

Celebrating 20 Years



of Meyn Mamvro

MESOLITHIC: HUNTER-GATHERER STATIONS ●
NEOLITHIC RITUAL SITES ● CASPN & CEMG ●
FENTON BEBIBELL CLEARED ● PATHWAYS ●
* **CORNWALL'S COLOURFUL SITES** *

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Articles [c] MM & authors. Thanks to Andy Norfolk for front cover artwork.

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This issue of MM includes an extra 4-page pull-out centre section celebrating **20 Years of Meyn Mamvro**. This section may be detached from the magazine by easing up the staples, removing the section and then replacing the staples.

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Meyn Mamvro

STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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

With this MM we reach 20 years since the first issue in December 1986. It's hard to believe that 20 years have elapsed since that first tentative issue, and we are celebrating our longevity with a special 4 page supplement on the history of the magazine, as well as a themed issue that looks back to the very earliest inhabitants of Cornwall - the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age peoples. As always, we reveal some new discoveries, theories and ideas about these periods: MM has always prided itself on producing fresh and original material and the 20th Anniversary issue is no exception! We have seen other magazines (such as *The Ley Hunter*, *3rd Stone* etc) come and go, but MM has always remained true to its roots in Cornwall, and those who love and care about the sites in Cornwall have remained our faithful readers over the years, and ensured that the magazine has always been a viable production. As MM Editor I (CS) have taken on many other projects over the years, including writing books, running a small publishing business, tour guiding, editing *Goddess Alive!* magazine, and putting down some roots in Crete, but my heart still lies in my homeland of Cornwall, and while I am able to do so, will go on producing MM.

Much has changed during those 20 years, not always for the best. But one of the most heartening developments has been the existence of CASPN (Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network) and its daughter support group FOCAS (Friends of Cornwall's Ancient Sites). There is more news about this Group on p.3, which is moving ahead in all sorts of spheres of activity, thanks to a substantial AONB Grant, which has allowed myself, CASPN Chairwoman, to take over the work of Project Manager for the outputs and milestones linked to the Grant requirements. This is an exciting challenge that I am thoroughly enjoying, and one that will hopefully make a real positive contribution to the upkeep and preservation of megalithic sites in Cornwall.

CASPN (Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network)

Address: CASPN, PO Box 274, Penzance TR19 7WW

Web site: www.cornishancientsites.com **E-mail:** secretary@cornishancientsites.com

Runs the F.O.C.A.S (Friends of Cornwall's Ancient Sites) scheme

For more details write to: 24 Queen St, St.Just, Penzance TR19 7JW

or visit CASPN website for downloadable application form.

Telephone nos. for reporting damage at sites: 01736-787186 or 01736-787522

Clear-ups at Ancient Sites - details from: Dave Munday 01736-787230

E-mail: dave@cornishancientsites.com



news page

The 18th Annual **Maypole Dance** on Carn Bosavern on Sunday 30th April had an evening of rather mizzly weather, but a regular crowd of 30 or more still turned up to dance in the Summer. It must have worked, as the next day was warm and sunny at Padstow for the Obby Oss! The following Sunday (May 8th) **The Three Wells Walk** was as usual also blessed with some lovely weather with 19 people for the first leg and 13 for the second. Water was collected from the three wells and mixed together in a Blessing for the Summer at Madron Baptistry.

The Summer season of walks and site visits commenced on Sunday June 4th when CEMG member **Bart O'Farrell** took a group Dowsing down the Lizard. The Group gathered at Goonhilly Craft Centre (where Bart showed how to find energy and water lines by dowsing, much to the amusement of other visitors!) and then went on to Dry Tree standing stone, where people dowsed the cantankerous Apollo line passing to its west and the menhir itself. The Group decided that it had been re-erected a number of times and not always on the same spot. The next stop was the Bronze Age barrow by Croft Pascoe Forest where most were happy to dowse the encircling and very pleasant energies and some brave souls waded through gorse to its top. After a hot lunch at Kennack Sands they went to Grade Church and finally St.Rumon's Well, both places having nice energies that made people reluctant to leave.

On Sunday July 2nd **Cheryl Traffon** led a group of 28 people on a Treen Circular walk (see Pathways to the Past in MM58), linking together several lesser-known sites. From Gurnards Head the group went to see the Treen Entrance Graves (newly cleared by FOCAS), and then the stone at SW4368 3672 that appears to point to a notch in Carn Gulva in a SW direction. The dowsers thought this was an purposely-erected stone that had originally been a few feet away and subsequently put back up. From there the Group walked to Bosporthenis Beehive Hut where they stopped for lunch and a rest. Then in the afternoon they walked back to Bosporthenis Quoit, that the dowsers felt had very disturbing energies. Finally, the Group made its way back to Treen Circle, an enigmatic site about which people had many different ideas. One of the dowsers asked some questions of the site, and concluded it was built in c 2500 BCE for ritual purposes rather than as a cattle pound. Others felt there had originally been more than one circle there [also see article in MM52 p.19], and the summer solstice sunrise alignment to the distinctive notch of Zennor Hill on the horizon was confirmed. The day finished with a most welcome drink at Gurnards Head inn!

The next issue of MM will include reports of the August (Tregonning Hill) & September (Holywell Cave) visits.

C.A.S.P.N NEWS ROUND-UP

Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network



ADOPT-A-SITE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING SCHEME

A new scheme was set up earlier this year by CASPN to appeal for volunteers to become the eyes and ears for monitoring and visiting the ancient sites on a regular basis. A database of sites was established that included all details of their location, ownership and history, and then through the FOCAS scheme and local publicity, a number of Archaeological Monitors were recruited. These were generally people who had an interest in the sites, who lived locally to one or more site, and who were willing to visit them regularly. A check-sheet was drawn up, and the scheme's co-ordinator Paul Bonnington met with the volunteers on site and briefed them on what to look out for. Not only the main sites, but many lesser-known, and therefore potentially more vulnerable, sites were included, covering the whole range of ancient monuments. The scheme is proving to be a great success, but more volunteers are still needed. If you would like to become involved please e-mail: paul.bonnington@nationaltrust.org.uk or write to CASPN at the address on p.1.

FOCAS CLEAR-UPS

FOCAS (Friends of Cornwall's Ancient Sites) have been continuing with their monthly clear-ups, and so far this year have done Boscawen-ûn Circle, Sperris Quoit and Round House settlement, Boswens menhir, Tregeseal Circle, and Mulfra Courtyard Houses, a little-known site covering a large area that the Group have been back to several times with the co-operation of the farmer Roy Olds.

A small group also visited the lost site of **Fenton Bebibell** well (SW 4296 3520) at the foot of Nine Maidens Downs in West Penwith on Good Friday. This delightfully named well means "well of the little people" and used to be visited by young girls on that day with their dolls in order to have them baptised. After some exploratory digging, the team found the well, still full of fresh water with low stone surround. They cleared out the surrounding vegetation and Rory Te'Tigo lost his scythe into the pool's depths; he couldn't find it at all until he asked the 'little people' to return it to him!

Cheryl Traffon blessed the well and baptised her Bridie doll in the waters, possibly the first time this had been done since the early 1920s. The team agreed to make this the start of a revived tradition and return again next Good Friday.



To contact CASPN or become a member of FOCAS see details on p.1

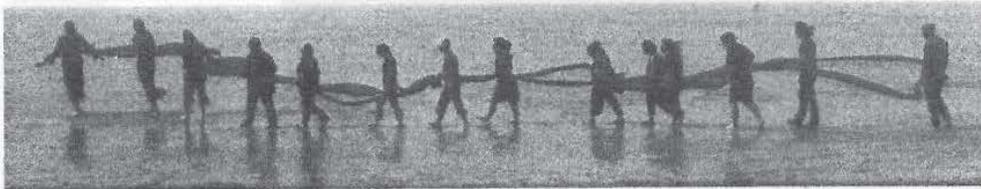
Penwith Pagan Moot



By Gemma Gary

The Moot met at Boscawen-ûn stone circle to open the gates of Summer with our **Beltane** ritual. The Green Lady and Green Lord were called by the sounding of a horn into the circle, where they were symbolically handfasted to mark the commencement of Summer. The Green Lady led the women in a widdershins dance around the central stone whilst the Green Lord led the men weaving deosil around the outer stones. All met again at the circle's entrance to be blessed by the Green Lady and Lord and re-enter the circle, passing between the two Beltane fires. Energy was then raised in the circle with slow and steady drumming and clapping, which was poured back into the circle with love. The Moot's new ritual athame, beautifully crafted by Rory, was then blessed, before being used to make the libation. The Green Lord and Lady then invited each in turn to take a paper leaf from a box, each of which had an individual blessing written upon it. The ritual was then closed and all gathered at the circle's edge for a picnic.

