

STONE ROWS - WHERE THE SHAMANS WALKED? ●
HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME ● CASPN & LAN ●
CARWYNNEN QUOIT EXCAVATION ● DOWSING ●
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Articles [c] MM & authors. Thanks to Andy Norfolk for front cover artwork.

Printed by Paul Williment of Brigid Design. E-mail: brigid.design@mac.com

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STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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

No-one likes change in the countryside and any change is rarely seen as an improvement. There are exceptions of course, and it is generally acknowledged that the ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) scheme, introduced into West Penwith and Bodmin Moor in the 1990s, managed to preserve much of the ancient landscape and field patterns that are part of the context where many of the ancient sites sit. This scheme has now been phased out, and its successor, the Higher Level Stewardship Scheme (HLS), has not met with the same approval. This scheme started out with the laudable aim of restoring ancient heathland, which is being widely choked with gorse, but the way it was introduced and run put many people's backs up. Grants were paid to farmers to graze their land with cattle, and this has usually involved additional fencing, and a perceived loss of free roaming. Consultation with the public has been poor, and consequently groups like Save Penwith Moors have sprung up to try and protect what they perceive as a loss of open moorland and a restriction on freedom to roam. They especially feel that grazing should not be brought in near ancient sites, as they believe that the presence of cattle has threatened the untrammelled access to the sites, as well as their stability. This has so far been mainly focussed around Tregeseal stone circle, but as more farmers join this HLS scheme, the opposition is likely to intensify not diminish.

In an attempt to consult more widely, the Penwith Landscape Partnership have been running community consultations with a view to gauging public opinion before devising strategies for the future management of the countryside and the sites. One of the problems with future management is that cuts in grants and payments continue to be made by national and local Government. PAROW (Penwith's Rights of Way group) have recently been hit hard by this, as Cornwall Council and local town and parish councils find themselves desperately short of cash to fund local projects. For example, until recently PAROW have helped CASPN in keeping vegetation growth cut back at many ancient sites, such as Caer Bran hill fort, Goldherring courtyard houses, Chûn Castle, Sancreed Beacon, etc. One of the sites they have cleared and maintained is Lescudjack Hillfort in Penzance, used by Montol as part of their winter solstice celebrations. Recently they asked Penzance Town Council for a £500 contribution to maintain the work, but Penzance were only able to offer them a tenth of that, which means the work will now not get done. More and more we are reliant on voluntary organisations like CASPN & LAN to keep these sites under control, and if it were not for them, many of these sites would soon disappear under gorse and bracken. CASPN itself needs help with funding, and is appealing for an experienced volunteer to apply for grants. If you think you could help with this, please let us know.

DOWSING NEWS



At the beginning of July, **West Cornwall Dowzers** returned to *Carwynnen Quoit*, previously visited by them three years ago, when the Sustainable Trust had recently purchased the site. [see MM71 p.3]. This time, the occasion was a closer investigation of the fallen quoit, prior to a 5 day preliminary excavation by Historic Environment Service. There were some interesting dowsing



finds at the quoit. Its previous position was located, slightly to the east of the present heap of stones; its original entrance was identified as being SE, in the direction of the midwinter solstice sunrise; its current stones were dowsed, which were a mix of original quoit stones, a barrow cleared from the NW field corner, and field clearance, as well as a stone that may have been originally a standing stone in the field (its location identified on the previous visit at SW6510 3728). In addition, a strong energy line was found going through the site, a petal energy pattern surrounding the stones identified, the position of the nearby Michael line found, and to cap it all, the location of a processional path to the quoit was also dowsed. Further up the field, another location was identified, which may have been a previous position of the quoit, or another former structure. All in all, a very productive and interesting visit, that was continued in the afternoon with a visit down the road to the privately-owned Rock Villa, where an enigmatic mound in the woods dowsed as a former entrance grave/chambered tomb! Plenty there for the archaeologists to investigate further [see p.4-5 for more details].

After a break in August, dowsing re-commenced in September with a visit by **Trencrom Dowzers** to *Sancreed Beacon & Caer Bran hill 'fort'*. On the Beacon a well-attended group of about 15 people dowsed for the remains of the barrows and hut circle there. Then they walked across to Caer Bran, which had been dowsed earlier in the year by the West Cornwall Dowzers [see MM79 p.2]. Local historian Barry Reilly talked about the site, and then MM editor Cheryl Traffon showed the group the two stones discovered by WCD in May: a fallen standing stone at SW40748 28992 and a possible capstone at 40747 28980. The Trencrom Dowzers confirmed the standing stone, and were aided in their clearing of the stone from the surrounding earth by an over-enthusiastic archaeological digging dog! There was some discussion about the 'capstone', with most dowzers feeling that it did not belong to a Quoit, but was prehistoric. Suggestions included a cove, or a propped stone. An energy line running from St.Buryan Church through the 'capstone' and the standing stone was also identified. Finally, a curious five sided stone with a pointed top was discovered in the vicinity, rounding off a good dowsing day.

Meanwhile in September, **Tamar Dowzers** were at the Apple Festival at Cotehele House to demonstrate dowsing to many interested visitors, and in October they visited Trefranck Farm near St.Clether. In November, Nigel Twinn gave a talk on the dowser Billy Gawn, and in December there was talk by Adrian Incedon-Webber on 'Healing your Home'. Future talks are planned for 2013. In November **West Cornwall Dowzers** started their winter programme, with visits to Alsia Well on the 18th, and Balowall Barrow on December 16th. Full reports of these days will be in the next issue of MM.

In November, **Trencrom Dowzers** had their AGM at Marazion Community Centre, which included a talk by John Moss, and the planning of future events, including talks. One of these will be a talk in January by Richard Dealler on 'The Mary/Michael Pilgrim Route'. This route is based on the Michael & Mary lines, originally dowsed by Hamish Miller, and Richard is now publishing a series of books, giving details of the whole route, including significant sites along the way, bus services, camping sites and local facilities. The route through Cornwall from Carn Lês Boel to Brentor in Devon has just been issued, and is available @ £7.50 through the website www.marymichaelpilgrimsway.org or by sending a cheque for £4.95 + an A5 envelope & £1.10 in stamps to: 16 Orchard Meadow, Chagford, Devon TQ13 8BP [Tel: 01647-432093]. In February (on Sat 3rd) Sig Lonegren, author of *Sacred Space Handbook*, will give a talk on labyrinths, followed by the making of a labyrinth on Marazion beach; and later in April Robin Heath will come to talk on Earth Mysteries. Full details at www.trencromdowzers.org.uk.

SACRED SPACE HANDBOOK



Sig Lonegren

Sacred Space Handbook by Geomancer Sig Lonegren is an e/iBook that will help you gather information in sacred spaces including archaeoastronomy, sacred geometry, the Earth energies and other data. This will prepare you for the real work: experiencing the Spiritual Realms directly for yourself.

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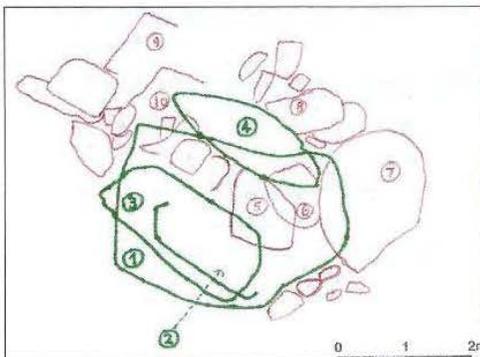
"I've been a dowser for about 25 years and I learned much from this book. Sig teaches about Earth Energies, Sacred Geometry, and includes related links, and a link to his Basic Pendulum Dowsing film. Anyone interested in Geomancy and Metaphysics will enjoy his clear, personal, writing style."

