

**ROCK ART IN CORNWALL ● LOGAN STONES ●  
GUNWALLOE WELL ● CARNEWAS MENHIR ●  
DOWSING ● CASPN & LAN ● ANCIENT TRACKS  
\*ALL PHOTOS NOW IN FULL COLOUR\***

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# Meyn Mamvro

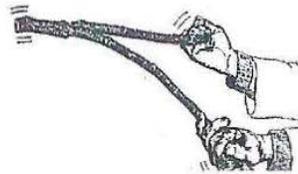
## STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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

The recent dividing-up of English Heritage into the statutory Historic England and the ultimately self-financing English Heritage Trust is already beginning to have some serious consequences. One positive outcome is that English Heritage is doing a review of all the properties they own, one of which is Chysauster courtyard house settlement in west Cornwall. A Conservation Management plan was drawn up by the CAU, which included some excellent recommendations, including a suggestion that the fogou (currently filled in with sand and inaccessible) should be properly excavated and restored. The report adds: "Lack of access is a source of disappointment to many visitors and its restoration should be considered a priority for future intervention". This is very good news, but whether English Heritage will act on the recommendations remains to be seen.

The other piece of news concerning English Heritage is not so good. At Tintagel, they have decided that they would like to create 28 visual displays at the site of the Castle, including one of a 8.5ft statue of Arthur in late medieval gear, to stand on the clifftop on The Island and a 'sword in the stone' structure! The Cornwall Archaeological Unit assessed that 9 of these would have a neutral effect on archaeology and visual amenity, but that 19 would have minor to moderate negative impacts: nevertheless Cornwall Council gave permission for all of them. The first to be created was a carving of Merlin in the cliff face below the Castle, which caused outrage and the accusation that English Heritage was 'dumbing down' the site to try and boost visitor numbers. The issue received widespread coverage in the national media, and a local Group KMTU (Kernow Matters to Us) led the opposition by commenting: "Cornish history gets sidelined, while English Heritage concentrates on dumbed-down populist trash that they think will attract the punters". In an appearance on the One Show on BBC1, Craig Weatherhill added: "ANY negative impact on the archaeology and visual amenity of such an iconic, important and spectacular site should have been refused permission". There are questions that need to be asked about how this was allowed to happen. The CAU were perfectly correct in the consultation report that they produced, but the fact that Cornwall Council then proceeded to ignore all their reservations and just passed the applications without question seems incomprehensible. English Heritage have agreed to a meeting with KMTU to discuss the matter, but whether they are willing to withdraw their plans is another matter altogether. It seems unbelievable that they would even consider plonking statues and instillations of 'King Arthur' and other tableaux all over what has been, and continues to be, such an important archaeological and historic site, and if this is a presage of how they might treat their sites in future, then God/dess help us all!

## DOWSING NEWS



October 2015 brought the first of the Autumn's indoor talks with **Trencrom Dowsers** presentation on 'Animal Healing' with *Ann Lodygowski*, and **Tamar Dowsers** discussion of 'Sound Dowsing' with *Nigel Twinn and Bill Kenny*. In November, there was another talk with **Tamar Dowsers** on 'Applying Intuition' with *Christopher Strong*, and again one on 'Animal Healing' with *Ann Lodygowski*. In the same month, there was a special visit from Isabel Derry, President of the British Society of Dowsers, who travelled down from Cumbria to Trencrom to present Ba Miller with the Billy Gawn Award, "in recognition of 30 years of commitment to Earth Energies' dowsing and her continuing work as an exceptional dowser, healer, researcher and promoter of the art".

Meanwhile, **West Cornwall Dowsers** were out and about in the land, and in November visited *Gunwalloe Church* (previously visited by Trencrom Dowsers in Aug 2013 - see MM83 p.3). Bart O'Farrell spoke about how the Apollo and Athena lines met here in the belltower, which was specially opened for the Group. They tracked the different paths of both lines, and Bart mentioned how the width of the Apollo line varied, contracting at dusk and expanding at sunrise. On a previous occasion an Earthsound group had chanted here, and the Apollo line width had expanded considerably.