Midsummer was celebrated under a spectacular sky on Sennen Beach. We began our ritual by making a sun-disk in the sand around the cauldron which contained our midsummer bonfire. An invocation was read to the sun and we all went in search of a stone to be our serpent's egg or Druid stone, which we brought back to decorate our sun-disk. We then raised energy in the form of the serpent, a traditional symbol of fire and potent earth forces. We became part of the body of the serpent by standing in a line between two substantial lengths of red fabric. We were led in a serpent dance by Kate (wearing a wonderful red mask with forked tongue!) meandering and winding slowly down the beach to the sea's edge and back up to our sun disk where we breathed and hummed the serpentine powers which we had raised into our stones. We each then took our stones as Adrian read a beautiful blessing of the Sun and the Serpent. The libation was made and our ritual was followed by a beach picnic.



As well as ritual celebrations, we have monthly Moot meetings for news, views and the discussion of a different topic each month, Ritual Planning Meetings and Sacred Site Clearances. Everyone welcome! To find out more visit the Moot's website at www.penwithpaganmoot.co.uk or contact Sarah on 01736-787522.

NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS UPSET AT MADRON WELL IMPROVEMENTS

A storm of protest erupted locally this Summer over the improvements to Madron Baptistry and Well, undertaken by the Bolitho Estate with advice from the Historic Environment Service and overseen by Madron Community Forum. The improvements include a better surfaced car parking area, disabled access to the Baptistry, drainage of some of the swampy area, the cutting back of overhanging trees and the creation of a new pathway down to the Baptistry. It is the latter that seems to have caused most upset, and complaints have been about its surface (a yellowish rock and rab material), and its appearance. In a letter to 'The Cornishman' Therese Clemo said: "Somehow the magical twists and turns, romantic stone stiles and pre-raphaelite mossy stone walls which cast their emerald hues so invitingly were irrevocably desecrated by Heritage Lottery Funding in order to create a utilitarian access route straight down to the Well and Baptistry". Ann Preston-Jones of HES defended the work, saying that the site badly needed improving and that over time the trees will grow back and the surface of the path will tone down.

MURDER TRIAL of PAGANISM/WITCHCRAFT

A 12 week trial of Margaret James, accused of conspiring to murder Peter Solheim, whose body was found out to sea off the Lizard, hit the headlines this Summer. The court heard how Solheim and James shared a love of the occult, and that Solheim was "obsessed with black magic and pornography". He had been part of a coven that met at St.Merryn (Eddie Pryn's stone circle). Witnesses at the trial included Professor Ronald Hutton, who described Solheim's collection of books on witchcraft as "extremely impressive" and "an occult laboratory of materials". Solheim was described as a Druid "whose warlock name was Orme, which is Norwegian for rape and pillage". James was found guilty and sentenced to 20 years, but police said after the trial that the notion that a group of pagans or witches carried out the murder was dispelled early on in the investigation. However, those who actually carried out the murder remains unknown, and despite the verdict, Margaret James continues to deny that she had anything to do with his brutal murder.

RARE ROMAN BURIAL URNS EXCAVATED

Rare Roman burial urns from the 1stC CE have been found in what is believed to be a shrine in the grounds of a new retirement village. The two pottery vessels were buried in a corner of an enclosure at Roseland Parc, in Tregony, overlooking the Fal River. They represent a rare find of early Roman remains in the county, which was barely touched by the Roman Empire's occupation of Britain from the 1st-5thC CE. The discovery may point to the adoption of burial practices from elsewhere in Britain by the local inhabitants, or it may have been the grave of someone from outside the county. The urns are undergoing specialist tests before going on display in Truro Museum.

MESOLITHIC [8000-4500 BCE]

HUNTER-GATHERER STATIONS IN WEST PENWITH: A Window on the Stone-Age Landscape by Rory Te'Tigo

What is a Hunter-Gatherer Station?

Since time immemorial, humans gained their sustenance by travelling along a permanent round of Camp Sites that they visited to exploit their resources. Depending on the conditions, it could be as little a number as two - Summer and Winter camp, or as many as twelve, or even sixteen, camps to make up an annual 'Walk About'. Arising out of knowledge of the land and its resources, the simple necessity arose over the millennia to pitch camp at more or less the same spot. These places have been named Hunter-Gatherer stations.

What defines a Hunter-Gatherer Station?

Human-made objects accumulated at these campsites. Where the conditions were right, archaeologists have been able to excavate these places and have found fire pits, dwelling platforms (for temporary structures like tents), and worked bone, deer antler and flint. These places were in a fairly small and condensed area, sometimes as small as fifty feet square. In West Penwith all that survives in the ground are the results of flint-knapping. If one finds debris from flint knapping, together with scrapers and at least four core fragments (walnut sized centres of flint nodules) one can infer that this find-spot was a Hunter-Gatherer Station.

What time frame are we talking about?

The end of the last Ice Age was about 12,000-10,000 BCE, with the final separation of Britain from the Continent at about 6500 BCE. The Mesolithic (Middle Stone Age) period, when the semi-nomadic lifestyle was followed, was from about 8000-4500 BCE. After this, from about 4500-4000 BCE people began to settle and learnt how to farm and raise crops, though this was not an immediate process but probably took several millennia to be fully realised.

How do we read the landscape to find Hunter-Gatherer Stations?

Look for the basic needs of any human, such as proximity to water, shelter in the landscape against heavy weather, and location of plants, trees and animals.

What social structures may have existed amongst the Hunter-Gatherers?

Nothing is known directly, but one can assume from anthropological studies of groups of Hunter-Gatherers (or Gatherer-Hunters as they are sometimes known), that where people still follow a traditional way of life, there would have been at grassroots level what some archaeologists call "The Band". According to some literature, this could have consisted of some 8 to 10 men and 30 to 40 people in total. In West Penwith it was perhaps likely to have consisted of up to 60 individuals, two-thirds children or elderly.

A smaller group is considered to be inefficient, and a larger group would have had the tendency to split up. Above 'The Band' once can assume structures like 'The Clan' and then 'The Tribe'. It appears unlikely that there was more than one Tribe in West Penwith, though it is possible to have more than one Clan in any given Tribe. Marriage may have been regulated along Clan structures.

How may the year of Hunter-Gatherers have been structured?

Just like crops in a field, wild food sources have their seasons. Add to that, the weather may have created the need to find upland shelter from winter storms. Summer could have brought beach camps, and the use of marine resources. One can presume that the Round of Hunter-Gatherer Stations had annual repetitions.

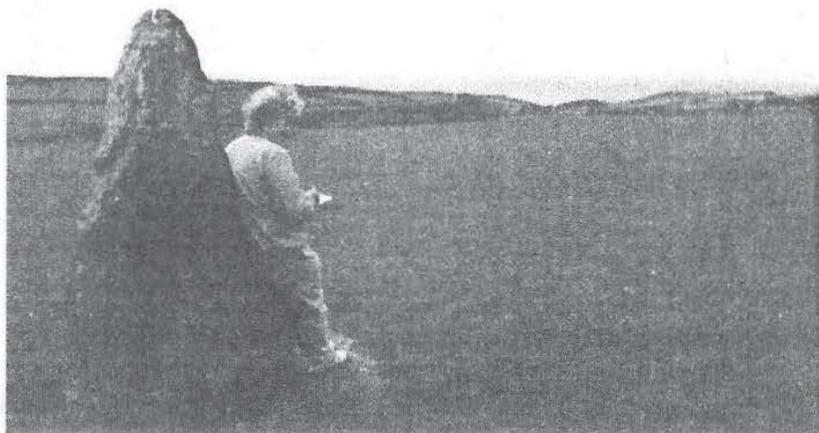
What is the average distance between Hunter-Gatherer Stations?

The distance between Hunter-Gatherer Stations would have varied over the millennia. In the Paleolithic (Old Stone Age) when Europe was still in the stranglehold of the Ice Age, people were big game hunters, hunting mammoth, woolly rhino, muskoxen and moose. In order to be efficient, vast distances of land had to be covered. Hunter-Gatherer Stations were so far apart that the entire S.W. Peninsula may only have been inhabited by a few thousand people by 6000 BCE. After the end of the Ice Age, nevertheless, the population must have grown rapidly. In the Mesolithic era, small game would have presented itself much more readily, and a wider variety of plants would have been available as food sources. I found that the average distance between Hunter-Gatherer Stations in West Penwith was as close as 800 yards. This must have meant that changing camps must have occurred quite often to avoid the over-use of an area, around individual sites.

Are there any differences in the Hunter-gatherer Stations documented in Penwith?

Some of the sites are much larger in area and much richer in the amount of flint one can find there. I presume this could mean that they were in use over a much larger time span, or they were used by much larger groups of people, i.e as an annually repeated gathering site.

One of these 'large camp sites', the one between Trevegean Veor and Trevegean Vean, on the landward slope of the Nanquidno Valley [no.9 on list] has a direct line of sight to Cape Cornwall, the Brisons, the Longship Rocks off Land's End & Chapel Carn Brea.