Laura Leveque, author of *Adventures with Ghosts & Spirits*

INVESTIGATING CARWYNNEN QUOIT

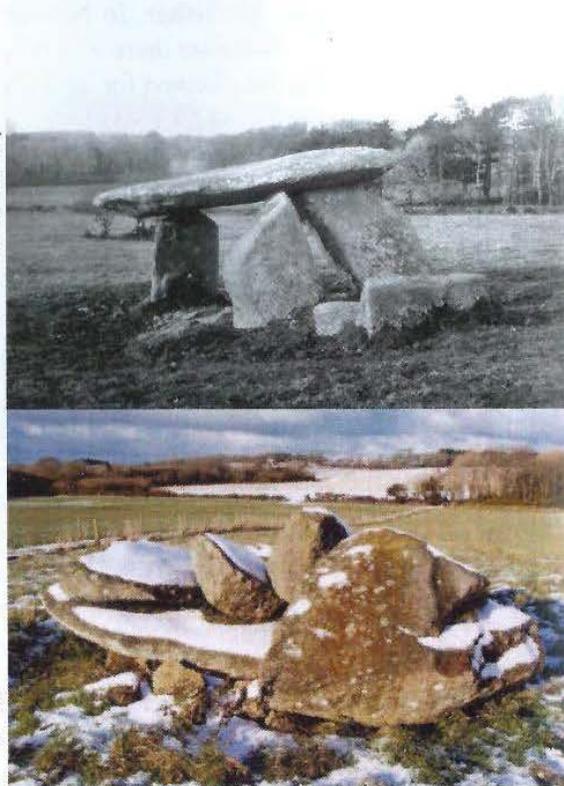
As most MM readers will know, the Sustainable Trust, under the guiding hand of chief administrator Pip Richards, acquired in 2009 the land whereon stands the remains of Carwynnen Quoit [SW6501 3721], a Neolithic dolmen over 5-6000 years old. They have received a grant that has enabled them to remove the stones and arrange an archaeological excavation, and they hope to eventually restore the site [see MM62 p.6, MM78 p.5 & MM79 p.1]. The quoit was standing up until 1834, when the chamber collapsed and the capstone fell. It was restored the same year, and in 1925 the Camborne branch of the Old Cornwall society visited the site for a picnic. In 1967 it fell again, reputedly during an earth tremor, and has so remained until the present day.

In July 2012, a preliminary dig of test pits at the site was undertaken by Historic Environment. This made some interesting discoveries: a handful of finely made flint tools, in particular a notched awl and a snapped blade, were found. The original stones of the monument, consisting of three uprights and a large capstone, were also identified, the remaining stones on the site being placed there from field clearances. In at least two areas, stone settings were uncovered: these stone 'arrangements', dug into the old land surface, suggests that the quoit was a focus for ritual and commemorative events long after the original monument was in use.



The next step occurred in early September 2012, when a crane was hired, along with experienced workmen, who carefully removed all the stones and placed them to one side, in preparation for a full-scale excavation that took place over a three week period in Sept/Oct.

Quoit before moving. Original stones are in green (capstone is no.1, uprights 2-4). Stones in red are from field clearances.



Carwynnen Quoit when it was standing (top), and in recent times in winter (below)

The excavation, led by HE's Jackie Nowakowski & James Gossip, produced some interesting results. The archaeology was extremely well preserved, and the three original socket holes for the uprights were identified. Pottery and flint were found, including a greenstone pestle, which places the site at about 3500 BCE, though more accurate radiocarbon dates should be forthcoming. Another interesting find were numerous small granite balls, deliberately rolled and many no larger than ping pong balls, their purpose unknown.



Moving the large capstone (9.8 tonnes)

There was also a pavement of small stones found on the site, whose relationship to the quoit has yet to be determined. This paving was made up of two elements, one of which was a narrow strip of compacted small stones which formed a hard-standing surface arranged in a doughnut-like circuit. This circuit wrapped around, and contained within, a pavement made up of larger stones. Both surfaces would have been protected by the suspended capstone when it was in place, but, at the front end of the monument (in the north-west), a fine narrow strip of the pavement extended well beyond the shelter of the capstone. The quoit appears to have originally been quite low-standing (similar to Pawton Quoit on St. Breock Downs).



Working on the excavation

Much of this evidence points to the commemorative role of Carwynnen Quoit over 5-6,000 years ago, and its major purpose as a community monument: for it was conceived, built, maintained and remembered by, and for, the prehistoric communities who once lived in the immediate neighbourhood. Carwynnen Quoit may well have acted as a major community landmark and a place where homage was paid to the ancestors. Tokens of that homage were sometimes left behind and indeed some may well have been removed. The artefacts found show that this place was visited frequently and over a long period of time, until its significance for communities finally waned and the monument was abandoned. Now it is being recovered again, and after some new fundraising, a further excavation is planned, with the ultimate aim being the eventual restoration of the quoit.

Thanks to Pip Richards for information, and to Sustainable Trust for photos on p.4, HE for diagram on p.4, and Barbara Tripp for photos on this page. On-going updates on the Project can be found at www.giantsquoit.org and Facebook page on Carwynnen Quoit.



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

Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network



CASP and LAN continued with their regular site **clear-ups** in West Penwith and the Lizard in the summer and autumn of 2012. CASP cleared the newly-excavated settlement site of Bosiliack *[see next issue of MM for more details]* in May, and then in the summer (June-Aug) they re-visited old favourites, Boscawen-ûn stone circle, Nine Maidens barrows, and Tregeseal stone circle. In the Autumn (Sept-Nov) they cleared other settlement sites - Bosulow Trehyllis, Mulfra and Bodrifty, and finished in December with a return to the CASP-owned site of Lesingey Round. Meanwhile, LAN returned to their old favourites - Poldowrian hut circle (May), Roskruge Barton barrow (June), St.Rumons church (July), and the Three Brothers of Grugwith (Aug), a site where they have uncovered much of interest in the past *[see MM73 p.20-21]*. This time was no exception, as they found an unrecorded line of 7 or 8 enclosing stones to the north of the monument, with 2 more to the east *[photo right]*. Clear-ups are fun and friendly, and everyone is welcome. Full details of the 2013 clear-ups may be found on the CASP website (and with the flier in this issue of MM).



Also on the website (and with the flier) are full details of the programme for **Pathways to the Past**, on the weekend of May 25th-26th 2013. This is the 7th year of this popular event of walks and talks amongst the local ancient sites of West Penwith, and there are a cornucopia of goodies promised, including enigmatic and lesser-known sites, and talks on cliff castles and paleolithic cave art. Not to be missed!

CORNISH ANCIENT SITES PROTECTION NETWORK [CASP]

CASP Address: Whitewaves, Boscaswell Village, Pendeen, Penzance, TR19 7EP

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

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups [search for C.A.S.P.N]

FRIENDS OF CORNWALL'S ANCIENT SITES [FOCAS]

To join FOCAS (£8/year waged- £5 unwaged) tel: FOCAS Administrator Eve Benney 07927 671612 or e-mail focas@cornishancientsites.com, visit CASP web site for downloadable application form, or write to: 24 Queen Street, St.Just, Penzance TR19 7JW

Adopt-a-Site scheme: e-mail: focas@cornishancientsites.com

Sites Clear-Ups: Dave Munday 01736-787230 e-mail: dave@cornishancientsites.com

Report damage at sites: Tel: 01736-787186 or 01736-787522

LIZARD ANCIENT SITES NETWORK [LAN] via CASP address (above)

Adopt-a-Site scheme: e-mail: info@cornishancientsites.com, or phone 01736-787186

Sites Clear-Ups: Tel: 01736-787186 e-mail: info@cornishancientsites.com

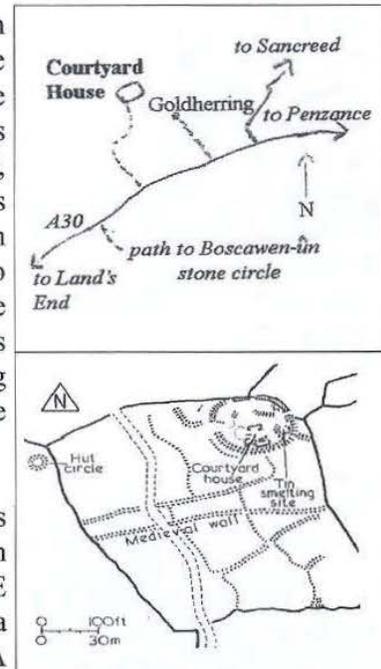
HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME

WHERE OUR ANCESTORS LIVED 1: Goldherring

The Courtyard House settlement of Goldherring in West Penwith [SW415 324] has been long buried by gorse and vegetation, so much so that it was totally inaccessible and obscured. However, a couple of years ago the site was cleared by PAROW (Penwith area Rights of Way group), and is now reachable for the first time in a long while. It is not easy to get to, but worth the effort, as it lies in a hidden but lovely part of West Penwith. The easiest way to get to it is by taking a footpath that leads off the A30 (ignore the South West Water warning notice on the gate), which is the first footpath west after the turning to Goldherring Farmhouse. There is parking beside the road, about ½ mile east along the A30.

