatepost (SW432 246). Further west, on the edge of the road, and forever at risk of serious damage by cars and lorries, is **TREGIFFIAN CIST** (SW430 244), with its circular and oval cupmarks. A few miles north of these sites is **BOSCAWEN-UN CIRCLE** (SW412 274), another 19-stone ring. The dominant megalith is made of quartz and endowed with symbolic attributes expected of a Goddess stone, in fact in this case of the Triple Goddess. Cheryl remarked that the stones were arranged to provide a view of the Beltane sunrise from the quartz stone. Boscawen-un is an eminent Goddess site with the advantage over the roadside Merry Maidens of tranquility and difficulty of access. By now the warm sun was gleaming most of the time, and continued to shine as we drove on



We arrived at the **MEN-AN-TOL** with its recently-found stone circle (SW426 349). My immediate impression was that to make sense of the three Men-an-Tol stones in the context of a stone circle setting, one may suppose that the perforated stone now stands at right angles to its original setting, having fallen and been repositioned incorrectly by someone who was unaware that the remains of a circle lay among the gorse and the ferns. Naturally, before leaving I had to pass through the enticing vulva, which I did three times in the traditional left-handed sense. The Dark Age standing stone **MEN SCRYFA** (SW427 353) inscribed in Latin is a further 400 metres beyond Men-an-Tol with imposing Carn Galver half-a-mile to its north.

The final visit was to the mushroom-like **CHUN QUOIT** (SW402 339) 300 metres west of the grim-looking granite-walled Iron Age Chun Castle. Its top surface is 1 and a half metres above the present land surface, but it may have been more in ancient times if the soil level has risen much since then. Two cupmarks on the capstone out of reach were indicated by



Cheryl. Many people, and certainly British archaeologists, are mystified by cupmarks and continue to write a lot of rubbish about them. But in Hindu India the sign of the cup or circle marked on a stone offers no problem to Hindu archaeologists. It is the sign of the yoni, of the Mahadevi or Great Goddess. British cupmarks date to Indo-European times: they too are vulva engravings, perhaps intended to permit the passage of spirits from within the rock, part of the realm of the Earth Goddess. If Chun Quoit, with its single square chamber was in Malabar, India, alongside one of the region's megalithic dolmens the Hindus would not hesitate to say that it was a yoni structure of the Great Goddess Devi in her Cunti epiphany. For that is exactly what it is in India, and would be recognised as such here as well if invaders and missionaries had not suppressed the descendants of the builders of these and other fertility-based monuments ages ago. The same applies to Christian archaeologists who are afraid to look seriously at religions other than their own. Those of us who are fortunate not have been brainwashed in this way can accept the logic of the evidence of prehistory that in Britain, as in India and elsewhere, there formerly was a widespread Goddess-yoni tradition with attendant fertility rites.

As we left Chun Quoit, low clouds were closing in, the hilltops vanishing and sea-fog advancing. In the evening we enjoyed a good meal and enlightening chats, and I finished with a lengthy browse in Cheryl and Cacia's well-stocked private library.

In the next MM, Terence Meaden goes to look at the Trippet Stones and Fernacre stone circle on Bodmin Moor.

Cerridwen's Cauldron



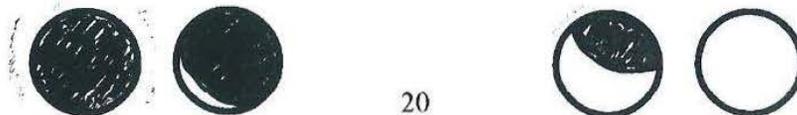
SHEILA BRIGHT, a psychological astrologer and astrological counsellor who lives in West Penwith, here writes about a ritual experience at the recent full moon eclipse in September 1997.

September's Full Moon was also Cheryl's 50th birthday and a total eclipse of the moon, so I suppose upon reflection it was bound to be a powerful celebration. But at the time I was stunned by the awe, beauty and intensity of our ritual at Halligye fogou on the Lizard. Cheryl's choice of location since it was her birthday. It had seemed an unusually deep, dark place to choose to celebrate a full moon, but it turned out to be perfect.

We began by calling in the powers of the Elements to bless and guard our circle as we worked. I did a brief purification with the four elements - joss stick, candle flame (the night was so still that our night-light burned unshielded without flickering!), salt water and soil - before following the others down into the fogou. The moon at this time was not yet risen and was also in total eclipse. Thus in the time of double darkness we descended into the utter darkness and silence of the womb of the Earth Mother, to reconnect with Her and to give thanks for the fullness in our lives.