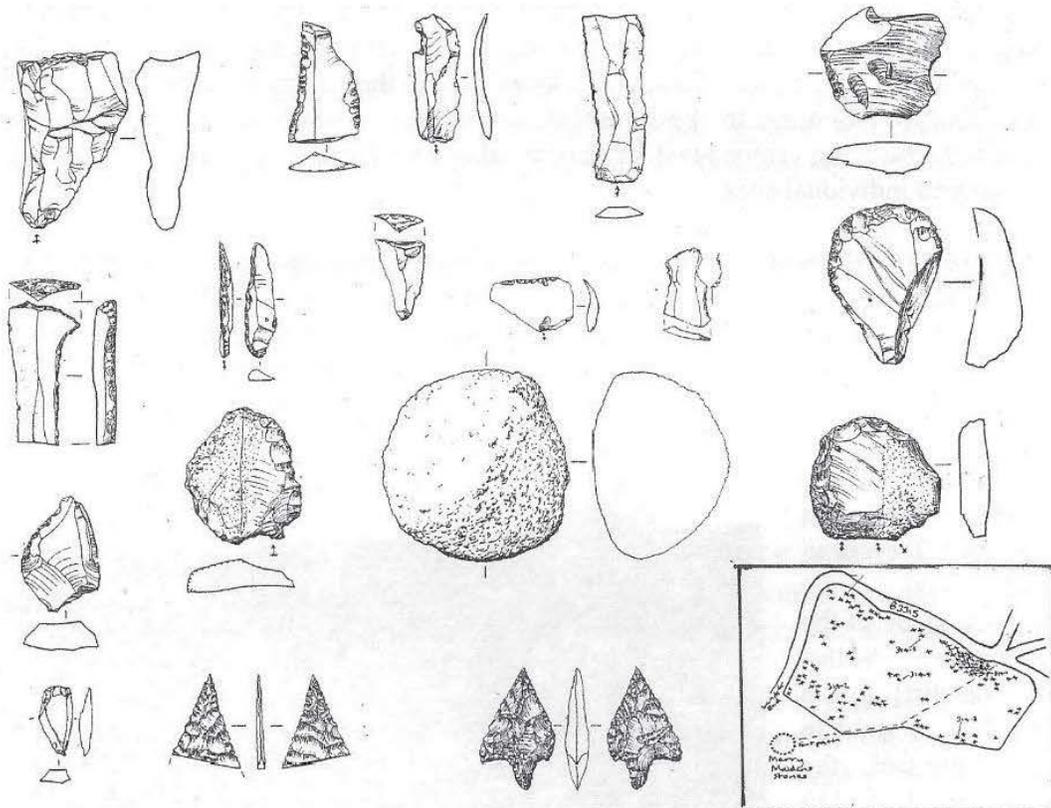


View from Trevegean Hunter-Gatherer Station

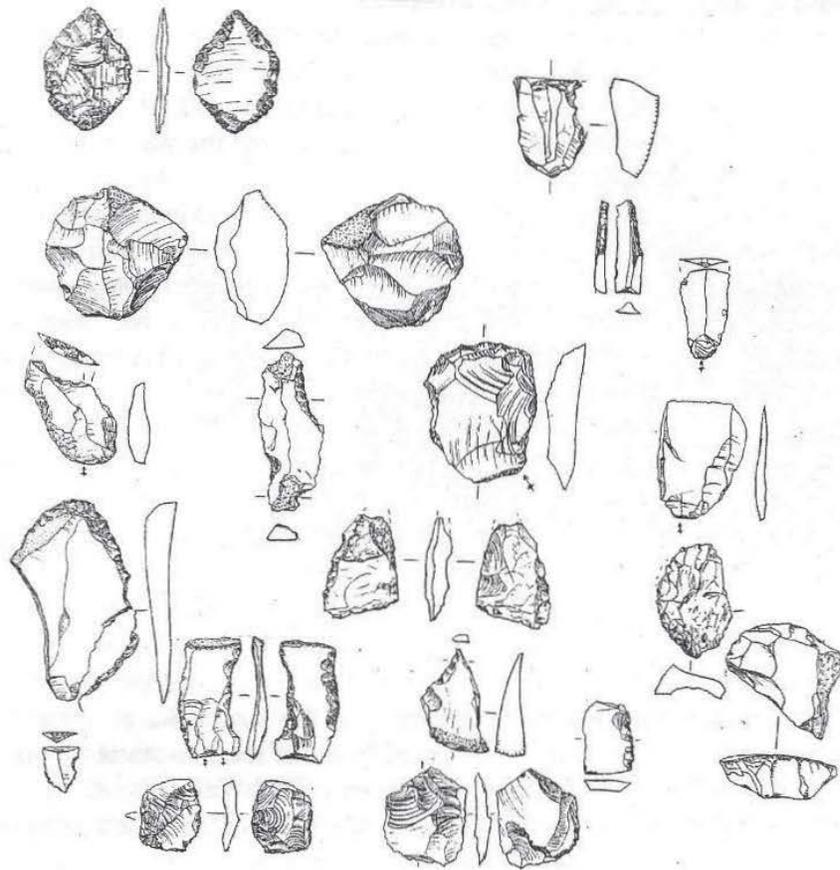
Another difference among the sites is the difference among the finds. Generally speaking, I found big blades and small blades. Big blades clearly pre-date small blades, as in some instances big blades have been used as cores to take smaller blades off them. I first thought that big blades and small blades were contemporary with each other, but then realised that big blades are from the Middle Mesolithic and small blades are from the late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic eras. The difference in size can be interpreted thus: the rare commodity flint had to serve a much larger population. There was also a change of flint use, from larger single blade tools to tools made from several blades set in a wooden mounting.

Where did the flint come from?

It is alleged that the flint (which is the only surviving proof for Hunter-Gatherer Stations in West Penwith) was primarily found on the beaches. Beach flint is relatively common in West Penwith, but I would like to suggest that it is a relatively recent occurrence, its source being in its use as blast in ships. It probably comes from shipwrecks. If one looks at the geology of West Penwith, flint, even beach flint, does not occur here in a natural context. The nearest geological sources of flint are: Beer in Devon (the source for dark grey and black flint), cherty flint from Portland, and perhaps also Broom on the Devon/Dorset border.



Some examples of flint found [by Graham Hill]



Some examples of flint found [by Graham Hill]

How was the flint distributed?

There are three different possibilities for the distribution of flint. It could be traded from Band to Band at annual Clan Meetings, i.e - Summer or Winter camps. It could be traded and delivered by specialised flint traders, who would carry it on travois-type racks, not unlike a mule train caravan without the mules. Or it could be brought in by boats. The risk of a sea journey was high, but profits would be high. Supplying a flint-less area like West Penwith with flint must have been lucrative. Boats could also carry the bartered goods that were used as payment, such as Cornish greenstone axe-heads, that were a very high status commodity. They were so widely used in trade and in status object exchange that some Cornish Greenstone axes have been found as far away as Germany. All three forms of distributing flint may have been used at different times.

What sort of shelter would the Hunter-Gatherers have used?

Very little is known about Hunter-Gatherer shelters, but one can presume that they would have used structures not unlike small Yurts, i.e, relatively low, circular, tent-like structures, covered in animal hides. Taking them down or erecting them could have taken as little as half an hour.

What could a camp moving have looked like?

As the Hunter-Gatherer Stations were so close together, moving Camp could easily be achieved in one day. Whilst it would have been a busy day, with lots of important tasks, it would also have been an exciting day full of joy and laughter. Just think of any first day of a holiday that involves a journey: the whole idea of a holiday or an outing reflects our semi-nomadic past.

Camp moving days would have been predetermined by celestial events, like the full or new moon, or environmental events, like the first spring flowers, or the beginning of the rutting season of deer. After say, one lunar month everyone would be full of moving fever, and moving on to the next campsite would feel like a relief. It is interesting to see that, in the Kelynack area, some of the old Camp moving routes are reflected in the roads, bridle paths and footpaths.

What religious and social structures may have existed among Hunter-Gatherers?

Hunter-gatherer groups, as observed by sociologists, tend to have shamanic faith structures, matriarchy, and female deities with male consorts. Internecine strife and warfare were rare, even non-existent. Hunter-gatherers tend to look upon themselves as being 'of the land', just as animals and plants are 'of the land'. Once the annual migratory cycle came to its end, this changed. The land was looked upon as being 'of the people', and patriarchy and male gods came in. It became important to be able to defend one's fields against roaming animals and people. The shamanka or shaman turned into the priestess or priest. Ever more complicated forms of religion started to appear, aiming to explain why the Garden of Eden, or the time of the Walk About, was lost, and had turned into a world in which one had to work very hard to gain one's sustenance.

In conclusion, I regard myself as a 'Field Variation Sensitive', or to put it into plain English, a 'Finder'. On weekends I regularly walk the fields of West Penwith to look for flint or quartz crystals. Finding Hunter-gatherer sites sometimes seems unavoidable. For example, when I parked my car in Cape Cornwall Car Park and was forced to park in the last available parking slot, I opened my car door and there was the flint lying right in front of me! I was amazed to find that Hunter-Gatherer Stations are so closely spaced, as I had expected them to be much further apart. At the same time, small blades are late Mesolithic to early Neolithic, and farming and the sedentary life style came in from the Neolithic onwards, so it may be difficult to differentiate between late Hunter-Gatherer Stations and some early farmsteads.

On the following list of Hunter-Gatherer Stations, 17 were found by me, 11 by Penzance fireman Ian Blackmore and 4 (in the Sheffield-Castallack area) by Graham Hill. None of us have studied the area north of the line between St. Just and Penzance, so the distribution map is heavily weighted towards the south part of West Penwith. It is known however that some large collections of flints have been found in the northern part, such as those at Lower Boscaswell by Dave Wetzell, so they must have been evenly distributed throughout the whole West Penwith area.