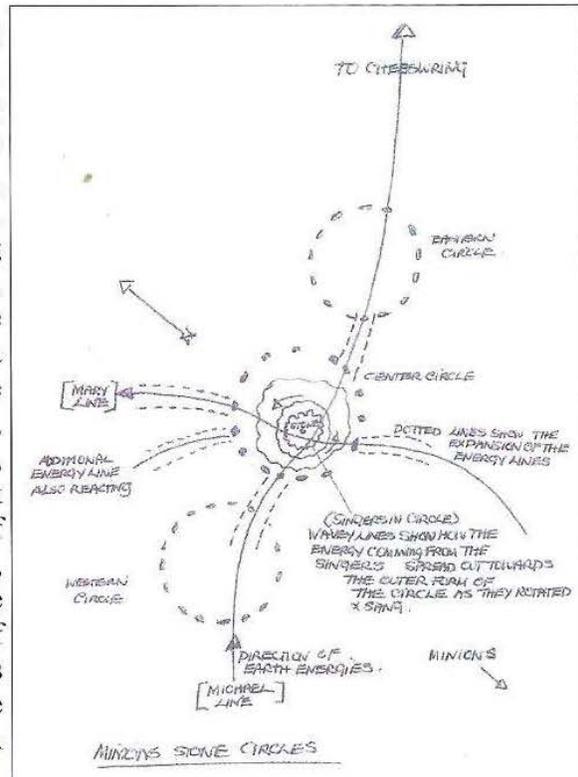
The Group also discovered that the Celtic cross in the churchyard had been moved from its original position closer to the churchyard wall, and had originally marked a pilgrim's path leading from the churchyard down to a *holy well* in the sands below: a note inside the church in a churchbook also confirmed this. The Group dowsed for this well, and found its location in the sands outside the church at SW66042 20551, but the spring feeding it had since moved. One of the Group, John Litton, dug at the original location down for about 10ft, and confirmed that it was now dry. Dowsing also revealed that the church wall had been originally further out, which meant that the holy well would have been *inside* the wall, and not outside as it is now. See p.4 of this MM for more information about this holy well and Gunwalloe Day.



*Dowsing for the well on the sands*

At the beginning of December **Trencrom Dowsers** held a talk by *John Moss and Palden Jenkins* on 'Leys and Energy Lines: what does it all mean?'. John gave a succinct summary of ley hunting over the last century, emphasising the difference between leys (alignment of sites) and energy lines. Then Palden took over, showing the application of alignments of sites in West Penwith from his new Alignments Map. Many of the audience, both ley hunters and dowsers, joined in the fascinating interactive discussion.

The winter solstice sunrise found **Tamar Dowzers** at *The Hurlers* on Bodmin Moor, together with Anne Hughes and a group of choiristers and celebrants to sing in the dawn. Before the singing began, the Michael and Mary lines were plotted, together with 63 radial lines emanating from the centre of the stone circle. Subsequent enquiry uncovered that there had formerly been around 40, prior to a ceremony taking place at the stones the night before. During the Solstice singing, the radial count rose to 80, then to 83, where it plateaued - before dropping back as the group drifted away. A 'bubble of energy' around the singers was dowsed, which grew with the input of the participants; and investigation of both of the Michael and Mary lines afterwards showed that they had moved to some extent from their typical alignments. A fascinating early morning's work.



Talks continued with Tamar and Trencrom Dowzers throughout early 2016. In January **Tamar Dowzers** had a talk by *Palden Jenkins* on his West Penwith alignments map; and **Trencrom Dowzers** had a workshop by *Fay Palmer* on 'The Consciousness of Water', during which participants dowsed for the energy in water, the environment and themselves, and discovered how water can transmit that energy from one location to another. In February **Trencrom Dowzers** had a talk by *John Christian*, Dartmoor artist and dowser. He described how he had had a vision of a ley crossing the land, visualised as a thin silver line, and pointed out that Alfred Watkins had described much the same thing in his book *The Old Straight Track*, published in 1925. John also discovered that a number of churches in mid-Devon were in direct alignment, finishing at the Temple church on Bodmin Moor, and he talked about some of the beliefs of the Templars. Coincidentally, the next day the **Tamar Dowzers** had a talk by *Alan Jones* on the Knights Templar. In March **Trencrom Dowzers** had a talk by *Dr Patrick MacManaway* on 'Conversations with Landscape - Dragons, Elementals and Devas: celebrating our sacred relationship with all things', in which he showed how communicating with plant spirits on their own vibrational levels could vastly increase crop yields. In the same month **Tamar Dowzers** had a talk by *Anne Hughes* on 'Death - a dowser's perspective' in which she explored death as an aspect of consciousness, and how to deal with dowsable information from the spirit world. Finally in April **Trencrom Dowzers** had a talk by *Christopher Strong* on finding lost objects, pets, people and ancestors.