Like other Courtyard House settlements, it dates from the Romano-Celtic period, and excavations from 1958-62 revealed that it was built from the late 1stC BCE or 1stC CE. Several round houses were enclosed within a Round, the bank of which is still visible in places. A bronze fibula was unearthed, plus evidence of pot making, and whetstones and saddle-querns were also found. From the 3rdC CE, the Courtyard House was built, overlaying two earlier round houses. A terraced field system was also laid out. Utility stones from as far away as Mounts Bay were found, as was pottery made from local clay. In the late Romano-Celtic or early Medieval, period, the House was abandoned, and the Round House adapted for tin smelting.

As so often with settlements, a local sacred hill seems to look over the site, in this case Sancreed Beacon to the north. Dowsing at the site revealed that its spiri-tual centre had been the hut circle, next to which now grows a distinctive tree, and that the site had been occupied by about 35-40 people. Goldherring is an interest-ing site, with people living here in round huts, before the Courtyard House was built, all in the lee of a sacred hill crowned by cairns. It has a very peaceful, welcoming atmosphere, and, now it has been cleared, is certainly worth a visit.

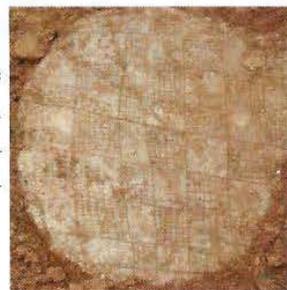


Goldherring in springtime, with bluebells

NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS NEOLITHIC ENCLOSURE FOUND AT TRURO

Remains of a prehistoric enclosure have been discovered by archaeologists at the site of the new eastern approach housing development in Truro. Initial findings from the excavations suggest that the eastern end of the site may have been a Neolithic enclosure dating to the period 3800-2400 BCE. The enclosure takes the form of two segments of ditch with a causeway between them, with the ditch segments up to 1.8m (5.8ft) deep and 4m (13ft) wide. The site occupies a striking piece of topography, lying on a saddle of ground that rises up from a drop below the main A390 road up to a spur of land overlooking a steep valley just above the point it joins the Trevella Stream. At this stage it is uncertain whether the causeway represents a causewayed enclosure of Early Neolithic date (4000-3400 BCE), a henge of Late Neolithic date (2800-2400 BCE), or an enclosure representing an intermediate stage between the two forms. The causeway is unusual for Cornwall and no direct comparisons can be made with other known sites in the county at this stage (the nearest to Cornwall, prior to this discovery, was on the Devon/Dorest border). The only Early Neolithic enclosures which are known in Cornwall are the tor enclosures; these are defined by stony banks and occupy prominent hilltops such as Carn Brea and Helman Tor. It is thought that they fulfilled the same functions as the causewayed enclosures known from the rest of the British Isles.

Features within and around the ditches include pits containing Peterborough Ware and Grooved Ware of Middle to Late Neolithic date. From this latter context, the team found an unusual slate disc carved with geometric patterns *[photo right]*. This is a unique find for Cornwall, though similar artefacts have been found in other parts of the British Isles from Orkney to Wessex.



SCILLY ENGRAVED POTTERY ON DISPLAY

Another piece of engraved ware, this time a piece of pottery dating from the late Bronze/early Iron Age, recovered during the building of social housing on St. Agnes on the Isles of Scilly in 2009, has gone on display at the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth *[photo right]*. Some archaeologists have suggested that the engravings represent a masted boat *[see MM71 p.24]*, though this is by no means certain. Radiocarbon dating has confirmed that it dates back to 1000-800 BCE, which would make it far older than the use of masts on boats in the 1stC BCE. Sean Taylor of HE has suggested that islanders drew a Phoenician trading vessel as it passed St. Agnes, and incorporated it into a cup or beaker, the remains of which were found on this site of a Bronze Age Roundhouse, but the jury is still out on the find.



A CAS talk on recent work on the Isles of Scilly will be given by Charlie Johns & Katherine Sawyer at Truro Baptist Church on March 14th 2013 @ 7.30pm. All welcome.

MISSING MENHIRS - CORNWALL'S LOST STONES

9: Crowpound stone

In *The Romance of the Stones* by Robin Payne [Alexander Associates, 1999], a stone is listed to the south of Bodmin Moor, near St. Neot, which he calls Crowpound Menhir. He says it is a 1.5m (5ft) high stone with a 21.5 x 28cm (8½ x 11in) cross-section, standing at a small crossroads on high ground to the west of St. Neot, not far from where Goonzion Downs gives way to the beginning of the moors. The stone is illustrated by Rosemarie Lewsey [drawing right], which shows it on a small mound at the crossroads. However, last year MM was contacted by Carol Winn to say that the stone was no longer at the crossroads.



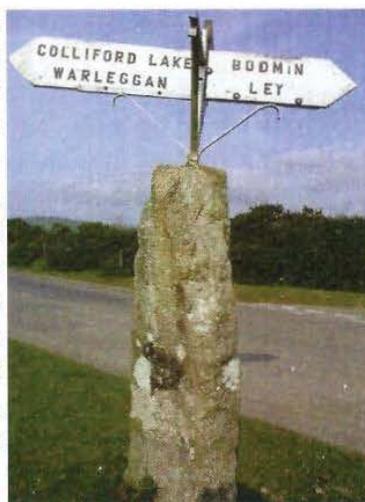
Original drawing of stone

When MM went to investigate with a GPS, we found that the NGR given by Robin Payne placed the stone about 150 yds west in some rough overgrown ground. The correct grid reference for its location at the crossroads should be SX1747 6777, but in its place there was a modern signpost, similar to the one pictured behind the stone in Rosemarie Lewsey's drawing. The stone is not listed in the Historic Environment Record, but a photo of it exists [right], which was posted on the Megalithic Portal web site by 'Ocifant' who is in reality Mark Camp. Mark confirmed that when he saw it the stone was standing at the crossroads.



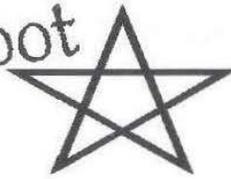
Photograph of original stone at crossroads

MM has been attempting to find out what has happened to this stone. We first contacted Cornwall Council, who put us on to Ian Thompson, who is a local expert of the Milestone Society. Ian took the matter up with St. Neot Parish Council, who eventually said that "the stone to which you refer has been reused for other signage.... at the southern end of Gonzion Downs". We went to have a look for it, and at another crossroads ½ mile further south, found a stone at SX1740 6689. It was similar in size to the one in Robin Payne's book, but with the top levelled off and a finger post attached [photo right]. Ironically one of the directions marked is to the hamlet of Ley! If this is the same stone, then this is rather a sad fate for it, to be moved, somewhat unnecessarily, and to have its top defaced in this way. But at least it has not been completely destroyed.



Stone in current location

Penwith Pagan Moot



PAGAN PAGES

by Eve Salthouse

Although the summer did not exactly blaze with sunshine, there was a shy glimpse of the sun at our **Midsummer Solstice** celebration at the Merry Maidens. This has always been a favourite place for the Moot to meet. Despite it's proximity to the road, and the procession of holidaymakers across the field, it is still a place of serene mystery and quiet beauty. At this particular time of the year, which seems certain was of great significance to many ancient peoples, the Moot chose to take as our theme honouring the ancestors. We focussed on the stones, as a physical bond to the ones who chose and raised them, and all those who have also met in this place at this time down through the centuries. At this time we also honoured the power of the sun, (although rather more power would have been nice in such a soggy summer!). Although as Pagans we chose to do this as a spiritual act, it is very encouraging to see so many others, in their own way, honouring and caring for these places. During our celebration, others came, and walked around the stones, photographed, or sat and watched in silence, all enjoying and honouring the circle in their own ways.