My thanks go to the piskies for leading me to many a good find!

List of Hunter-Gatherer Stations (north to south)

* = found by Rory Te' Tigo

+ = found by Ian Blackmoor

^ = found by Graham Hill

No.1 3680 3180 Cape Cornwall Carpark*

No.2 3647 3026 S of YHA road to Kelynack*

No.3 3823 3025 SSW of Puffball stone at Bosworlas*

No.4 3717 3005 SE of Kelynack Bridge*

No.5 3824 2995 2nd & 3rd field WSW of Dowran*

No.6 3800 2975 N of footpath nr. Little Kelynack*

No.7 3647 2974 N of Trevegean Veor, E of Hendra*

No.8 3753 2970 ENE of Little Kelynack (Large St.)*

No.9 3659 2937 Fields W of Trevegean Veian Lane (Large Station)*

No.10 3875 2915 WNW of New Town*

No.11 3810 2875 NW of Little Brea Farm*

No.12 4600 2730 N of Trungle Moor^

No.13 4550 2670 WSW of Sheffield+

No.14 4755 2655 E of Trevithal Farm^

No.15 4630 2640 Both sides of crossroads S of Sheffield to Castallack^

No.16 3480 2620 E of Pedn-mên-du+

No.17 3890 2590 Bosfranken Farm+

No.18 3612 2555 2nd field behind First & Last Inn at Sennen*

No.19 3485-3475 2540-2545 Large site near Maen Castle+

No.20 4200 2553 S of Sanctuary, St.Buryan*

No.21 3940 2512 Fields leading down to Alsia Holy Well*

No.22 3735 2510 Brew Farm+

No.23 3955 2510 E of Alsia Well+

No.24 3522 2477 2nd field W of Trevescan*

No.25 4460 2460 NE of Merry Maidens Stone Circle^

No.26 3460 2450 Greeb Farm+

No.27 3642 2443 S of road near Skewjack Farm*

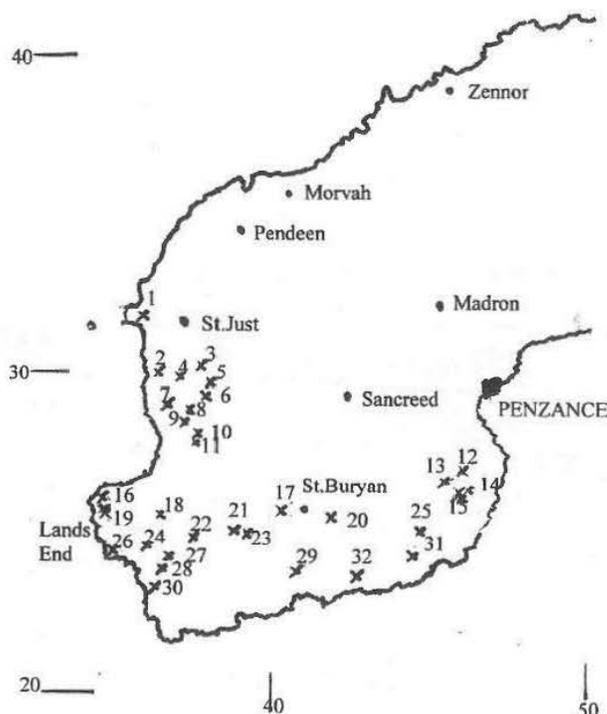
No.28 3630 2420 NNE of Lower Bosistow Farm+

No.29 4085 2415 Treverven+

No.30 3605 2397 Above Nanjizal Bay to the NNE*

No.31 4455 2365 Rosmodress+

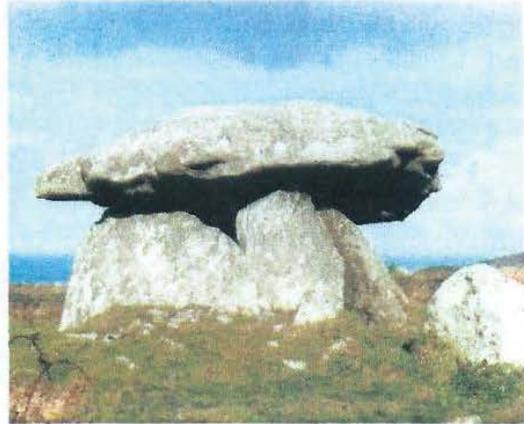
No.32 4275 2340 Boskenna+



CORNWALL'S COLOURFUL SITES

The colour section this time features DOLMENS FROM THE NEOLITHIC

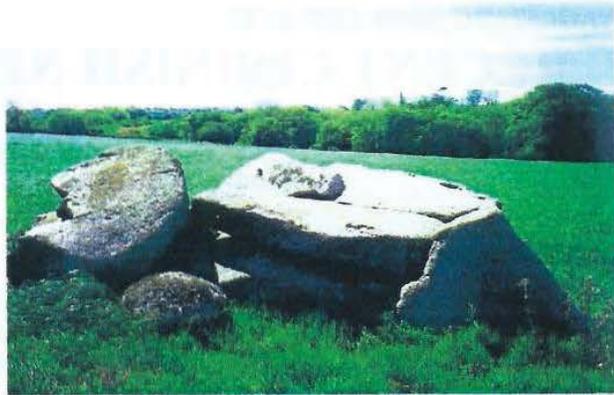
West Penwith



Top row - left: Lanyon Quoit
Middle row - left: Mulfra Quoit
Bottom row - Zennor Quoit

right: Chûn Quoit
right: West Lanyon Quoit

Rest of Cornwall



Top row - left: Trethevey Quoit
(nr. Liskeard)

right: Carwynnen Quoit
(nr. Camborne)

Middle row - Lesquite Quoit (nr. Bodmin)

Bottom row - Pawton Quoit (nr. Wadebridge)

*All photos
[c] C.Straffon*

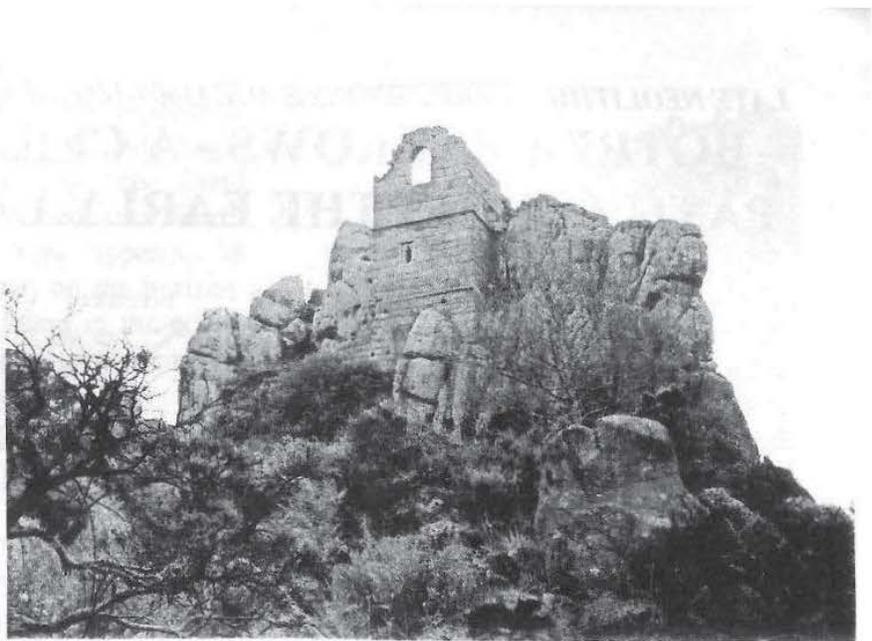
NEOLITHIC [4000-2500 BCE]**RECENT CORNISH NEOLITHIC SITES**

Evidence of Neolithic activity (from about 4000-2500 BCE) in Cornwall is rare. Apart from probable Tor enclosures at Carn Brea near Redruth, Helman Tor and Bodmin Moor, and a handful of flint scatters and pits at places such as Poldowrian on the Lizard, Tremough near Penryn, Trenowah near St.Austell and Portscatho, the only other 'evidence' is an inferred early Neolithic date for the dolmens and chambered tombs. There is little evidence of settlements, and it has been suggested that the Neolithic in Cornwall was a transition phase between the earlier Mesolithic hunter-gatherers and the later settled Bronze Age societies.

A number of recent finds of sites in Cornwall of a Neolithic date give some credence to this hypothesis. On **Stannon Downs** on Bodmin Moor, the area now occupied by the China Clay works has been recently investigated by archaeologist Andy Jones [*"Settlement and Ceremony" in Cornish Archaeology (forthcoming) & talk given at Liskeard, Feb 2006*]. Although the principal phase of activity was in the Bronze Age, nevertheless the area was already beginning to be cleared in the earlier Neolithic period. The predominantly wooded landscape was punctuated by clearings, perhaps linked by pathways, and finds of flints and pottery sherds indicate that there was at least seasonal activity here. The site is overlooked by the impressive natural rock formation of Rough Tor, and it is suggested that at times communities would congregate in the Tor Enclosure, perhaps for ceremonial activity. Towards the end of the period, Stannon Stone Circle was built (SX1257 8010), probably for ritual activity and clearly in relationship to the Tor.