*The Hurlers drawing [c] Nigel Twinn. Dowsing heading [c] Jean Hands*

## GUNWALLOE WELL - SUNK BENEATH THE SANDS

Gunwalloe holy well on the Lizard was formerly one of Cornwall's most renowned holy wells. It was first mentioned by A.H.Cummings in 1875 (in *The Churches and Antiquities of Gunwalloe*) in which he placed it "close to the church porch, only a few feet over the precipitous rock, which in part forms a breakwater and protection from the waves". He goes on to say: "The spring that once bubbled up in its rocky basin is no longer there: sand and stones fill up the well at each high tide, and though occasionally cleaned out for the satisfaction of the wayfarer's curiosity



*Gunwalloe church cove,  
viewed from the site of the holy well*

is yet only an imperfect semblance of its former self". In 1891 Quiller Couch (*Ancient and holy wells of Cornwall*) searched "long and carefully for the well" but could find no trace.

However, an anonymous report in *The Cornishman*' newspaper of August 12th 1909 was more helpful. It said: "Local tradition, supported by the 'oldest inhabitant', has always agreed in placing the site of the long-buried holy well at the foot of the rocks a few feet to the south of the churchyard wall. About twenty feet or so from the wall and some four feet above the sand could be seen a roughly semicircular cutting in the rock." It adds: "A small band of enthusiasts, headed by the Vicar of Gunwalloe, recently made an attempt to see if the cutting gave any clue to the site of the well. Spades were borrowed from some children, who were attempting to divert the river from its usual channel, and a start was made. A foot or so below the level of the sand the rock was found to be cut back in a semicircle, and about two feet deep fresh and sweet-tasting water was found, apparently running out from a crevice in the rock. Time did not allow for further exploration, but it is hoped to clear away the sand and ascertain if this is really the holy well."

According to A.H.Cummings: "That Gunwalloe was considered by the country folk a well of some importance there can be little doubt, for one day in the year, which was called Gunwalloe Day, was set apart for cleaning out this holy well, now only remembered by two old men out of the whole population of this place." *The Cornishman* report adds: "The oldest inhabitant says that up to 70 years ago the well was cleared out every year from the sand that was washed into it, and a sum of five shillings was paid by the parish for this purpose." It also says that the water was used for baptisms, and that the well was used for divination. "Pins or similar objects were thrown in, while the proper incantations were used, and by the movement of the water, or the position in which the object settled, conclusions were drawn, perhaps by a girl who wanted to know when and whom she should marry, or by a fisherman anxious to know what his luck would be." There are some local people nowadays, headed by Ann Muller of Ann's Pasty Shop on the Lizard, who would like to revive this custom, and uncover and clear out the well once again, so who knows whether the well 'sunk beneath the sands' may one day once again reappear!



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

*Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network*



Work has begun on the Penwith Landscape Partnership Project (Part 2) to submit to the Heritage Lottery Fund to confirm the Grant of 2.7 million pounds for a series of interconnected projects for the West Penwith landscape. CASPN is the lead partner on the Archaeology (Ancient Penwith) strand, with aid from the Historic Environment Service of Cornwall Council. A Working Party has been set up, and is now in the process of creating a number of 'Landscape Trails' that will provide circular walks and cycle routes to the ancient sites. Linked to this will be schemes for the preservation and maintenance of the sites, and educational projects to involve local people and schools in 'ownership' of these important places. We have about 18 months to get all of this together before the second stage bid, so this is a very busy time for us.

However, we are all looking forward to the annual Pathways to the Past weekend at the end of May (Sat 28th & Sun 29th). This year marks the 10th anniversary of the weekend, and a great selection of walks and talks are planned. Full details are on the website (address below), or from Meyn Mamvro. Please note that the talks on Saturday evening (with Paul Bonnington) and Sunday morning (with Adam Sharpe) have been moved from the Count House at Botallack to St. Just Town Hall. We hope to see many of our MM readers at these events.

Finally, it is with sadness that we report the death of Neville Noye. Neville was a great supporter of CASPN, and donated to us the hillfort at Lesingey, to the west of Penzance, which we have been looking after for a number of years now. Neville stipulated that the collection made at his funeral should be split between CASPN and another charity, so that even in his death he thought of us. Lesingey Round will always be his legacy to all.