Amazingly, despite knowing the fogou well, Cheryl at first could not find the entrance to the big side passage, and she ended up having more of a physical and terrifying rebirth experience than she had anticipated in the tiny creep passage. This was one of those strange and meaningful happenings which demonstrate the Goddess at work and Her active presence in our rites. We may create the structure and outline of our rituals, but She supplies the substance of our magical, transforming and memorable experiences, often in very unexpected ways.

One by one the other three of us re-gathered above the entrance to the fogou, leaving Cheryl to a solitary vigil below. Time of course had unaccountably passed, as it does in magical time, and we had failed to hear Cacia's repeated call: "Sisters, the Moon is risen" despite having been well within normal ear-shot. The eclipsed full moon had risen well above the horizon by the time I emerged. It was an awesome and spectacular sight. The whole disk of the moon was visible, dark menstrual-blood-red, altogether unearthly (unmoonly?), disconcerting and awe-inspiring in its strangeness. Then around the bottom corner of the disk, appeared a slender crescent of familiar bright white moon, a crescent which very gradually grew thicker as the earth's shadow passed off the face of the moon.



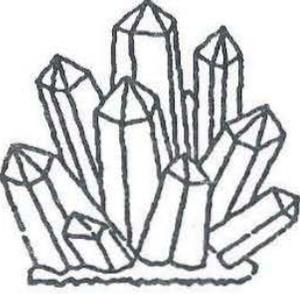
We didn't want Cheryl to miss too much of this, so in the end we summoned her fairly vigorously with calls, tambourine and bells. Literally we called her back into the upper world, into the rebirth which is the essence of a birthday, chanting her name over and over with joy and blessings. It felt wonderful to do, to celebrate a friend that way, and it seemed pretty wonderful to receive too. We try to be so careful in these feminist times about participating equally and not dominating group air-space that it is fantastic to unabashedly give full attention to one person.

For a long time we stood watching the white moon slowly re-emerge and eventually grow right back to the round full moon we know and love. The time was filled with words of thanks and gratitude to the Goddess, with dancing and chanting and drumming and singing, and with expanding understanding of how the eclipsed and re-emerging full moon reflected the changing patterns of darkness and light in our lives. But the visual experience surpassed any of our responses and commentaries, and I will never forget its magnificence. We finished by toasting with hot spicy apple juice and sharing food, before leaving for home with that warm feeling of being utterly full-filled on all levels which good ritual gives.

For further details of Sheila's astrological services please write to "Windover", Portheras Cross, Pendeen, Penzance, Cornwall TR19 7DY, or telephone 01736-787717.

Adventur-ine

CRYSTALS
INCENSE
RUNES
ESSENTIAL OILS



BOOKS
TAPES
MAGAZINES
DREAMCATCHERS

**AND LOTS MORE
FROM...**

LIZ ALLMARK

ADVENTUR-INE UNIT 4 CAMELOT COURT ALVERTON STREET

PENZANCE, CORNWALL TR18 3QN

(01736) 332313

If you cannot find us - phone us
We will be happy to help

BOOK REVIEWS

OAKMAGIC PUBLICATIONS have produced several new booklets, continuing their excellent policy of making available again little-known works on Cornish folklore and customs, primarily from the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Two of them are by the Press's Kelvin L.Jones, who in each case writes the introduction putting the subject matter into context and then continues with extracts from a variety of contemporary documents. Both booklets could usefully be read together, as they both relate to the May Day and Midsummer rites and rituals of (primarily) West Cornwall. *Penzance Customs & Superstitions* (£3.00) includes Mazey Day, the Madron Well rites and ghosts of old Penzance; while *Robin Hood in Cornwall* (£3.00) features the old May games and rituals, and their significance is traced back to a past where pagan ritual flourished in Cornwall. The extracts in these booklets come from Robert Hunt, William Bottrell and Margaret Courtney, all of whom were recording the old customs in the 1870-1890 period. Their works are also reprinted in other Oakmagic publications. Bottrell's material can be found in *Cornish Witches & Cunning Men* (£2.75), *Cornish Giants* (£3.00) and *Cornish Ghosts* (£3.00), and Margaret Courtney's original book *Cornish Feasts and Folklore* is reprinted @ £12.95. Other early writers are also featured. *Hawker's Tales of Ghosts & Witchcraft* (£3.00) is extracted from his 'Footprints of Former men' published in 1893; *King Arthur in Cornwall* (£2.75) is Henry Jenner's 19thC account of the possible locations for Camelot, etc; *Customs & Superstitions of East Cornwall* by J & T Couch (£3.50) is a useful 19thC collection of folklore from a much less well-documented part of Cornwall; and *The Cornish Folklore Handbook* by John Kinsman (£3.50) is a 1930s collection of tales and legends. All in all these moderately priced booklets are a gem for any collector of Cornish lore and legend