Something similar seems to have gone on at Tregarrick Farm (SW9902 5977), about 180 metres NW of **Roche Rock** near St.Austell, also investigated by Dick Cole & Andy Jones in 2004 [*"Journeys to the Rock" in Cornish Archaeology (41-42, published 2006)*]. Here 10 pits were discovered dating from the Neolithic, each containing depositions of pottery, flints, stones etc, which were probably of a ritual nature. Three of the stone objects contained quartz, which archaeologist Timothy Darvill has suggested was associated with the human spirit. The fourth stone object, a quern, was also distinctive in terms of its sandstone texture and red colour, which may also have had symbolic qualities. Cole & Jones suggest that the motive for burying these objects may have been intended as sacrificial acts to propitiate or obtain favours from the spirits or god/esses who dwelt within the Rock: "People are likely to have regarded the landscape as being the creation of spirits, gods or ancestors and it is likely that stories, myths and legends would have grown up around landscape features. Significant natural features may have been considered to be the homes of spirits, ancestors or gods, or gateways which acted as a communication with other worlds, or the place of creation". They add that Roche Rock constitutes one of these significant landscape features, having even the profile of a stone head, resembling the statues of Easter Island. "Places such as Roche Rock were perceived as powerful liminal points, where spirits or beings from other worlds could affect the lives and well-being of the community".

Cole & Jones suggest that, as with Stannon Down/Rough Tor, this site was visited on a seasonal basis by small groups of people. The ubiquity of hazlenuts in the pits suggests that the Rock may have been visited around Harvest time, perhaps by “elders, or ritual specialists, to venerate the spirits of the Rock”.



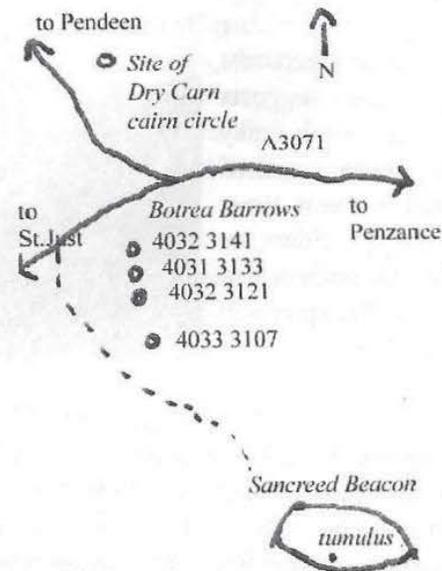
As revealed in MM60, Oxford Archaeology, who have been excavating the area to the north of **Goss Moor** in advance of the new by-pass being built between Innis Downs and Indian Queens, have discovered something very rare for Cornwall, an early Neolithic wooden Henge. At Deep Tye Farm near Indian Queens (less than a mile from the Castle- an-Dinas hillfort), a ring of 10 post holes in an incomplete arch was found, that would originally have held 10 posts making a henge-like structure. Wooden circles may have been earlier versions of later stone circles, or they may represent some kind of timber sacred enclosure, as as Stanton Drew in Somerset and Woodhenge near Avebury. In Cornwall hitherto the only other henges identified have been at Castilly, that lies to the eastern end of the by-pass near Innis Downs and the Stripple Stones on Bodmin Moor. However, other timber circles that were not henges are known about, including the two Caerloggas Barrows near St.Austell, one of which had an irregular circle of 43 posts set around a central Tor. Many of these sites probably had sacred purposes, including lunar and solar orientations, and may have involved ceremonial processions across the landscape, and provide a fascinating glimpse into a lost world where ceremonial and ritual activity took place at sacred seasonal sites in the landscape.

Finally, a site dating from the late Neolithic/early Bronze Age has been discovered at **Lower Boscaswell** near Pendeen in West Penwith (SW3760 3470), only a few hundred yards from where I (editor) live! Recent pipe-laying work by SW Water has uncovered a rare pit, about 18” wide and 18” deep 1 metre below the field line. Fragments of a broken pot were found along with small round pebbles, and a pile of burnt rocks in the bottom, though no evidence of burning, so it was probably not a fire pit. Archaeologist Ann Preston-Jones has suggested [*pers. com.*] that all this may be evidence of a closing-down ritual at the site, perhaps to create liminal boundaries with the surrounding land. If so, this would also be another special ceremonial place, visited perhaps on a seasonal basis by people moving through this early landscape. [CS]

LATE NEOLITHIC - EARLY BRONZE AGE [3000-1600 BCE]

BOTREA BARROWS - A CEREMONIAL PATH ACROSS THE EARLY LANDSCAPE

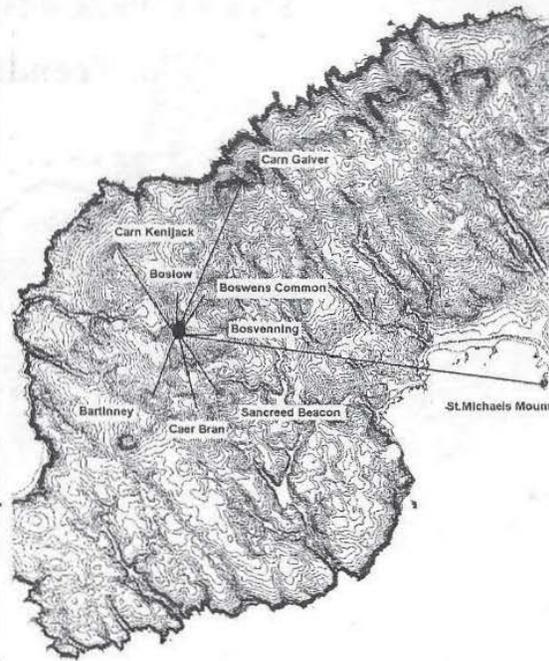
The late Neolithic-EBA period saw the first stone circles being put up, and a large amount of barrows of all kinds being constructed at key points in the landscape. Research on placing these barrows in the context of a ritual landscape is now being undertaken more thoroughly. Paul Bonnington has written about the barrows in the Chapel Carn Brea area of West Penwith [in MM53 & MM57]; Howard Balmer has investigated the barrows of St. Breock Downs and Trevoise Head in his recent book *Stone to Rock, River to Sea*; and Andy Jones has written extensively about the subject in *Cornish Bronze Age Ceremonial Landscapes* [BAR, 2005].



Among the barrow sites that Andy Jones identifies is the Botrea Barrow cemetery that lies beside the A3071 road from Penzance-St. Just in West Penwith [SW4031 3121]. This site provides an excellent example of how our EBA ancestors placed the barrows very carefully in the landscape in relationship to surrounding hills and tors. I recently walked this landscape to view the site through EBA eyes: the northern part of Botrea hill is now Open Access Land, though permission should be granted from the landowner for access to the southern part.

The present day A3071 road runs through what is effectively a valley bottom, with the hills of Dry Carn rising to the north and Botrea Hill to the south. Dry Carn, with its present-day aircraft tracking station is particularly prominent, but it would have been equally prominent in prehistory, with a cairn and surrounding cairn circle (at approx. SW401 325) just below the summit of the hill. A short distance to the NW lies Boswens menhir (SW4001 3290), which could have acted as a marker for people coming from the northern coastal fringe. It occurred to me that a sacred pathway across the land could perhaps have started at Dry Carn and continued down the valley side, across the bottom, and then up the side of Botrea Hill. If you do this, then the kerbed platform barrows open up to you, one after the other, as you climb the slope of Botrea Hill. The first barrow is a small one (now hidden in the gorse) at SW4032 3141, perhaps designed to start the sacred pathway in a deliberate low-key approach. From here the next barrow at SW4031 3133 is visible. When excavated in 1826, this barrow was found to contain two barbed and tangled arrowheads, perhaps sacred objects placed by the people there as a memento of their hunter-gatherer days?

The third barrow that appears as you climb at SW4032 3121 is quite large, and when excavated a cist was found containing an urn. From here, the fourth barrow SW4033 3107 now appears, 38 metres (120ft) in diameter, on the horizon. One again, ashes were found in the centre of this barrow, indicating that the sites were used for burial as well as ceremony. It is when you reach this barrow, however, that the full impact of the significance of the sacred path hits you. It is only when you reach the barrow, that the 'revelation' of the landscape is opened to you. Ahead of you to the south-east is the rounded hill top of Sancreed Beacon; to your left appears St. Michael's Mount; to your right on a clear day the Isles of Scilly are suddenly visible; and behind you the top of Carn Kenidjack is just visible on the horizon.



Botrea cemetery (large black dot) and its relationship with landscape features.

This is an awe-inspiring and magical view of significant landscape features in all directions around, and must have been a dramatic and powerful climax to the walking the sacred pathway. As Andy Jones says: "The Cemetery is of interest because it is situated within a wider ceremonial landscape of hilltop cemeteries, rocky-outcrops and ceremonial enclosure sites of probable Later Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date... the prominent hills and the sea may have held strong cosmological associations, and indeed many of them were associated with their own monuments".