For **Lammas**, the celebration of First Harvest, we managed to find enough ripe corn for the Moot to make corn dollies to celebrate the season in a traditional way. We met at the foot of Trencrom, by the kind invitation of the owners of Gonew Farm, with the ancient ramparts watching over us. This was, as every harvest celebration should be, a jolly occasion with a lot of laughter, (mostly from people who needed three hands to make any sort of dolly, or fewer fingers and thumbs to get in the way). The making of corn dollies is a very ancient harvest custom, going back perhaps thousands of years. In many traditions, the corn doll was made from the last sheaf of corn and was thought to house the Spirit of the Corn. It was honoured and kept safe throughout the winter, to ensure a return of fertility to the fields the following year. As a symbol of a good harvest, safely gathered in, it is also often seen as a good luck charm. After much fierce wrestling with cornstalks, (given that modern corn is not the right kin really to make corn dollies from), string and ribbons, everyone ended up with their own dolly as a symbol of good fortune. Not many of them could be identified from a book of corn dolly patterns! They were however special to us, and are now, like mine, sitting on a shelf in the kitchen for the winter, to remind of summer days and our own personal harvest.

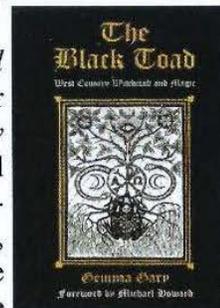
The Moot finally ran out of luck with the weather at **Autumn Equinox**, which in traditional fashion blew in on a gale of rain. We had hoped to meet on the summit of Chapel Carn Brea, but in the event, the ancestors had the hill very nearly all to themselves in the driving rain. Our seasonal celebrations are open to all and, at least in the warmer months, are held at some of our many beautiful ancient sites. All are very welcome to come along, either to join in or even just to see what it is we do. For more details, please see the contact details on the back page.

PAGAN PAGES

BOOK REVIEWS

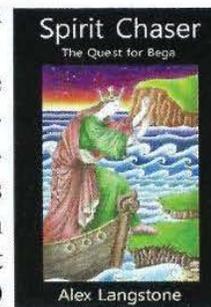
The Black Toad by Gemma Gary [Troy Books, 2012. Pbk- £11.99 + p & p. Hbk - £18.99 + p & p. Website: www.troybooks.co.uk]

Gemma Gary is the author of the acclaimed book *Traditional Witchcraft: a Cornish book of ways* [Reviewed in MM69 - Summer 2009]. Now she follows this up with *The Black Toad: Westcountry witchcraft and magic*, a collection of some of the fascinating magical practices and lore of the cunning folk and craft practitioners from Cornwall and Devon. These are an eclectic mix of spells, charms, protections, blessings and occasional curses, all of which demonstrate a belief in the spirit forces of the land, the Faerie, animal and plant lore, as well as the use of Christian sources from the Psalms, etc. This is a cornucopia of traditional lore, and a valuable source book of material from the past and more recent times. And the Toad title? Amongst some rather dark and sinister references, there is a delightful one for anyone taking residence in a new property: “A fine black toad is to be carried to the front door of the property and solemnly brought through the house and out of the rear door. Here, in the garden, the creature is set free and care is given to seeing that its needs are met and comforts provided. The presence of a black toad will bestow blessings of good fortune upon the property and its inhabitants, as well as bestowing a fruitful garden”. You can’t say fairer than that can you?!



Spirit Chaser: the Quest for Bega by Alex Langstone [Spirit of Albion Books, 2012. Pbk - £14.99 + p & p. www.spiritofalbionbooks.co.uk]

When I was getting into earth mysteries in the 1970s & 1980s, one of the strands was psychic questing - plugging into channelled information to lead the questor to sites in the landscape where strange phenomena occurred and sometimes objects were found. Alex Langstone was one of those questors, but one who very often added a spiritual dimension to the quests. I have on my bookshelves an early copy of his book about his search for the Cumbrian saint/Goddess figure Bega, and now some 20 years later, Alex has produced an up-to-date account of that search, a story of psychic adventure, esoteric exploration, poetic vision, spiritual fulfillment and creative enlightenment. There are many twists and turns in the story, all of which make gripping reading. One of those twists and turns brought Alex to Cornwall, where he now lives, and so a section of the book deals with his journey here and his spiritual path and discoveries here. These have led him to seek out Elen of Cornwall, which is part of the story, and an account of his discoveries entitled *The many faces of Helena* was published in MM73. The interconnectedness of all of the strands can only properly be revealed by reading the book - a single review cannot hope to do it justice. Suffice to repeat the words in the book: that Alex was led “to discover the enigmatic mystery of St. Bega, the sacredness of the landscape of the British Isles, and ultimately to experience the divine esoteric reality of the Celtic tradition of mysticism, miracles and magic”.



*IN-
SITE*

As a lead-in to the article on p.16-18 this feature is a 4 page guide that looks at the latest information on

THE STONE ROWS OF BODMIN MOOR

There are nine definite stone rows that have now been identified on Bodmin Moor, including the most recent discovery at Searle's Down [see p16-17]. So this feature looks at the other eight (+ two possible) sites, which vary from very low stones in the ground, often hidden by the vegetation, to ones with more substantial stones. The NGR (grid reference) given is the one supplied by HER, and usually indicates the middle of the row.

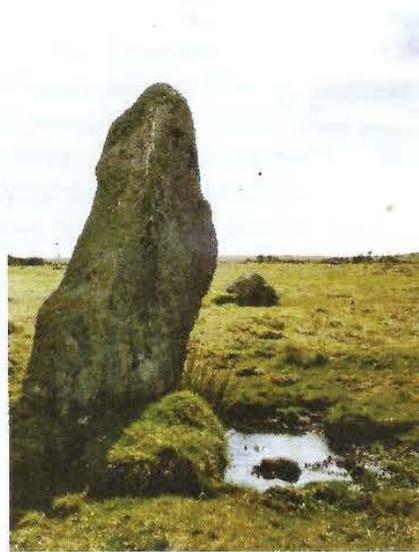
WEST

TREHUDRETH DOWNS [SX1247 7295]. Situated to the north of the A30, at the western end of the Moor. Marked on OS 109 map. Easiest access is from minor road leaving A30 at Trethorne going to Waterloo, then park on corner where gate leads on to the Moor. The row is located on open moorland on a gently sloping WNW hillside and is in good condition. It consists of two separate sections, both on a NE-SW axis and both on exactly the same alignment (midsummer solstice sunrise - midwinter solstice sunset), but 350m (379yds) apart and not intervisible.



The SW section (between SX1244 7294 & 1249 7295) [photo above] has 6 upright, 4 recumbent and at least 3 buried stones, and a short distance to the SW at 1244 7280 a standing stone marks the southern end of the complex.

COLVANNICK TOR [aka CARDINHAM MOOR] [SX1282 7187]. Situated to the south of the A30 at the western end of the Moor. Marked on OS 109 map. Access from large layby on southbound carriageway. The row is located on an undulating plateau in open moorland. It extends for 378m (409yds) approx in a NW-SE orientation (midsummer solstice sunset - midwinter solstice sunrise), and consists of 2 upright, 2 leaning and 8 recumbent stones. The extant stones are from 7 to 14m apart, but other stones have probably been removed. At the southern end there is a tall 2.4m (7.8ft) upright stone [photo right] and at the northern end a 1.2m (3.9ft) upright stone, but these two terminal stones are not intervisible with each other.