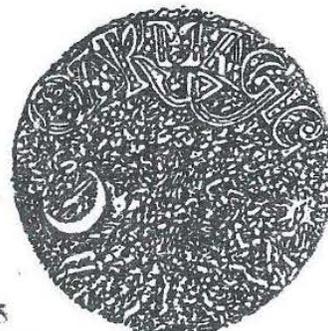
OAKMAGIC PUBLICATIONS

Publishers of West Country Folklore

Distributors of Goddess Cards.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

ROBIN HOOD IN CORNWALL - Kelvin Jones £3.00
PENZANCE CUSTOMS & SUPERSTITIONS £3.00
ST. SELEVAN/ST. SENAN - Canon Doble £1.95/£2.50
KING ARTHUR IN CORNWALL - Henry Jenner £2.75
HAWKERS TALES OF GHOSTS & WITCHCRAFT £3.00
CUSTOMS & SUPERSTITIONS OF EAST CORNWALL £3.50
THE CORNISH FOLKLORE HANDBOOK - John Kinsman £3.50
CORNISH FEASTS & FOLKLORE - Margaret Courtney £12.95



For full illustrated catalogue, send SAE (A5).

OAKMAGIC PUBLICATIONS,

K & D Jones,
 2 South Place Folly,
 Penzance TR18 4JB.

There are several new books from Blandford in their Celtic series. *Classic Celtic Fairy Tales* by John Matthews (£18.99) features tales from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Mann and Brittany - but none from Cornwall, the only Celtic nation not to be included! John Matthews says that this is not because the traditions of Cornwall are any the less valuable, but because the published literature from the late 19thC onwards tends to be more of an overview rather than extended storytelling. This is only partially true, as any detailed reading of Bottrell and Hunt will testify. Many of their collected fairy tales are long and detailed, and it is a pity that at least one example of their marvellous stories could not been included. Perhaps the problem was an unfamiliarity with the material.

The same cannot be said for Elaine Gill who lives near Penzance. Together with David Everett she has written *Celtic Pilgrimages: sites, seasons and saints* (£18.99), illustrated by the ubiquitous Courtney Davis. The structure of the book follows the wheel of the year, visiting places associated with Celtic Christianity, and several Cornish places are featured, such as St.Nectan's Glen, Madron well, St.Buryan and Roche Rock. Although the emphasis is on the Christian perspective, the book does not neglect the significance of the pre-Christian dimension.

Finally from Blandford comes *Holy Places of Celtic Britain: a photographic record of Sacred Albion*, written and photographed by Mick Sharp (£20). The text is brief but informative, and the photographs are mostly in colour and sumptuous looking, with the exception of Cornwall, which for some strange reason seem to be mainly in monochrome! Maybe he couldn't buy any colour film when he was down here! While there is a place for B&W in photography, sites like St.Nectan's Kieve, Roche Rock, Boleigh fogou, Sancreed well, and Madron well clouties cry out for colour.

A couple of books have been usefully reprinted. One is *Celtic Britain* by our own Charles Thomas, now in paperback @ £9.95 (Thames & Hudson), which includes illustrations, some coloured. This book is as sound and reliable as when it was first published in 1986, includes a section on Cornwall, and is excellent value for money. *The Travellers Guide to Arthurian Britain* by Geoffrey Ashe, first published in 1980 by Longmans, is now reprinted in paperback by Gothic Image (£12.95). A useful pocket-sized guide with full map references and photographs. Gothic Image are also promising a reprint of John Michell *The Old Stones of Land's End* later in 1998.

Finally, some miscellaneous items. The Ordnance Survey have just issued a new set of Explorer maps at 1:25,000 (the old 2½"/1 mile scale) to cover the whole of Cornwall & Scilly, the first part of Britain to be completed. There are 12 maps in all @ £5.25 each, but each is about 3 times larger in area than the Pathfinder maps they replace.

Next, a welcome to a new magazine. West Penwith now has its own pagan mag, called *Pagan Pen*. It is published by Mel & Leanne of Raven Enterprises at Niwala Celtica shop @ 2 Albert Street, Penzance. It is published monthly @ £2/copy, and is well worth supporting.