### **CORNISH ANCIENT SITES PROTECTION NETWORK [CASP]**

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

**Web site:** [www.cornishancientsites.com](http://www.cornishancientsites.com) **E-mail:** [secretary@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:secretary@cornishancientsites.com)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/groups](http://www.facebook.com/groups) [search for C.A.S.P.N & Lizard Ancient Sites]

### **FRIENDS OF CORNWALL'S ANCIENT SITES [FOCAS]**

**To join FOCAS** (£10/year waged, £14 couples, £7 unwaged) tel: Eve Salthouse 07927 671612 or e-mail [focas@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:focas@cornishancientsites.com), visit CASPN web site for downloadable application form, or write to: 11 Victoria Row, St. Just, Penzance TR19 7LG

**Adopt-a-Site scheme:** e-mail: [focas@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:focas@cornishancientsites.com)

**Sites Clear-Ups:** Dave Munday 01736-787230 e-mail: [dave@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:dave@cornishancientsites.com)

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

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

**Adopt-a-Site scheme:** e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com), or phone 01736-787186

**Sites Clear-Ups:** Tel: 01736-787186 e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com)

## ANCIENT TRACKS

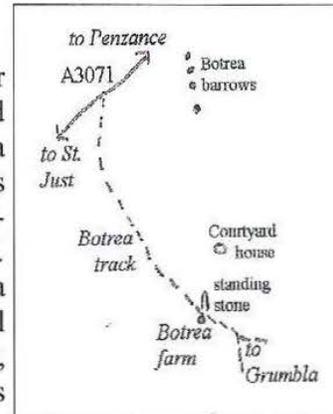
### 10: Botrea lane

*A series that looks at some pathways to ancient sites in West Penwith that may be the tracks where our ancestors walked. Many of the old tracks exist as the old churchway paths connecting settlements to the parish churches, but parts of them, especially those with tall hedges may define old estate boundaries or are older than those. These deeply sunken tracks, especially those that pass or go to ancient sites, are the essence and heart of this time-worn land.*

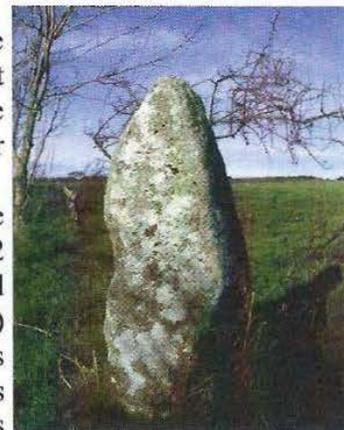
An ancient track, that may be an old tinner's track or drovers road, runs from the A3071 Penzance to St. Just road towards Sancreed. On the hill slopes above the track, lie a number of ancient sites, that archaeologist Andy Jones has identified as a 'Cornish Bronze Age ceremonial landscape' [BAR publications, 2005 and article in MM61 p.16-17]. There are four kerbed platform barrows on Botrea hill in a roughly north-south line [SW4031 3121]. If you climb the hill from the A3071 road, each barrow appears, one after the other, until you reach the topmost barrow, where the landscape opens up, and a number of sacred hills become visible: to the SE is Sancreed Beacon, to the east is St. Michael's Mount, and to the west (on a clear day) are the Isles of Scilly. These 4 barrows were excavated in 1826, with finds of arrowheads, and a cist containing an urn with ashes.

Returning to the lane, as you approach Botrea Farm, there is a standing stone in a paddock to the east of the lane behind some trees [SW4034 3051]. Since first reporting it in MM73 p.9, we have learnt that in fact the stone was lying down, but was erected on the directions of the late Hamish Miller. Hamish arranged for very few stones to be put back up, so he must have thought that this one was of some significance, though neither the landowner John Tobin nor Hamish's widow Ba can remember why that was so.

Finally, on the hill slope above Botrea Farm, from the later Iron Age there lies a single courtyard house [SW4042 3076] with an associated Round House [at 4040 3080] and field system. The Courtyard House is a large one - 28m (92ft) by 24m (80ft) with round, long and oval rooms, and has extensive views over the valley. The family who built this home must have been aware of the barrows of their ancestors lying just over the hill, and the old track that led to their home.