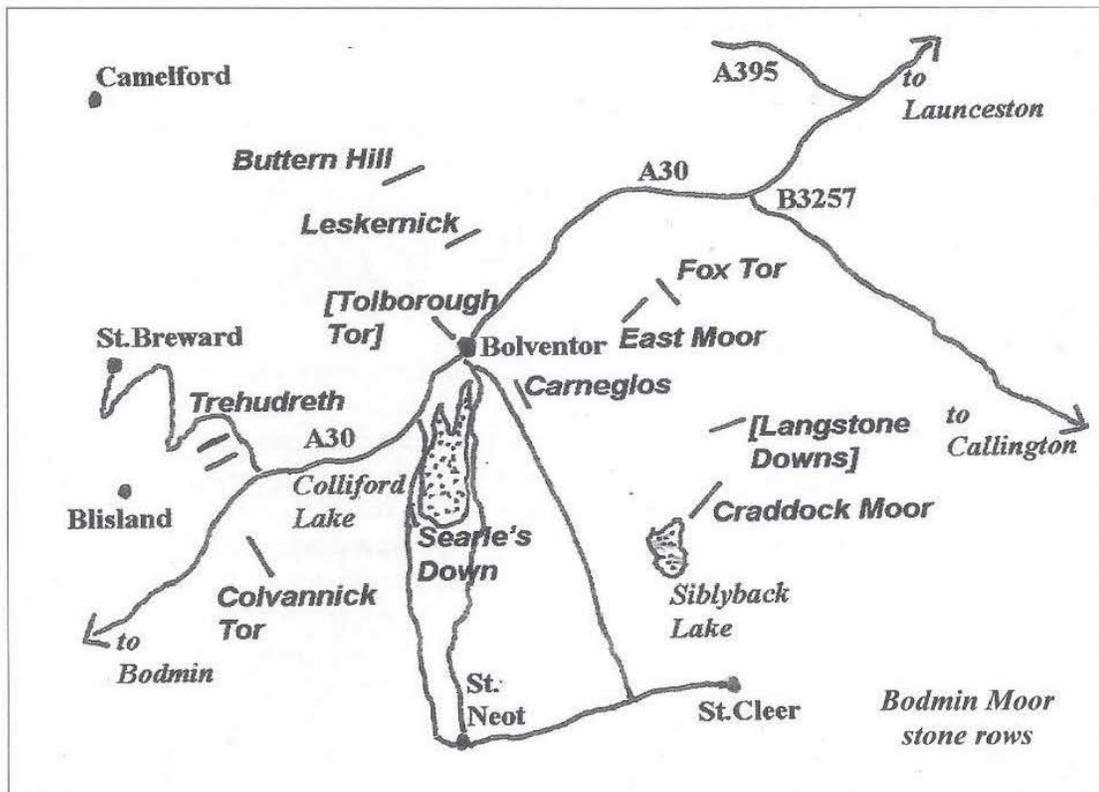


CENTRAL

+++ *NEW SITE* +++ **SEARLE'S DOWN** [SX1759 7122] Situated to the E of minor road running from A30 south to St. Neot on low-lying land beside Colliford Lake. See p.16.

CARNEGLOS [SX1988 7740]. Situated just to the east of Bolventor on the south side of the A30. Access by a public footpath running from Dryworks to Webb's Down. Not marked on OS 109 map. The row is located on a WSW facing hillslope in enclosed moorland, that is wet and peaty, and at its northerly end the row disappears into a bog. There are 34 (possibly 36) stones in the row, which is aligned just west of north-south. 20 of the stones are still upright (although 15 lean to a greater or lesser extent), 2 are recumbent, and one is just visible through the turf. Of the upright stones, the tallest stands only 0.45m (1.5ft) above ground, and most are hardly visible. Near the southern end there may be the remains of a cairn, and the row appears to point directly at a cove-like feature, 25m (27yds) to the south, formed by a semi-circular bank of stony rubble.

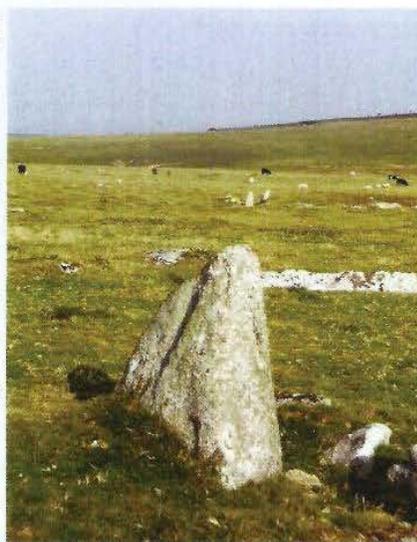
TOLBOROUGH TOR [SX1756 7786]. Situated to the north of the A30 at Tolborough Tor. Take lane off A30 at Bolventor running north to Codda Ford, and ascend hill from there. Not marked on OS 109 map. Near the top of the Tor is a small row of 5 stones extending in a NW direction towards a cairn at the top of the Tor. The stones are very small, only 0.4m (1.4ft) high, and the row is very short, although it may be aligned to a stone abutting the cairn [see p.21 for more details]. An unusual stone row.



NORTH-EAST

EAST MOOR [SX2245 7801]. Situated to the south of Fox Tor, which lies in the northern part of East Moor, south of the A30 at Trewint. Marked on OS 109 map. Take the minor road from the A30 to Eastmoorgate, where there is roadside parking, and then walk southwards. The row is a long one, extending in a NNE to SSW direction for 560m (606 yds), crossing transversely a shallow saddle between high points. 21 stones are identifiable, with 4 upright and the rest recumbent. The stones are all small, varying in height from 0.4m (1.4ft) to 1.7m (5.5ft), with an interval between the stones of about 10m (32ft). There may also have been another 17 stones missing in the extant row, with another 12 missing at the SSW end, where there is a gap of 126m (136yds) before a blocking stone, 1.0m (3.25ft) high & 1.8m (5.8ft) wide, set at right angles to the alignment. This blocking stone also seems to be roughly aligned with 2 ring cairns, further to the SSE, and in addition there is a 'ritual enclosure' to the west. An interesting and enigmatic site.

POSSIBLE SITE: FOX TOR [SX2302 7862]. Situated to the east of Fox Tor, which lies in the northern part of East Moor, south of the A30 at Trewint. Not marked on OS 109 map. Take the minor road from the A30 to Tregune, where there is roadside parking, and then walk southwards. The row is located on a very gentle SE slope on the lower slopes of Fox Tor, just above Redmoor Marsh. The primary components of the site, which perhaps could be better described as a stone setting rather than a row, are 2 thin upright slabs 1.0m (3.25ft) and 2.5m (8ft) high, standing 3.0m (9.75ft) apart, and set almost at right angles. 10 lesser blocks of stone are randomly arranged some 3m (9.75ft) away. This site should not be confused with a line of boundary stones to the SW on the flanks of the Tor. There are also prehistoric hut circles to the north of this site.



LESKERNICK [SX1884 7988]. Situated to the E of Leskernick Hill, which lies to the north of the A30 at the eastern edge of the moor, and which has the remains of a prehistoric settlement. Marked on OS 109 map. From Trewint take a minor road west to Westmoorgate, where there is limited parking. Then walk westwards towards Leskernick Hill. The stone row lies between two poorly-preserved stone circles, one to its north and the other to its south at its western end. It is approx. 316m (342yds) long and oriented ENE/WSW. The row consists of at least 27 exposed or partially exposed granite stones with about 21 other earthfast stones lying in the immediate vicinity. Only 2 stones in the row are still standing (one 0.6m (2ft) high, and the other 0.4m (1.3ft) high) and most stones only just protrude above ground level. There is also a group of 3 squared stones at the western end. It has been observed that the row dips down to a stream, so that anyone following it and crossing the stream would have had a dramatic view of Rough Tor, a holy hilltop, opening up in front of them as they climbed with the row from the stream.

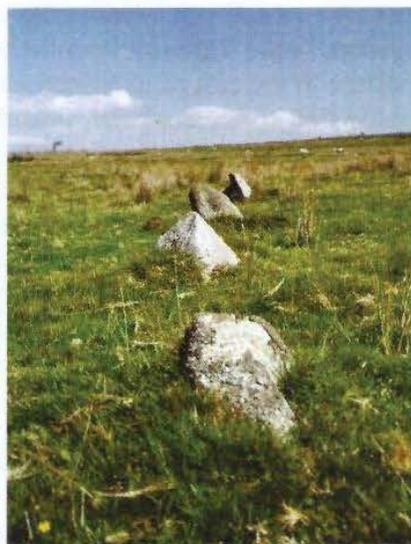
BUTTERN HILL [SX1693 8158]. Buttern Hill is on the eastern side of the Moor to the north of the A30 (NE of Leskernick Hill), and this stone row lies to the west of the hill, across a very boggy area that is the source of the River Fowey. Not marked on OS 109 map. There are no roads or footpaths nearby on this rather featureless part of the Moor, so this site is difficult to access. The row is oriented ENE-WSW, and is quite disturbed. It consists of 21 small stones, including 4 upright slabs, 1 post-type stone and 11 fallen ones, and is traceable for about 78m (85yds). The propped stone on Leskernick Hill comes suddenly into view from the south terminal stone [p.19].



SOUTH-EAST

CRADDOCK MOOR [SX2402 7214]. Craddock Moor lies on the SE part of the moor, and this stone row is situated on the NW side of Craddock Moor. It lies on a west facing hillslope in cultivated moorland, to the west of ancient settlements and field systems. Marked on OS 109 map. Nearest access is road to Sibylback Lake (parking) and then climb hillside behind Sparretts Farm.