And in conclusion, MM reader Richard Lee is at present compiling a National Index of Wells, and asks for help in recording all of Britain's remaining holy wells. If you think you can help please contact him at Spey Cottage, Doctors Common Road, Berkhamsted, Herts HP4 3DW.

THE PIPERS TUNE

The account in *The Pipers Tune* in MM34 of the strange sighting of the bright blue light near Gurnards Head rang a few bells with MM reader Raymond Cox, who remembered a sighting of an anomalous green and silver haze light that appeared not far away at Newmill at the Old Post Office in September 1977 (reported in MM11 p.19) Ray Cox points out that the Newmill site was near an old granite quarry and comments: "These odd light phenomena are probably something to do with the interaction between earthlights/ faulting/ quartz rock, and the human mind and brain. And of course ancient people were connected with this. There is a strong correlation which also involves things like quarries and tin mines which emit lights etc, which seem to affect the mind"

'Coincidentally', the *Western Morning News* published last year a letter from C.J.Crosby of Paul who experienced inexplicable lights while walking at Botallack near St.Just-in-Penwith. While on an evening walk in the vicinity of the old tin mine, he saw streaks of light that flashed across the rocks, darted up the chimney stack, and then appeared to dance around the old mine ruins. This was accompanied by an underground rumbling sound, followed by scrapings and janglings. A couple of readers then wrote in, one to say that his grandmother knew them as 'Jack Harry's lights' - "phantom lights that may be seen in the area as a warning of danger", and the other who wrote to say that they were a well-known phenomenon that he thought was caused by geological disturbance and the shifting of rocks underground.

FAIR EXCHANGE

Pendragon is the Journal of the Pendragon Society, an organisation that focuses on all things Arthurian. The most recent edition (Summer 1997) is devoted to Arthurian Topography, and as such Cornwall, and in particular Tintagel, features very prominently. An article by Aad van der Geest (very Cornish!) looks at the possible meanings of the name Tintagel, and argues for an Irish origin; one by Dan Nastali examines colourful writings by Victorian visitors to Tintagel; Charles Evans-Gunther looks at Cornwall and Arthur to see how Arthur may have become linked to Tintagel; and John Ford looks at some traditional Arthurian sites, including Arthur's birth at Tintagel. All in all, an edition that will be of great relevance to MM readers who are interested in the Arthurian mythos, and details of the Society and magazine are given below.

**THE PENDRAGON
SOCIETY**

THE ARTHURIAN SOCIETY

Founded  in 1959

The Society investigates Arthurian
Archaeology, History, Folklore,
Literature, Art
NEWS REVIEWS
ARTICLES LETTERS

A year's subscription includes 3
journals and costs only £6, or send
£2.00 for a sample copy.
Cheques to: 'Pendragon'
Smithy House, Newton by Frodsham,
Cheshire, WA6 6SX.

EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

Prices are for annual subscriptions
[sample copies in brackets].

EARTH MYSTERIES

THE LEY HUNTER - PO Box 258,
Cheltenham, Glos GL53 0HR...£7 [£2.50]

NORTHERN EARTH - 10 Jubilee Street,
Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, W.Yorks
HX7 5NP.....£6 [£1.50]

AT THE EDGE (archaeology, folklore &
mythology) 2 Cross Hill Close, Wymes-
wold, Loughborough, Leics .£9 [£2.50]

3rd STONE(new antiquarian)POBox 961,
Devizes, Wilts SN10 2TS.....£10 [£2.75]

TOUCHSTONE (Surrey) - 25 Albert
Road, Addlestone, Weybridge, Surrey...£2

FOGS (Friends of Grampian Stones) -
The Old Manse of Bourtie, Inverurie,
Aberdeenshire AB51 0JS.....£10

SACRED SITES

CAERDROIA (Mazes & labyrinths) - 53
Thundersley Grove, Thundersley,
Benfleet, Essex SS7 3EB.....[Annual. £6]

WALKING THE TALK (saving sites)
9 Edward Kennedy House, Wornington
Rd, London W10 5FP£6 [£3]

RILKO (patterns) 43 Dorchester Avenue,
Palmer's Green, London N13 5DY.....£8

THE DRAGON CHRONICLE - PO Box
3369, London SW6 6JN.....£7 [£2]

MEYN MAMVRO is available on annual subscription - 3 issues £6.00 (inc p&p)
from:-51 CARN BOSAVERN, ST.JUST, PENZANCE, CORNWALL TR19 7QX.
MM36 due May 98 will be a special edition featuring Maytime celebrations in Cornwall.
Most back numbers are now sold out, but photocopies can be done as a special service to
subscribers and regular readers upon request at £1.90 each.