Botrea barrows

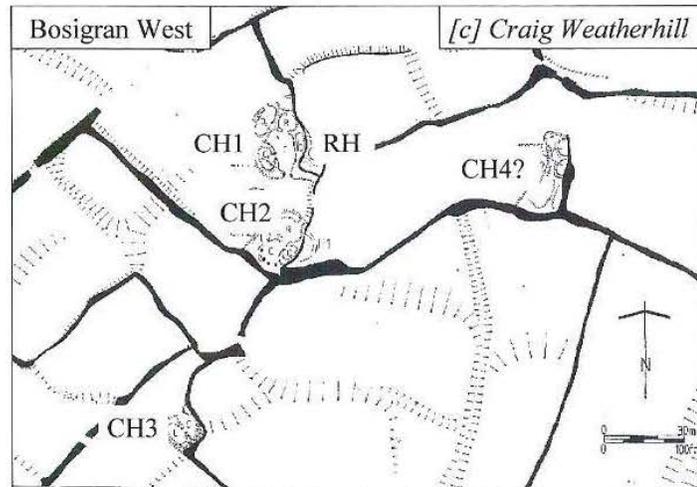
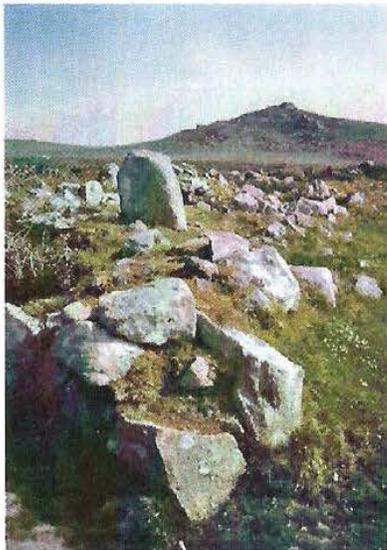
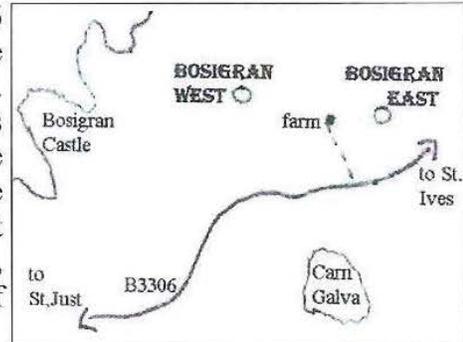


Botrea standing stone

## HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME

### WHERE OUR ANCESTORS LIVED: 11 - Bosigran

To the west of Bosigran Farm on the B3306 north coast road, lies a substantial Courtyard House settlement, known as **Bosigran West** [SW423 371]. The settlement is quite widely scattered, and consists of three Courtyard Houses [CH] and a possible Round House [RH], with the remains of a possible fourth Courtyard House, mutilated by more recent structures. The settlement is quite well preserved, with visible remains, including some of the rooms of the Courtyard Houses, and several upright stones.



*Bosigran East houses with views of Carn Galva*

Perhaps the most significant feature of the site is how it references Carn Galva, a holy hill and Neolithic tor enclosure that is visible dramatically standing to the south of the site. Undoubtedly, this hill would have been seen as a place of the ancestors, and would have been an ever-present reminder of the sacred landscape wherein the Courtyard House Settlement was built. In addition, to the north-west of the settlement, only 460m (500 yds) away lies Bosigran Castle, a contemporary Iron Age cliff castle, that was most probably used and visited by the inhabitants of the settlement. These people lived in the most dramatic sacred landscape possible.

About half a km (less than half a mile) away to the east lies the remains of **Bosigran East** Courtyard House settlement [SW428 370], a much more modest affair and less well preserved than Bosigran West. A single courtyard house was built here, with another possible smaller one built adjoining an Iron Age Round. A stone mound to the west may have originally been a fogou.

## MISSING MENHIRS - CORNWALL'S LOST STONES

### 16: Carnewas menhir

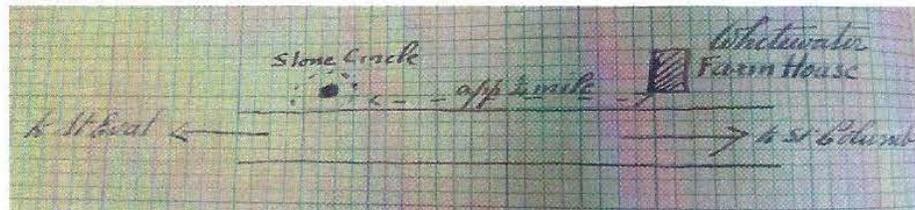
This menhir was first identified in 2009 by Sheila Harper and Steve Hebdige of the Newquay OCS. It was lying in the boundary hedge of the National Trust car park at Bedruthan Steps, North Cornwall [SW8475 6885] and is listed on the Megalithic Portal web site. It was about 9ft tall, and made of precipitated quartz, similar to other menhirs in the area. It was plotted as being on an alignment which passes by St.Eval longstone, the Magi Stone on St.Breock Downs, and the Mên Gurtha standing stone. The stone was reported to the National Trust, but sadly was not listed on the Historic Environment Record at the time. When NOCAG (Newquay Old Cornwall Archaeology Group) re-visited it in 2014, they discovered that a wall had been built over it, leaving just the two ends visible. NOCAG added: "It also looks like the end of the stone was knocked off, which is really a shame and illustrates the ignorance of some [people] to our archaeological heritage". They contacted the National Trust about it, and Mike Simmonds replied that they didn't know it was a menhir until after the hedge was rebuilt.