It consists of the remains of a well-defined, though disturbed, stone row, which is now 244m (264yds) long. It lies on a NE-SW axis (midsummer solstice sunrise - midwinter solstice sunset), but does not in itself seem to be aligned on any particular landscape feature, although there is an interesting feature at the NE end (*see below*). The row now comprises 85 closely spaced stones, which are set almost, though not precisely, in a straight line. The majority are firmly embedded in the peat, with 0.2-0.4m (8"-1.4ft) protruding above the surface. It is clear that other stones have either been uprooted, displaced, buried or removed by agricultural activity. At the NE end of the row, a right angle turn leads to an alignment that runs SSE to an embanked avenue, the Craddock Moor stone circle and the Hurlers south stone circle. This line may have been deliberately linked to the stone row by a terminal stone (now missing) at the NE end of the row[*see p.19*].



POSSIBLE SITE: LANGSTONE DOWNS [SX2538 7379]. Langstone Downs lies to the north of Craddock Moor on the SE side of Bodmin Moor. In open moorland on the top of Langstone Downs is a possible stone row, situated approx. 100m (108yds) west of a cairn group. Not marked on OS 109 map. A line of 15 stones can be seen extending for 50-55m (54-59yds) in a WSW-ENE line. The line consists of mostly small post-type stones, barely above ground level, but there are also two almost-fallen slabs aligned along the row. The eastern end of the row is aligned on the edge of the NW cairn,

SEARLE'S DOWN - A NEWLY-DISCOVERED STONE ROW

by Peter Herring

Stepping out of the mud and running across the bare rab goes a trail of small stones, a pace apart, some standing, some fallen, fading as they enter furze and grass above the high water mark: a previously unrecorded stone row found while walking around Colliford Lake reservoir, on Bodmin Moor, when the water level was particularly low after the dry summer of 2006. A new discovery – now the Moor's ninth known row – allowing us to walk again in the footsteps of a group of prehistoric people.

Thirty-two stones form the 66m (71yd) long straight line of the Searle's Down stone row (named from the rounded hill on whose eastern flank it lies). Its downhill SSE end probably continues into the reservoir, any stones here drowned not only in water, but also in soft black peaty silt, washed down from upslope soil. The row would have lain in rough pasture to the east of nineteenth-century intake fields associated with the several Searle's Down Farms. Its line does not conform to the rectilinear pattern of those fields, and is not, therefore, an unfinished element of their system. Field evidence confirms that the rough pasture has never been intensively farmed, although there has been prospecting, streamworking and openworking for tin in the near vicinity. Away from the tinning, any prehistoric remains can be expected to survive well. There appears to be no terminal feature, no larger stone or cairn, at the uphill NNW end of the row, at the crest of the steeper part of the hill.

Reservoir wave action has scoured soil away from most stones so that only 15 are still on edge, their long axes following the row's line, as do those in all Bodmin Moor stone rows. Gaps between closest parts of adjacent stones range from 0.6m to 0.9m in the better preserved stretches; there were probably originally a further 34 to 39 stones in the length of row recorded here (i.e. 66 to 71 in all). Around six stones were lost to an un-dated hollow-way near the NNW end. The location of one lost stone, recently pulled out, is betrayed by a fresh 0.14m deep hole, and others seem to have also been wholly removed, perhaps by modern stone-splashers.



*Searle's Down stone row
(dotted line marks the alignment
across the water to the cairns
on low headland opposite
+ SSE terminal stone of stone row)*

For elements of a monument, the stones are tiny. None of the toppled ones, whose greatest dimensions can be measured, is longer than 0.5m, and no standing stone rises more than 0.2m (8 inches) above the rabby subsoil into which they are set. Seven are less than 0.1m high, and the average height is a mere 0.107m (4 inches); if we factor in an inch or two for washed-away topsoil then we must imagine the stones barely breaking the surface. They are also irregular in shape and inconsistent in stone quality, most being coarse-grained granite, but three fine-grained. Searle's Down is, then, one of Bodmin Moor's more modest rows, which are themselves generally less substantial and dramatic than the better-known Dartmoor sites, but similar in scale to some on Exmoor, whose stones can again be as low as 0.1m.

Nicholas Johnson noted in 1994 that six of the seven rows then known on Bodmin Moor had southern terminals: four as the row's tallest stone; two as transversely set slabs. Further examination of the reservoir foreshore established that the Searle's Down row also has a southern terminal, a 0.55m (1.75ft) high orthostat. Our row is perfectly on line with this stone, but as the intervening 230m is under water it is not possible to verify that stones extended all the way to it. The suggested total length 296m (320yds) fits well with the range of Bodmin Moor rows at 59 to 560m ((64 to 606yds), and the Colvannick and East Moor rows on Bodmin Moor and the Nine Maidens row on St Breock Downs all have sizeable gaps between the main stretch of the row and the terminal stone.

Frances Griffith excavated three round cairns on the low spur here in 1977-8 in advance of the reservoir. The orthostat (upright stone), now fallen, was barely one metre north-west of the largest and lowest-lying cairn's outer edge, and up-throw from the holes for this stone, and a second, 4.5m to its east, was apparently in place for only a very short time before being covered by earth 'mounding', part of the cairn's perimeter. A small cairn, 5m (16ft) in diameter, 10m (11yds) SE of the orthostat, and more or less on line with two other closely spaced small cairns to its SW, was enclosed by an outer ring cairn shortly after its construction. The orthostat, which predated this outer ring but not necessarily the inner cairn, and the row which it ends, may account for why the outer ring is not concentric with the 'inner cairn'. There seems to have been a need for the outer circuit to have been pulled to the north-west to be just a step away from the row.

The site's stratigraphy and soils convinced Frances that all elements of the cairn were created, and the orthostats were erected, at essentially the same time – there was no significant period of inactivity. This is important as radiocarbon dating of charcoal samples from beneath the inner cairn came out at 1560 ± 80 bc, recalibrated to 2040-1620 cal BC. As the charcoal is oak, it is safest to simply state that cairn and orthostat are from the early second millennium BC. Nevertheless this is still the tightest dating evidence for a stone row in south-west Britain.

This extract originally published as part of article entitled "Stepping onto the commons: south-western stone rows", in P Rainbird, ed, "Monuments in the landscape" [Tempus, 2008].

WALKING THE SHAMAN'S PATH - THE USE OF STONE ROWS IN CORNWALL

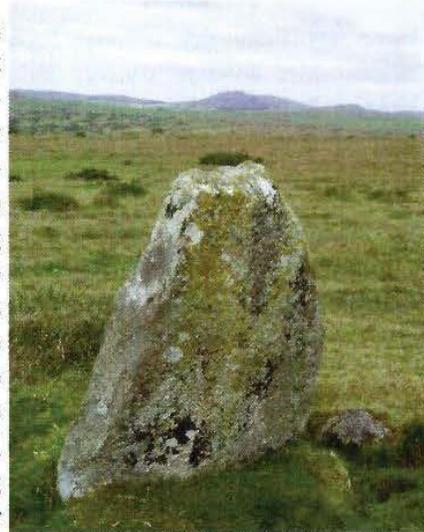
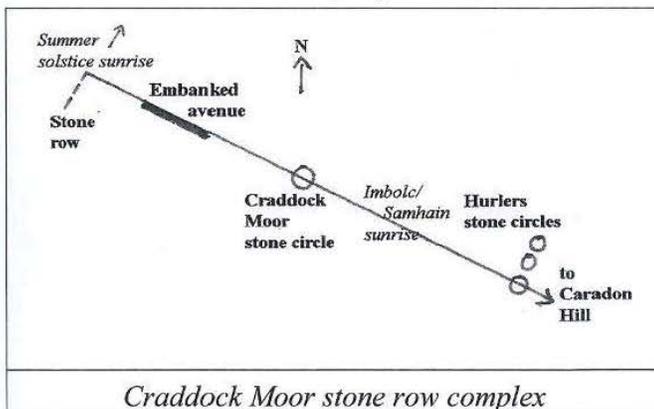
by Cheryl Traffon

Stones rows used to be described by archaeologists as “an enigma wrapped up in a conundrum”, but the publication of Aubrey Burl’s monumental work *From Carnac to Callanish - the prehistoric stone rows and avenues of Britain, Ireland and Brittany* [1] went a long way to defining and classifying these fascinating sites. There are many different types of stone rows, ranging from large avenues, such as at Avebury, to multiple lines, such as Carnac in France. Burl suggests that these different types of rows would have had different functions and purposes, but for the purposes of this article, it is the stone rows of Cornwall that we are going to consider.