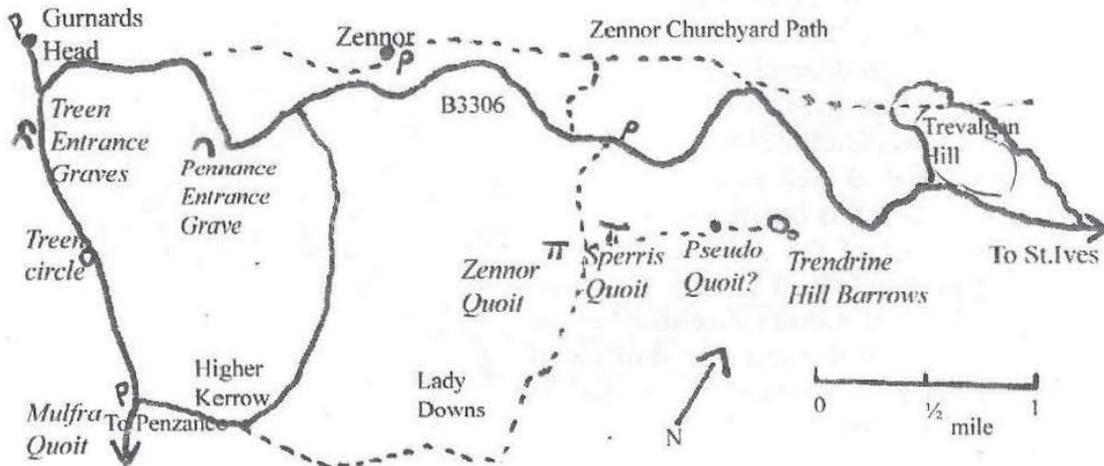
The barrow cemetery had in addition another 'arm' to it, to the west of the platform barrows so far described. There were another three ring-cairns on the western arm (one now destroyed), much smaller and visually less impressive than the barrows, but nevertheless clearly associated with them in some way. The western arm of ring cairns and the eastern arm of the barrows both finally converge at the southernmost barrow (SW4033 3107) from where the spectacular vistas are seen, so we may think of the western arm of ring cairns as perhaps a secondary route of significance, perhaps a 'pathway of the dead spirits or ancestors'. At any rate, clearly what we have here is a spectacular sacred pathway across the land, marked by barrows of some significance, in which the walking of the pathways was a means of ceremonially connecting with the ancestors and the sacred hilltop and island features, which only became visible at the end of the ceremonial walk. The EBA landscape can still open up before our very eyes!

Above map [c] Andy Jones

[CS]

PATHWAYS TO THE PAST

The Trendrine Ley Walk



This walk is the third of three in the Gurnards Head-Zennor area of West Penwith. In MM58, we went from Gurnards Head south and west to Treen and Bosporthennis; in MM59 we walked from St.Ives along the Zennor Churchway Path to Zennor. For this walk we go up on to the Penwith Moors above Zennor to explore some lesser-known sites that lie along a notable ley line. All three walks can also be linked together and joined and traversed in various ways and combinations [see map above].

For this third walk we once again start at Gurnards Head on the B3306 St.Ives-St.Just road and drive south on the minor road to Penzance. We pass the start of the Treen-Bosporthennis walk [in MM58] and go on as the road rises with a view of **Treen Common Circle** [SW4446 3666] on our right [see walk in MM58 for more details of this site]. Ahead of us is a turning to our left, and opposite this a small rough parking area for 2 or 3 cars. Park here, and if you wish to visit **Mulfra Quoit** [SW4518 3536] you should take a trackway going west that runs along the borrom of Mulfra Hill and then turns at a left angle up to the top of the hill and the quoit.

Our route on this walk however lies east. Walk about a quarter of a mile along this minor road and where it bends sharply northwards, a lane leads straight on eastwards past some cottages at Higher Kerrow. Beside one of the cottages is **Higher Kerrow Well** [SW4630 3620] with a few steps leading down to the clear water. It is however often very overgrown with vegetation and hard to see unless you are looking for it. Carry on along the lane until it becomes a track that leads up on to Lady Downs. After a while the track comes to a crosspath. At this point there is a small sign pointing northwards to Zennor Quoit. Turn left and take this track that goes across the downs to **Zennor Quoit** [SW4688 3801] visible on the skyline in the distance.

Zennor Quoit is the largest of all the extant quoits in West Penwith. Two immense stones form a portal at the entrance to a sealed antechamber. A huge capstone 18ft x 9½ft weighing 9.3 tons leans backwards over the chamber, the result of the collapse of a support, clearance by a farmer and blasting in the C19th.



The chamber once stood within a stone barrow, but the archaeologist John Barnett speculates that the facade and capstone may have been visible, giving access to the chamber for ceremonies. Findings include a whetstone and some pottery with cord impressions, which tends to support the theory that the quoits may have been used for rituals by the living as much as burial places for the dead.

From Zennor Quoit we take the track heading eastwards towards the ruins of an old building. Here it joins another track heading northwards and downwards towards the houses at Eagles Nest on the B3306 road. However we continue eastwards and after a few hundred yards come to the ruins of another dolmen **Sperris Quoit** [SW4709 3826]. This quoit is much smaller than Zennor, and it is curious why the 2 quoits of such differing sizes lie so close to each other.

It lies in the low remains of an oval barrow, and consists of one upright stone 6ft high and 3 fallen stones. Excavation revealed a small cremation pit just outside the chamber. Perhaps this was a burial for a child, and might explain why this smaller dolmen was built not far away from the main Zennor Quoit.



From Sperris Quoit we continue eastwards across this rather bleak stretch of moorland along some indistinct paths. Just to the north of this track are the remains of a **Settlement** [SW4750 3850] of hut circles, now rather overgrown but clearly visible in 1997 after an extensive fire in this area, and photographed then.



We are now on one of John Michell's classic ley lines that runs all the way from Boswens menhir [SW4001 3290] to Trendrine Hill barrows, which is where we are heading. Along the way it goes through a tumulus on Nine Maidens Downs at SW4324 3530, a stone at SW4448 3623, Zennor Quoit, and the path we are now on. This now runs alongside a stretch of parish boundary, a distinctive rock outcrop at SW4764 3859, and a stone structure with a large 'capstone' at SW4773 3866. This was recorded by Vivien Russell [*West Penwith Survey, 1971*] as a possible 'cist?', but may be a form of a pseudo-quoit or propped stone identified elsewhere on Carn Gulva on the Penwith moors and on Bodmin Moor [see article in MM49 p.8-11]. Their function is unknown, but they may have been used as sightlines to significant solar alignments. This was also the stretch of track where some of the Cornish Earth Mysteries Group heard an unexplained 'humadruz' sound during a visit in July 1997 [see article in MM35 p.4-7].

After a short distance we reach the destination of our walk **Trendrine Hill Barrows** [SW4789 3875]. These stand on the summit of Trendrine Hill, and consist of the remains of 2 barrows, one a great cairn of stones 62ft across & 8½ft high, and the other 46ft diameter & 6½ft high with a large kerb surround of stones.



From this site there are panoramic views out to sea, and, most obviously, the breast-shaped mound of Trevalgan Hill to the north-east. Known locally as 'Buttermilk Hill', this may be a memory of an Earth Goddess feature, celebrated at this site at the midsummer solstice when the sun



would have been seen rising out of the sea and over Trevalgan Hill, a magnificent sight of great significance to the megalithic peoples who built these barrows here.

We have now reached the turn-around point on our walk, so we go back along the path past Sperris Quoit to the track that leads downhill to Eagle's Nest houses. This time we take this track, which has beautiful views of the Zennor lowlands and the sea, down to the B3306 road. [It is also possible to start this walk from here by parking in a layby beside this road]. We turn left on to this road and walk a short distance down the hill, and then take a track leading right to Tregerthen Farm. Here we can join the Zennor Churchway path walk back into Zennor [for sites in Zennor see walk in MM59] and then continue westwards to Gurnards Head, from where we once again turn south to the layby at the bottom of Mulfra Hill where we originally parked.



In the summer an open-top bus plies this stretch of the B3305 road between St.Ives and St.Just, so if we reach the road at the right time we can take transport back to Gurnards Head. There are refreshments at Zennor (Backpackers Cafe and pub) and Gurnards Head (pub). Although Zennor Quoit is relatively well known, the rest of these sites along this walk are largely unknown and infrequently visited. To get a real sense of the ancient sacred landscape of West Penwith, you could not do much better than take this 'pathway to the past'.

'Pathways to the Past' in the next issue of MM moves out of West Penwith to explore the great trackway The Saint's Way that runs right across the centre of Cornwall from Padstow to Fowey. We have a number of informative and colourful brochures about what to see on the path to give away to readers as well.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Green Man and the Dragon - Paul Broadhurst

[Mythos, Box 888, Launceston PL15 7YH. 2006 £12.95 - colour illustrations]

In Search of the Southern Serpent - Hamish Miller & Barry Brailsford

[Penwith Press & Stoneprint Press. 2006. £16.50 (pbk) £19.50 (hbk) - colour illus.]