*[Above] Carnewas menhir in its original position*

*[Below] Incorporated into the rebuilt hedge*

## STONE CIRCLE & CROMLECH AT ST.COLUMB MAJOR?



Sheila Harper has also drawn our attention to an entry that she came across in some notebooks of George White from 1959, in which he talks about "some interesting stones approx. ¼ mile north of the farm house at Whitewater, St.Columb Major". He says that they were "the remains of a cromlech surrounded by a ring of stone pillars app. 4ft 6in in height, the diameter of the circle being approx. 20ft." The site was inspected by himself and the archaeologist Dorothy Dudley in 1952, but nothing has been recorded since then. Sheila drew it to the attention of Phil Ellery from St.Columb Major OCS, who went to have a look at the site and found a pile of quartz rocks dumped along the side of a hedge adjacent to a gate in the possible vicinity of where the possible "quoit and stone circle" may have been. The HER records a possible ploughed out barrow across the road at SW9003 6574.

## BOSLOW STONE THEORY

The Boslow inscribed stone outside St. Just in Penwith [SW3925 3305] stands at a crossroads of ancient trackways and is on the boundary of St. Just and Sancreed parishes. The stone is in its original position at the head of a stone-lined grave and bears a single name which can only be read at midday when the sun is exactly in the south: TAETVERA. This is Latinised 7th century Cornish: Taithuere = "exalter of the journey". The stone is now at some risk from modern farm machinery as a recent picture shows that deep rutted tracks have been made very close to, and over the grave.



Craig Weatherhill has recently come up with an interesting theory about the grave. He says:- "A contemporary incised cross on the southern face of the stone, and Alpha-Omega symbols under the inscription, indicate that this is the grave of an early Celtic priest, but which one? 'Taithuere' could be a 'name taken in religion', e.g. Wynfrith became St Boniface; Magonus was the birth name of St Patrick; and every Pope in history has done it, too. Was there a local priest of this era who was known for taking himself off on frequent journeys? There was: St Just himself, actually a man called Yestin, who also journeyed to his other churches at St Just in Roseland and Gorran Haven, while there are tales of his visits to St Achebran at St Keverne. Then there's the name of this stone in 1613: Crowze East (crows Ust, "St Just's cross"). Is this the gravestone of St Just?"

## WELLS CORNER

*A regular feature on Cornwall's holy wells*  
**Menacuddle well [SX0118 5325]**



Menacuddle well, near St. Austell, lies most picturesquely amongst trees and rhododendrum bushes by a river and a waterfall, reached by a bridge across the stream. It has a 15th century well house, restored in the 1920s as a tribute to a member of the Sawle family of the Menacuddle estate who was killed in WWI. However, it has over recent years sadly deteriorated and is in need of some TLC. A local group, the Friends of Menacuddle Well, have been formed under the auspices of STAR (St. Austell Renewables), a local community group, and they applied for a grant from the new Tesco 'Bags of Help' fund for community projects. Three groups in Cornwall were short-listed for the annual award, and the Friends were given a total of at least £8000 to help them with their project. They intend to restore the well and create a plan for its future maintenance, and once the initial project has been completed, to extend their work to the surrounding area.

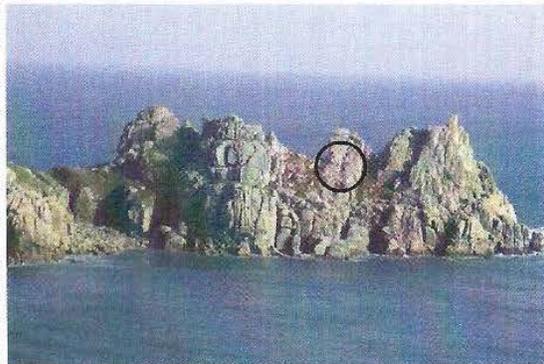
## LOGAN STONES: they moved the earth for me