Let’s turn first to Bodmin Moor. As can be seen from the preceding 6 pages, the stone rows of Bodmin Moor are mainly all of a kind: single rows of smallish stones that wander in roughly (though not completely linear) straight lines for distances from 55m (59yds) at the disputed Langstone Downs row to 560m (606yds) at the East Moor row. As such, they seem most closely related to the stone rows of Dartmoor, though these tend to be larger and rather more impressive, and very often have features included such as double rows, terminal stones and cairn circles. The closest-looking row to these Dartmoor ones is East Moor row on Bodmin Moor, with its large terminal stone and two cairns at its SSE end. Interestingly, it is also the closest row to the Dartmoor ones, as only 20m (32km) separates it from the Merrivale stone row complex on western Dartmoor. Burl suggests [1] that “Migrants (from Dartmoor) may have followed the high ridge from Tavistock to Gunnislake, Hingston Down, crossing the River Lynher near North Hill (to get to Bodmin Moor)”. Andrew Fleming [2] noticed that ceremonial complexes including stone rows are fairly regularly spaced around Dartmoor (with the exception of the SW quarter) suggesting that they were created by “different, contemporary human groups, each working within the framework of beliefs and rituals associated with stone rows to create its own distinctive sacred place”, and the same may be true of Bodmin Moor. The location of the stone rows on Bodmin Moor [see map on p.13] seems to fall into 4 or 5 distinct geographical areas: to the east of the Moor there is East Moor and Fox Tor (?) rows, with Leskernick and Buttern Hill a little further away to the NW; to the south of the Moor there is Craddock Moor and Langstone Downs (?) rows; in the centre there is Carneglos, Searle’s Down and Tolborough Tor (?); and to the west there are Trehudreth Downs and Colvannick Tor rows. Perhaps each of these two sets of rows represents use by a different tribe or family group.

So what could that use have been? The most obvious suggestion is that they were lines to be followed. But the problem with that is, very often they seem to start nowhere in particular and finish nowhere in particular! Of course, stones - and sites - could have been lost from either end of them over the millenia, but even so, the rows never seem to be closely related to the significant monuments on the Moor, such as the stone circles.

A closer look at some of them however, does show that sometimes they do have special features at their ends. For example, at Trehudreth Downs a standing stone marks the southern end of the row [*photos right*]; at Carneglos, the row seems to point to a cove-like feature at the southern end; at East Moor at the SSW end, the blocking/terminal stone points to two ring cairns [*see p.17*]; and at Searle's Down the row may originally have terminated at a standing stone next to two small cairns [*see p.17*]; and at Craddock Moor, the NE end of the row is set at right angles to an alignment across the moors [*see p.15*]. If there was a terminal/blocking stone at the NE end of this row (now missing), then it would be part of a much more impressive complex, linking together an embanked avenue, the Craddock Moor stone circle, and the Hurlers South stone circle, all of which were aligned to a cairn on Caradon Hill at the Imbolc or Samhain sunrise [*map below*].

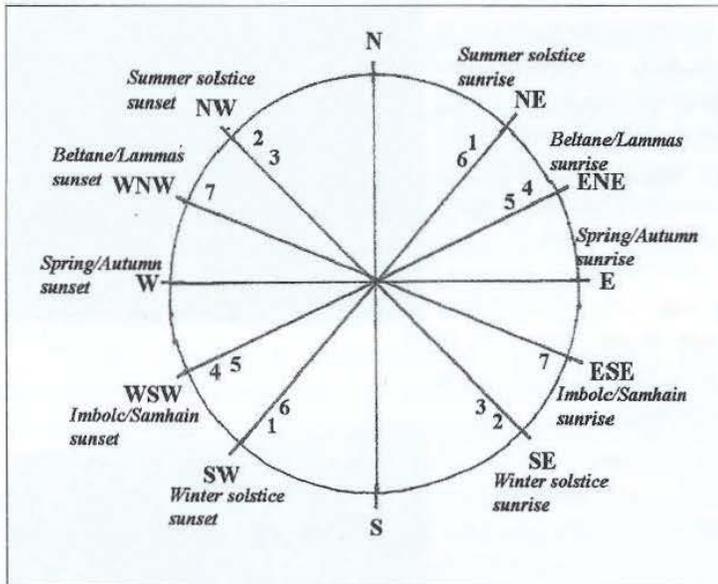


Terminal stone at end of the Trehudreth Downs row

This alignment on Craddock Moor leads us to a consideration of whether the function of these stone rows might perhaps be connected to solar alignments.

Burl considered the matter, only to dismiss it. "The rows have no consistent orientation, arranged north - south, north-east - south-west, ENE - WSW, even north-west - south-east, and they seem devoid of astronomical sightlines" [1]. But is this really true? Of the 8 definite stone rows for which we have orientations (Fox Tor has no discernible orientation), three - Carneglos & Searle's Down (both SSE-NNW) and East Moor (NNE-SSW) - have no significant solar alignment. Of the remaining 5, two [Trehudreth Downs & Craddock Moor] face NE-SW, midsummer solstice sunrise & midwinter solstice sunset; one [Colvannick Tor] faces NW-SE, midsummer solstice sunset & midwinter solstice sunrise; and two [Leskernick & Buttern Hill] face ENE-WSW, Beltane/Lammas sunrise & Imbolc/Samhain sunset. The other two possible rows - Tolborough Tor & Langstone Downs - also

have significant orientations: Tolborough Tor runs SE-NW, midwinter solstice sunrise & midsummer solstice sunset, and Langstone Downs runs ENE-WSW, Beltane/Lammas sunrise & Imbolc/Samhain sunset. So, out of a total of 10 known orientations in definite and possible rows, 7 of these have significant orientations, with 4 of those at the solar points, and 3 at the cross-quarter days.



There may however be something else going on at these rows, which is not only about alignment on to megalithic features, or orientation to the solar points. Christopher Tilley [3] was the first to note that some of the stone rows on Bodmin Moor have what he called ‘perspectival effects’ as one walks along them; i.e views of significant features of the moorland landscape, such as summit tors of the two great hills, Roughtor and Brown Willy, poke over the shoulder of intervening downland, and either open up or are closed off as the row is walked along. This may well have been deliberate, so that someone walking the row in a spiritual state of mind, would get sudden revelations or bursts of views of sacred hilltops in the landscape, which may have been thought of as the dwelling places of the gods and goddesses, and/or the ancestors.

Examples of this may be found at some of the rows. At Buttern Hill row, not only does Brown Willy disappear from view as the row is walked along from north to south, but a significant visual burst is experienced precisely when the tallest southern stone, the row’s terminal, is reached. At that moment the early Neolithic pseudo-quoit (propped stone) on the western slope of Leskernick Hill, pops into view on the horizon [photo on next page], having been previously masked by Buttern Hill’s flank. The quoit is only skylined from certain directions, making the Buttern row burst more convincing. Peter Herring makes an interesting observation about it [4]: “That the effect only works for people of average adult height (around 1.6m or 5.2ft) might even suggest that the set-up was indeed intended for revealing key features of the world (i.e Brown Willy and the ancestral quoit) during an adolescent’s rites of passage ceremony”.



Leskernick propped stone (pseudo-quoit), the ancestral stone viewed from the end of Buttern Hill stone row.