CELTIC/ARTHURIAN

DALRIADA (Celtic) - Dun-na-Beatha, 2
Brathwic Place, Brodick, Isle of Arran,
Scotland.....£10 [£2.25]

CELTIC CONNECTIONS - Sycamore
Cottage, Waddon, nr Portseham,
Weymouth, Dorset DT3 4ER....£7 [£1.75]

PENDRAGON (Arthurian) Smithy House
Newton-by-Frodsham, Cheshire....£6 [£2]

PAGANISM

THE CAULDRON - Mike Howard,
Caemorgan Cottage, Caemorgan Road,
Cardigan, Ceredigion, Wales£8 [£2]

QUEST - BCM-SCL Quest, London
WC1N 3XX.....£6 [£1.50]

THE SILVER WHEEL - PO Box 12,
Leicester LE9 7DN£7.50 [£2]

WHITE DRAGON - 103 Abbotswood
Close, Winyates Green, Redditch, Worcs
B98 0QF.....£8 [£2.25]

PAGAN PEN - 2 Albert St, Penzance
TR18 2LR.....[£2.25]

GODDESS/FEMINIST(* = women only)
WOOD AND WATER- c/o 77 Parliament
Hill, London, NW3 2TH.....£5 [£1.25]

*MRRN (Matriarchy Research & Reclaim
Network) c/o Wesley House, 4 Wild
Court, London WC2B 5AU.....£6

*from the flames - Details from 42
Mapperley Rd, Nottingham NG3 5AS.

NOTICEBOARD

ISSN: 0966-5897

CORNISH EARTH MYSTERIES

Winter talks at the Queens Hotel [change of venue] in Penzance on the last Thursday each month @ 7.30pm.

Jan 29th Hamish Miller "The Earth Responds"

Feb 26th Caitlin Matthews "The Spells of Women: the sacred and magical role of the ninefold Celtic sisterhood"

Mar 26th Cassandra Latham "The work of the 20th century witch in West Penwith"

Membership details from CEMG, 3 Nanturras Row, Goldsithney, Penzance TR20 9HE, or ring Andy Norfolk on 01209-831519, or turn up on the door.

CUFORG (Cornwall UFO Group)

Meet on first Tuesday of every month at Richard Lander School in Truro.

Details: Dave Gillam, 24 Carrine Rd, Truro TR1 3XB. Tel: 01872-276381.

THE WELLBEING CENTRE

Old School House, Churchtown, Illogan, Redruth. Tel: 01209-842999. Regular workshops and events.

RESEARCH AND ENLIGHTENMENT CENTRE

King's Avenue, St. Austell. Tel: 01726-74843. Regular monthly talks and healing sessions.

ANTIQUITIES WALK

Sat Jan 17th with Ian Cooke over Penwith Moors
Tel: 01736-368282 for more details.

PENWITH PAGAN MOOT now at

the White Hart Hotel in Hayle. 7.30pm
Monthly meetings on Tuesdays *Jan 13th, Feb 10th, Mar 10th, Apr 14th.*

Tel: Cassandra 01736-810809.

KETTLES - Pagan Group. Meets 3rd Thursday every month at White Hart pub in Liskeard Town Centre 7.30pm.

Tel: Amber 01752-848444

KALI WOMEN'S GROUP

Creating Women workshops *31st Jan/1st Feb & 28th Feb/1st March.*

Details: 23 Holmbush Rd, St. Austell.

CAER Courses and workshops incl:

Jan 30th-Feb 1st Fogou: a journey to the underworld - Jo May

Feb 27th-Mar 1st Augery and Inspiration - Caitlin Matthews

Mar 20th-22nd Guardian, Mother & Son of Light - Ian Rees & Jo May

Tel: CAER, Lamorna 01736-810530.

BELTANE CELEBRATIONS 1998

Thurs Apr 30th - 10th annual Maypole Dance & feast at Carn Bosavern, St. Just. Meet 6.30pm onwards.

Fri May 1st - Obby Oss day at Padstow. Details: 01841-533449.

Sat May 2nd - Beltane celebrations at Harmony Pottery, Scorrier, Redruth. Details: Geraldine 01209-890581.

Sun May 3rd - 10th annual Three Wells Walk. Details: 01736-787186.