The two Cornish co-authors of *The Sun and the Serpent* and *The Dance of the Dragon* Paul Broadhurst & Hamish Miller, both have a new book out at the same time. Neither book is primarily set in Cornwall, though both contain some material from there. But the two books are very different in style and content.

Paul Broadhurst's book is the more scholarly of the two. On the surface it is a curious choice of subject matter for someone living, researching and publishing in Cornwall. As Craig Weatherhill pointed out recently (in *The Cornishman*) it was the flag of St. George that the English bore when they carried out genocide against the Cornish over the Prayer Book Rebellion in 1549, 10% of the Cornish population being killed by the English. So St. George is still a potent symbol of the oppressors to some Cornish people, whose patron saint is not St. George but St. Piran. However, having said that, Paul's book actually sets out to reclaim St. George from English nationalism and to explore his links with the enigmatic Green Man and the Knights Templar who understood the mystical traditions of those former times. It ranges widely over legend and history and round the world from Padstow's Obby Oss & Helston's Furry Day with its St. George associations, to sites and churches in England, Europe, the Holy Land and Egypt associated with giants, green men, pagan gods, dragons, Druids and serpents. Paul Broadhurst knows his material well and weaves together many seemingly disparate threads to produce an intriguing and always interesting book.

Hamish Miller's book, co-written with New Zealand author **Barry Brailsford**, is really two books in one. Barry Brailsford writes about the Waitaha people and their legends of the Land, communicated to him by some elders from the tribe. Hamish writes a dowsing travelogue about their journeys through New Zealand. The two styles are very different and don't always mesh together very successfully. Basically the book is written by Hamish, with numerous interjected pieces from Barry (though the interjections are not always very clearly signposted). In this respect the book could have benefited from a professional editor's attention. But what links the two authors together is their love for the sacred land of NZ and their interest in the relationship of people to that Land. When I was in NZ myself some years ago I too became enchanted by the Land and its ancient living legends, so it is easy to see how Hamish and his partner Ba were similarly entranced. Although some judicious cutting and re-shaping of the material would have been advisable, nevertheless this is an enjoyable book, written with a light and humourous touch, in a manner reminiscent of the diaries and journals of 18th & 19th century explorers of strange and wonderful places. Hamish & Ba's dowsing adventures will be of interest to many dowsers and earth energy practitioners, and Barry's message, that we can't change the past but we can try to heal it will strike a chord with many.

C.D REVIEW

Yemaya - Danu Fox

[Available from 35 Bay View Terrace, Penzance TR18 4HS] £14

This CD by local artist Danu Fox came out of a period of shamanic study and is a beautiful spiritual journey inspired by the natural world. It starts with Yemaya, a song inspired by a chant to the Yoruban sea goddess Yemaya that Danu created on the sea cliffs near Porthcurno in West Cornwall. This is followed by songs dedicated to Orca, Eagle Calling, Great Spirit, Horse (connected to running water), Wairua (a Maori word meaning Spirit that came to her at Lamorna Cove), Mother of the Water, Thanksgiving, Full Moon (recorded on a full moon at Trevaylor woods), Wolf and Golden Arrow.



Danu's ethereal voice is accompanied with piano, flutes, percussion, drum and violin, and the whole album has a very meditative feel. One to listen to to connect with the spirits of the land, sea and sky, this album is highly recommended.

The Goddess in Cornwall



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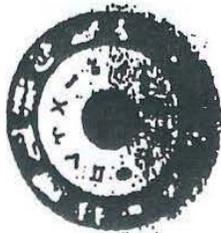
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THE PIPERS TUNE

Pagans in Cornwall have recently been working together to apply for representation on SACRE, the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, who are responsible for advising on religious education in schools. Most faiths have representation on this body, but up until now, paganism has been notable by its absence. Two applications have gone forward, including one from a new Cornish Group PEN (Pagan Education Network) who were set up to provide pagan support for those involved in education, such as parents, teachers and children. (Its aims and objectives may be viewed on the web site www.paganeducationnetwork.org.uk). The initial application was looked at by the Scrutiny Committee of Cornwall County Council, at their Meeting in April 2006.

This Meeting revealed a lot of prejudice against Paganism by one particular Christian minister. Nevertheless, the matter was passed back to SACRE themselves for consideration, who have yet to add it to their agenda. However, they cannot indefinitely ignore the matter as there is a legal requirement that SACRE should reflect the relative numbers and importance of faiths in the area. Extrapolating from the 2001 census, it would appear that 5390 people in the SW region out of nearly 5 million gave their religion as 'pagan', which if applied to Cornwall alone would give somewhere between 600-750 pagans. This would make it the third or fourth largest religion in Cornwall, after Christians and Buddhists, and way above Hindus, Sikhs and Baha'is, who already have representation on SACRE. It seems that although they might wish it otherwise, SACRE has to consider a pagan input.



Liz Allmark

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A new Yahoo email group has been set up for the Pagan community in Cornwall. Is intended to be inclusive and diverse and welcomes new members. If you would like to find out more go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Pagan_Cornwall

MEYN MAMVRO is available on annual subscription - 3 issues £7.50 (inc p&p) from:-51 CARN BOSAVERN, ST.JUST, PENZANCE, CORNWALL TR19 7QX. MM62 due out Jan 07 will include Moon Standstill reports & Legends in the Landscape. Most back numbers are now sold out, but photocopies can be done as a special service to subscribers and regular readers upon request @ £2.00 (nos.1-50) or £2.50 (nos. 51 on). Contents list & Index available on floppy disk (75p) or printed format (£2), or at the web site *www.meynmamvro.co.uk*

NOTICEBOARD

ISSN: 0966-5897

CORNISH EARTH MYSTERIES*17th Annual Season (1990-2006)*

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Thurs Sept 21st **Journeying into the Land & the Lunar Standstill - Jill Smith***Thurs Oct 19th* **Folklore of the Stones - Craig Weatherhill***Thurs Nov 23rd* **Dowsing Ancient Sites - Alan Neil**

Yuletide Gathering:

Sat Dec 23rd **Chûn Quoit sunset** - meet at 4pm to see winter solstice sunset, followed by **Winter Storytelling** at Age Concern in St. Just. Bring food & drink to share and perhaps a story to tell?Further details from - The Cottage, Crowan, Praze, Camborne TR14 9NB
Tel: 01209-831519. Website: www.meynmamvro.co.uk/earth.htm**WEST CORNWALL DOWSERS**New group meets one Sunday each month, exploring sites in Mid-West Cornwall. Details: Bart O'Farrell 01326-280681 or e-mail: westcornwalldowsers@yahoo.co.uk**ANCIENT SITES CLEAR-UPS***Sun Sept 10th* Nine Maidens Barrows*Sun Oct 15th* Treen Circle*Sun Nov 19th* Bosiliack Barrow/
Mulfra Courtyard Houses*Sun Dec 3rd* Balowall Barrow

All at 2pm. For further details contact Dave Munday 01736-787230

E-mail dave@cornishancientsites.com**PAGAN MOOTS****Penzance** - meets 2nd Tues each month 7.15pm at 53 Morrab Rd.

Tel: Sarah 01736-787522

E-mail: vivianatfarwest@supanet.com**Earth Moot - Penzance** meets last Weds each month 7.15pm at Stella Maris Centre at Healing Star.

Tel: Rod 01736-731548

Redruth/Camborne - meets 3rd Mon each month in Redruth. Tel: Annette 01209-216243/213099E-mail: amaccaul@yahoo.co.uk**Bodmin** - Pagan Paths meets first Weds each month in Lanivet nr Bodmin. Tel: Wendy 01208-832977E-mail: paganpaths05@aol.com**Bude** - meets last Thurs each month 7.30pm at Brendon Arms. Tel: Lorraine 01288-359463E-mail: silverwitch-poo@tiscali.co.uk**CORNWALL'S 16TH NEW AGE****FESTIVAL** Nov 24th-27th

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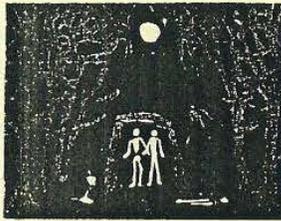
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20 YEARS OF MEYN MAMVRO 1986-2006

Meyn Mamvro

ANCIENT STONES & SACRED SITES
OF WEST PENWITH. Issue 1 £1.20



CRAIG WEATHERHILL on Cornish Fogous
HUGH MINERS writes about the Gorseth
HOLY WELLS • MILPREVES • PAGANISM
LEYS & EARTH MYSTERIES • BOOK REVIEW

The very first *Meyn Mamvro* was published in December 1986, and launched at the St. Just Gallery, Visions and Journeys. The co-owner of the Gallery, Gabrielle Hawkes, graced the cover of the first issue with one of her paintings, and continued to do so up to and including Issue 6. The first issue was sub-titled 'Ancient Stones and Sacred Sites of West Penwith' and did not go Cornwall-wide until Issue 13. The format of the magazine established itself in the first issue - and 61 issues and 20 years later it still follows a remarkably similar path - 24 + 4 A5 pages, editorial on p.1, archaeological/earth mysteries emphasis in the first half, more pagan/spiritual oriented articles in the second, and a 'guide to the sites' feature in the centre (now pictorial in colour). Many issues have had special themes or topics running through them, with different aspects and approaches relating to that theme (such as Arthurian, Scilly, Ireland, Maytime, Bodmin Moor, St. Breock Downs, stone circles, fogous, East Penwith, holed stones, caves, etc). Plus there has always been a liberal amount of photographs, diagrams, maps and artwork.