by **Rory Te’Tigo**

Granite or porphyric rock is the base rock of the Penwith peninsula. In a few places it is also possible to find greenstone, blue elvin and slate. But granite infused with metal ores of tin, copper, and iron is what you can find in abundance in this most westerly peninsula of Cornwall. Granite is a name that derives from the Latin word “granu” for grain. And crystalized grains of the minerals feldspar, quartz and mica as well as a variety of amphibole minerals is what constitutes our local granite. This mix of mineral crystals varies in its quantities and as a result the colour and consistency of the local granite can be different within a few dozen of yards. An important quality of the local granite is that these minerals have different expansion rates at different temperatures. This is the reason for a temperature related “weathering” or degrading of the local granite that leads to the natural creation of “tors” or stacks of granite that sometimes includes large pieces of rock that are finely balanced on top of earth-fast stone.

This occurs not very often and if one looks around these “tors,” it is possible to see that for every finely balanced “logan stone” there are many other tor stones that were not in balance when the weathering parted them from their base rock. These toppled and fell and now lie next to their original perches. Naturally balanced “rocking stones”, Cornish “logan stones” occur in all areas of Cornish granite upland but they are rare. So they did not escape the observations of our forebears. It is easy to understand that they saw them as special places; places that were holy and by gently rocking these stones that can weigh several tons they sought to contact a higher self, the venerated spirits of their own forebears and the great earth mother goddess herself.

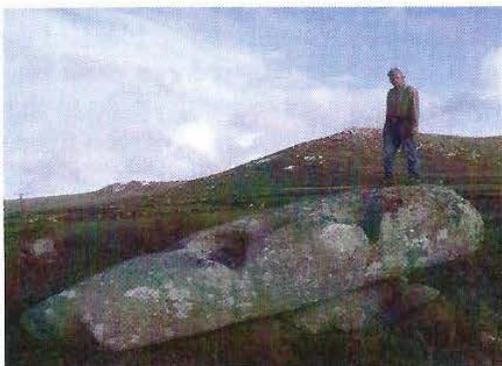
Unfortunately logan stones also attract hooligans and other idiots who try to topple them from their perches. The best known case of hooliganism was the toppling of the well-known Treen Logan Stone [SW3968 3810] in 1824 by the Royal Navy Lieutenant Hugh Colvill Goldsmith who caused it to slip about three feet where it lodged in a crevice. Because of the strength of local outrage about this act of wanton vandalism he was made to restore the rock to its rightful place. This cost him £130 8s 6d - a large sum of money in 1824. It is alleged that the Treen Logan Stone nevertheless no longer rocks as it was not put back into its proper position.



*Treen logan stone [circled] - second outcrop from the end.*

This Logan Rock has an interesting legend attached to it. The logan stone was used by a giant to sit on it whilst his wife sat on another rock, the Lady Giants Chair nearby. Another giant that lived in a cave below had become attracted to the giant's wife. So one day the cave giant stabbed the other giant in the belly and pushed him into the sea. The giants of fairy-tales most possibly were the tribal leaders of old and the cliff castle of Treryn Dinas, in whose western corner the Treen Logan Stone can be found, was most possibly a stronghold used by them.

There are three other logan stones I want to introduce to the readers of Meyn Mamvro. Two are in the parish of Zennor. The largest is the "Giants or Witches Rock" [SW4538 3877]. It can be found in an area of ploughed out stones to the north-north-east of Zennor Churchtown. This area of scrub is not easy to enter. At times I have found this stone was unbalanced and no longer resting just on one contact point but on three and therefore no longer rocking. At other times I found that it is quite easy to rock it. It has several dips, large bowls that were most possibly created by fire and weathering on its



*Giants/Witch's Rock, Zennor*

northern, lower area. These dips not only change the balance of this rock but also make it easier to climb on to it. It is reported that one can be initiated as a witch by walking around this stone nine times anticlockwise (widdershins) on a night without a moon, or by climbing up on to the stone nine times. Walking around this stone is very difficult as it is in the middle of an area full of boulders, ivy, gorse and blackberry bushes. Therefore walking around it, in the dark, nine times takes a very devoted person indeed.