Another interesting ‘view burst’ row is the Tolborough Tor one. The row has been considered to be a doubtful example of a stone row, mainly because of the shortness of the row (5 low uprights). However Nick Johnson & Peter Rose who surveyed it [5], suggested that the row was in line with a sixth upright, perched on the eastern side of the summit tor cairn. Peter Herring comments: “The most south-easterly stone (of the row), skylined on the crest of the hill when approaching from the Moor’s great dividing valley, the Fowey, signposted the row to those who knew it, enabling them to lead those who didn’t along the correct route up the hill’s long and steep south-eastern slope. When the crest was reached the cairn itself would block views to the north-east, and only when the short row was walked along, and the cairn itself was mounted, did one of the most spectacular bursts on Bodmin Moor open up. The initiate suddenly saw the great tors of Brown Willy, Catshole, Butterstor and Garrow” [4]. This would have been a dramatic spiritual experience to those who did not know what was in store for them as they walked the row, but it would also have acted as a ‘trigger’ for a commune with the ancestors and gods/goddesses, even for those who were familiar with what was to come, especially if they were in a state of altered consciousness. If it was walked at summer solstice sunset (in a NW direction) towards the cairn following the setting sun over the hill, the effect would have been even more dramatic

Finally on Bodmin Moor, there is the experience of the Leskernick stone row. Although once again this is a seemingly insignificant row, with 27 stones lying low in the ground, nevertheless it may not be the size of the stones that is important but the experience of walking the row. It has been observed that from the ENE end of the row, the row dips down to a stream at the bottom of the valley, so that anyone following it and crossing the stream would have only a view of Leskernick Hill getting ever closer. That is, until they crossed the stream, which would have represented a liminal boundary between one state of being and another. Then as they climbed the row from the stream in a WSW direction, they would have had a dramatic view of Rough Tor, a holy hilltop, opening up in front of them. If this walk were done at the beginning of November or February, then they would be facing the setting sun at Samhain or Imbolc, or if the row was walked in the opposite direction (i.e WSW to ENE) at the beginning of May or August, then they would see the rising sun at Beltane or Lughnasad. As with the other stone rows we have been considering, what may have been happening here was a combination of dramatic landscape views of holy hilltops in conjunction with significant solar phenomena at different times of the year.

Moving away from Bodmin Moor, there are two other stone rows extant in other parts of Cornwall: the Nine Maidens stone row on St. Breock Downs, and the Treveglos row at Zennor. Do the same considerations apply at these rows as they do to the Bodmin Moor rows? The Nine Maidens row [SW9363 6745] consists of nine stones (five still standing) in a line stretching for 107m (352ft), and oriented SSW to NNE, which is not in itself a significant astronomical direction. The stones themselves are taller than most stones on Bodmin Moor, being 1.6 - 1.8m (5.25 - 6ft) high. At the northern end there is a gap of 600m (656yds) before the stump of a standing stone, which stands on the crest of the hill. This is the remains of what was formerly a 2.3m (7.5ft) standing stone, known variously as the Magi Stone, the Fiddler or the Old Man. It was obviously a terminal pillar to which the stone row was directed. Aubrey Burl comments: "It was to that elevated column, enclosed in a ring of low stones, that people may have proceeded for their ceremonies. At what times of year is unknown" [1].



Nine Maidens stone row

When we turn to a consideration of how the stone row might have worked with a landscape 'burst', we find that it does indeed have similar functions to the stone rows on Bodmin Moor. The Nine Maidens row rises gently with the slope of the land, with views only of the next stone in the row, until the walker reaches the crest of the hill leading up to The Fiddler stone. Here, views to the north coast and Bodmin Moor open up dramatically, the Camel estuary and Trevoze Head being particularly noticeable. It has been suggested (by Howard Balmer in an article in MM no.57 p.22-23) that Trevoze Head was an important landscape feature to prehistoric peoples, being viewed from several ceremonial sites in the area, and framed between slopes of the land. He points out that the headland has the appearance of the head of a Goddess shape in the land, enhanced by one of the surviving barrows on the headland forming the shape of her eye. A Neolithic and Bronze Age quarry lies on the eastern side of the headland, that was worked to produce beautiful axe heads that have been found across southern England. The headland may well have been a sacred area, and what is more, the midsummer sun sets into Trevoze when seen from the Fiddler. The prehistoric designers of the site could thus have seen this elevated spot as being a highly appropriate terminus to their ceremonial route from the stone row.



*The stump of The Fiddler,
looking to Trevoze Head*

Finally, we come to the far west of Cornwall, and the only stone row in the peninsula, which is at Treveglos near Zennor [SW4539 3887]. Three upright stones remain, but others may have been robbed for use in field hedges or as gateposts. It runs WNW to ESE for 117m (127ft), and its stones are the tallest of any stone row in Cornwall. Its WNW end stone has a prehistoric lynchet built up around it, but it is still possible to measure a height of 2.37m (7.7ft). The centre stone in the middle of a field is smaller, but the ENE terminal stone, now re-used as a gatepost, is a whopping 2.8m (9ft) high. The orientation of the row points at its westerly end to the setting of the sun over the sea at Beltane (early May) and Lammass (early Aug), and at its easterly end to the rising of the sun at Samhain (early Nov) and Imbolc (early Feb). Furthermore there is a significant landscape feature that comes into view as you approach the easterly end of the row. The ESE terminal stone [*the gatepost stone pictured above*] has its top shaped so that it points to and mirrors the apex of Trendrine Hill, a holy hilltop that is crowned by an entrance grave. This would have been a significant landscape 'burst' for anyone walking the row at this time of year.



Zennor Row gatepost stone

So, putting all this evidence together, we may come to a better understanding of the purpose and function of these stone rows. They were designed to be walked at significant times, either at astronomical points on the wheel of the year, and/or at times of initiation to the mysteries of the land. They are cleverly constructed so as to provide glimpses or 'bursts' of significant landscape features, particularly hills and tors, that may have been thought of as the dwelling places of the ancestors or the gods/goddesses. They were probably walked in an altered state of consciousness by the spiritual leaders of the tribe, or shamans to give them their popular name. This may have involved the shamans going on spirit journeys, and it is possible that the blocking stones or menhirs or features at the end of some of the rows may have been designed to ground the shamans' spirit and bring it back to earth again. And they are places where the shamans walked, and where the dwelling places of the dead ancestors were revealed and opened up once again to the living.

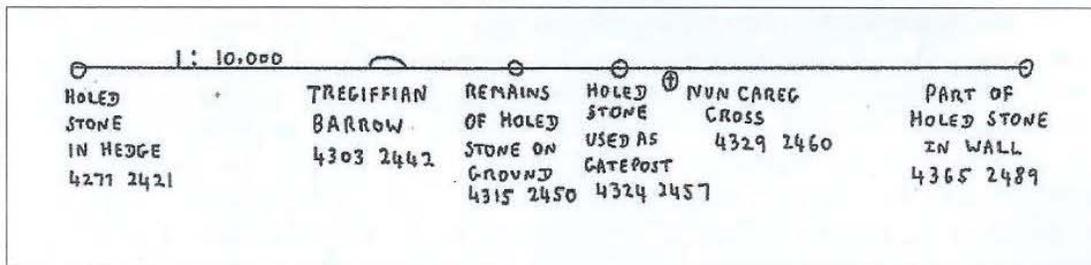
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20 YEARS AGO

Delving into the pages of MM from the past

Coincidental to this issue's feature on stone rows, 20 years ago MM20 (Winter/Spring 1993) was reporting on another kind of 'stone row'- a line of holed stones, the remains of which had been identified close to the Merry Maidens stone circle. MM had been searching for the Mên Frith holed stone, which had originally been mentioned by William Borlase in 1754, and illustrated by J.T.Blight in 1864. This was one of a number of holed stones in the area, and in Borlase's day had been in Rosemodross Lane, leading off the main road to the north of the stone circle (at SW4360 2458). It was subsequently moved, and used as a gatepost and then relocated to the entrance of Tregurnow Farm nearby, where MM found it in a hedge at SW4432 2415. At the time we speculated that it may originally have stood in the line of other holed stones, which run in the area over a distance of 1.11 km (0.68 mls), from a holed stone in a hedge near Boskenna Cross (4277 2421) [*photo below left*] to a holed stone in the wall of a mohay at Boleigh Farm (4365 2489). On the way the line brushes the edge of Tregiffian Barrow, which doesn't have a holed stone but does have a very distinctive cupmarked stone (4303 2442), the remains of a holed stone on the ground at 4315 2450, a holed stone now used as a gatepost at 4324 2457 opposite the Merry Maidens circle [*photo below right*] and also runs close to the edge of the Nun Careg cross (4329 2460) - 6 sites (including 4 holed stones) in just over ½ mile.



Andy Norfolk computer-checked this alignment and found it to be very accurate (with a mean offset of only 3.75m). It was at an azimuth of 45°, which means it was facing NE (mid-summer solstice sunrise) or possibly the midwinter moonrise at



Stone near Boskenna Cross (above) & gatepost stone (right).



its most northerly extreme. Either way, it seems to be a most interesting deliberately-aligned line of stones that may have been used for astronomical purposes.

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