The content of the first issue was also an indication of the standard to which MM aspired - new ideas on sites and legends in Cornwall by well-respected writers and researchers. The first issue included an article by the well-known archaeologist Craig Weatherhill on 'The Riddle of the Fogous', a subject that was to be elaborated in Issue 2 where Ian Cooke revealed for the first time his research which was later to become his very successful book *Mother and Sun*. Jo May, 'guardian' of the Boleigh fogou at CAER also contributed an early piece in Issue 3. Other topics covered in the eclectic mix that made up Issue 1 included: 'The Gorseth of Cornwall' by past Grant Bard Hugh Miners, 'Holy Wells' by Carol Slater, 'Paganism in West Penwith' by editor Cheryl Traffon, and - a most unusual topic - 'Milpreves or Adders Beads' by Jo O'Cleirigh. From the very first issue there was also Book Reviews and The Piper's Tune, which have continued throughout.

It could be said with some truth that practically everyone who is well-known in the Earth Mysteries and alternative Archaeological field in Cornwall (and sometimes the mainstream archaeology field too) has written for MM at some time or another. The long list includes: Paul Devereux, Alan Bleakley, Jeff Seward, Paul Broadhurst, Hamish Miller, Craig Weatherhill, John Michell, Nigel Pennick, Doc Shiels, Nick Johnson, Charles Thomas, Joy Wilson, Aubrey Burl, Paul Bonnington, Monica Sjöö, Andy Collins, Jill Smith, Andy Norfolk, Kelvin Jones, Ian Cooke, Jo May, Terence Meaden, Robin Heath, Tony Blackman, etc, etc.

MM has always tried to be as inclusive as possible, with its main focus being on the sacred sites and people's relationship to them. We are proud that contributors and readers come from the whole spectrum of those who love and study the ancient sites, including academic archaeologists as well as earth mysteries researchers. We are able to run articles that are more speculative than most straight archaeological magazines, but at the same time ensure that they are rooted in the research and knowledge of the sites, so that anyone versed in archaeology can read it and say "Well I may not agree with their conclusions but I cannot fault their research." Truth to tell, during the last 20 years of the magazine, the fields of 'earth mysteries' or 'alternative archaeology' and mainstream archaeology have grown closer and closer together, particularly in Cornwall. MM has an excellent relationship with the Historic Environment Service (Cornwall Archaeological Unit) and has often benefited from contacts and 'inside information' from that service, while at the same time retaining its right to independent comment and occasionally criticism where relevant.

At the same time, MM has always tried to be lively and not too cerebral in its approach. During the last 20 years we have seen other Earth Mysteries magazines come and go, usually having had a great debate about whether 'earth mysteries' or 'ley lines' exist at all, and then disappearing up their own energy vortexes! MM has never thought that any of this was of much interest to its readers, who basically love the sites and are interested in their meaning and some of the anomalous phenomena and spiritual

connections experienced at them. We are happy to be still talking about Earth Mysteries, and sometimes about ley lines or energy lines, without being either dogmatic or in denial. We have no particular axe to grind (or not grind!), and that has maybe been the key to our success where others have fallen by the wayside.

We are also rooted firmly in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, and do not go wandering over the rest of the country (save only for the purposes of comparison and contrast). It seems obvious, but is in fact quite extraordinary. There are very few other 'earth mysteries' publications now in existence, just a couple covering the Home Counties, and one that hitherto covered the whole of Northern England and has now extended its brief to cover the rest of the country as well! There is not (and never has been) any regular publication covering, for example, Wessex or that rich county of Wiltshire, or Wales or Ireland, all of which are fertile ground for research and activity. But we have always found plenty to write about and investigate in that small 100 miles x 30 miles piece of Celtic country called Cornwall, and our readers seem happy with that. There are many other booklets about ancient Cornwall out there, but so many of them are quite shallow, superficial, unoriginal and derivative. We have always gone for the different, the original, the uncommon approach, and enjoy nothing more than reporting some new discovery or ferreting out some new piece of information about the stones and the sites. We are fortunate in having readers who also seem to love to find out more and different information and ideas about these special places.

Artists too have always been keen to have their work featured in MM. From issue 7-12 Sue Bayfield (née French) produced the carefully drawn covers, and one of our favourite covers, her most dramatic piece of work for Issue 7, is reproduced [right].



From Issue 13 Andy Norfolk took over the covers and so continues to this day, having contributed a total of nearly 50 covers so far. Other artists who have also contributed specially-drawn work for the magazine include Ian Cooke, the late Penny Harris, Geraldine McCarthy (née Andrew), the late Monica Sjöö and Sarah Vivian who, incidentally, had the distinction of having her 'Honey Down the Stone' picture reproduced as the first colour picture ever in MM46. This was a precursor to the first colour printed spread in MM's special 50th issue, featuring golden finds from Cornwall's ancient sites, and led directly to the now-regular centre page spread of sites in colour that has proved to be so popular. MM is not high-tech or glossy: it is still produced by the same local friendly printer PlusPrint who has printed it for the last 14 years, and the centre colour spread is about as glossy as we get! That means that sometimes the quality of the ordinary photographs leave something to be desired, and sometimes lines and marks creep into the text. But we do believe that MM is 'fit for its purpose', that content is more important than glossy appearance, and that people love it for what it is and does

The other major aspect of MM is that it isn't just about the archaeology and earth mystery aspects of the sites, but that it has a very strong spiritual side. This 'holistic' approach also marks us out as different from other Earth Mysteries and archaeological publications. We do not promote any one spiritual path, though we are sympathetic to paganism and drawn to the whole concept of sacred Land and Mother Earth. We do believe that sites are not just about stones and bones: MM's philosophy is that the people who built the sites did so for sacred reasons, and that ceremony and ritual was a big part of their lives. Therefore, we need to consider the sites in relationship to spirit as manifested in the Land in which they sit. People continue to visit them today for spiritual purposes, or just to find peace of mind, and MM has always been open to that dimension in their use. We would like to think that in some small way we have helped to preserve and enhance the specialness of the sites over the last 20 years, that we have helped people enjoy them as they are meant to be enjoyed, and that we have campaigned long (and sometimes vociferously!) on their behalf.

Of course no magazine would be anything without its readers. MM actually knows the identity of its first ever subscriber! MM Editor Cheryl Traffon was at the Cornish Gorseth that took place at the Merry Maidens in the early Autumn of 1986 when MM was in the planning stage. There she met an American guy who was over here on a visit. They got chatting and she told him about the magazine. Immediately he said "that sounds great" and with typical American openness fished his hand into his pocket and handed over a fiver for the first issues! 60 issues later, he still receives the magazine regularly in the States.

Subscribers are the backbone of the magazine and over half of the print run goes to them. We would be interested to learn if there are any subscribers who also bought no.1 of the magazine and have had it ever since, so possessing a complete print run. The rest of the copies are sold throughout shops in Cornwall, with one or two outlets out of the county. We are fortunate in Cornwall in having a large number of visitors, and many of those who buy an odd copy when they see it on the shelves go on to become subscribers, some to become friends, and many end up moving down here permanently. MM always appreciates the little notes, comments and letters it sometimes receives with people's subscriptions. The post and e-mail side of MM has over the years brought some fascinating correspondence and ideas, and makes it all very worthwhile. Sometimes it feels like a big extended family of readers, all of whom share a love for the ancient sites, a respect for the Land and a fascination with all of Cornwall's ancient past.

The magazine has always tried to include a mixture of articles to appeal to those who are discovering the sites for the first time and those who know them well and want new information and ideas. Being up-to-date with the news surrounding the sites has also always been a high priority. MM may not have the detailed archaeological research found in say *Cornish Archaeology* but as a vehicle for keeping up with the news of discoveries, research and background information we like to think that it is unrivalled! Many of the things that we used to talk about 20 or so years ago, that were considered then to be 'lunatic fringe', such as alignments, sacred landscapes, orientation of sites, spiritual beliefs, etc, are now generally accepted and promoted by archaeologists as if they had discovered them for the first time! We are pleased at this, but sometimes have a little wry smile!

The last 20 years have also seen a huge growth in the pagan community in Cornwall, and while we know that many of them regularly buy the mag, we hope that it appeals as much to those of other (or no particular) beliefs who just love the stones and the sites. For it is those sites that are the focus and *raison d'être* of the magazine. Your editor is now 20 years older than when she started the magazine, but my love of the sites and my passionate desire to protect and care for them remains undiminished. While there are still people who feel the same, and are happy to go on buying MM, and writing for it, then I hope to go on producing it for as long as I can. MM has over its 20 years produced a veritable cornucopia of all the best writing and research on Cornwall's sites and prehistory - long may it continue to be so!