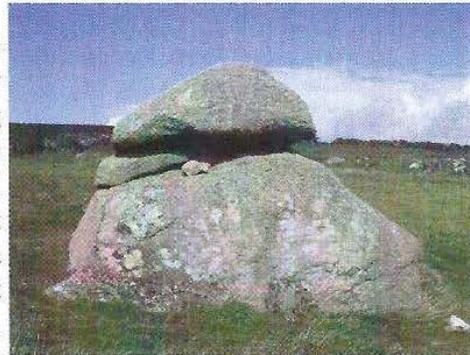
The other Logan stone in Zennor that I want to introduce to you is on Zennor Carn [SW4629 3810], a large rocky hill inland from Zennor. If you walk up into Zennor valley and take a scrabbly footpath to the left, up the hill close to some cottages, you will end up on the southern end of Zennor Carn. You will find the Logan Stone on the south-western fringe of the rocky outcrop. This stone makes a deep rumbling sound when rocked. Standing on it, rocking it



*Logan stone, Zennor Carn [circled]*

and looking across the valley one can become quite disorientated and enter into a meditative state of mind and thus find a way into the otherworld.

The third Logan Stone is visible from the coastal path just south of Land's End. I remember seeing this boulder many years ago whilst walking on the coastal path. I thought at the time that it was a quoit, the remains of an early Bronze Age burial chamber. Much later when I to investigate it [at SW3492 2415], it turned out that what from a distance looked to me like four slabs of Granite that formed a small chamber with a capstone on top, was actually a single square block of earthfast rock with a finely balanced large stone on top. It was quite easy for me to climb up on to this stone. But



*Logan Stone near Land's End*

unless one focuses ones eyes on a fixed point on the horizon, rocking the stone felt scary. Once I had overcome this frightening feeling by focusing my eyes on a fixed point I then realised that if I unfocused whilst still looking into the distance I was able get into a deep meditative state. The rolling movement of the stone, the rolling of the waves and the gentle movement of my body combined to create an experience as if I was standing on a threshold into the "Other World." My feet were firmly on the rock so that I could maintain the movement of the stone but my mind began to travel across the waves, along the shining path of light reflected on the water towards 'Tir-na-nog', the Island of the Blessed of Celtic mythology. Once I stopped actively rocking the stone it still took some time before it stopped moving me. I have to admit that this logan stone moved the earth for me.

And maybe if these stones are approached in a quiet, respectful and gentle way they may move the earth for you as well; be it by gently touching a tree, a rock or a tuft of grass, a logan stone or just a pebble from a beach. The entire world is full of spirit, some places more so than others. And logan stones are definitely stones that are outstanding in their ability to act as gateways to the understanding of the beauty of the green earth and the life upon it.

*Photos p.10 [c] Meyn Mamvro p.11 & 12 [c] Rory Te'Tigo.*

### **Other logan stones in West Penwith**

Other logan stones recorded in West Penwith by Peter Stanier\* include ones on the moors at **Boswarlas Lehau** near St.Just (mentioned by Borlase), apparently no longer extant; on the summit of **Carn Galva** "which readily and easily oscillates"; on the summit of **Rosewall Hill** (which West Cornwall Dowsers looked for but could not find); and on nearby **Tregarthen Hill** where "several logan stones can be found: in the 19<sup>th</sup> century one was called the Cradle because of its shape and a large cavity on top, and there are at least two examples of double logans, where the motion of the top stone sets off the one it is resting on". Stanier also mentions several coastal logan stones in addition to the one at Treryn Dinas [see p.10]. These are at **Gwennap Head** to the west of Treryn Dinas; and at **Bosigran Castle** on the north coast, just north of Carn Galva, of which Polsue [1868] says: "On top of the castle there are traces of defences, and also a flat logan stone, about 10 ft (3m) long, 7½ ft (2.3m) broad, and 28 ft (8.6m) in circumference and easily moved."

There is also a logan stone at **Nancedra (Trink Hill)** near St.Ives [SW5048 3715], of which Robert Hunt [1871] said: "Numbers of people would formerly visit a remarkable logan stone, near Nancedrea, which had been, by supernatural power, impressed with some peculiar sense at midnight. Although it was quite impossible to move this stone during daylight, or indeed by human power at any other time, it would rock like a cradle exactly at midnight. Many a child has been cured of rickets by being placed naked at this hour on the twelve-o'clock stone. If, however, the child was 'misbegotten', or, if it was the offspring of dissolute parents, the stone would not move, and consequently no cure was effected."



*Twelve o'clock rock on Trink Hill*

### Other logan stones in Cornwall

One of the most well-known logan stones is **Men Amber** near Crowan [SW6501 3225]. It was tipped over in about 1650 by Shruballs, the governor of Pendennis Castle for Cromwell's regime. This may have been prompted by one of Merlin's prophecies that it would stand until England had no king. Borlase said that "the vulgar used to resort to this place at particular times of the year, and payed to this rock more respect than was thought becoming to good Christians". However, the local Methodists met there in the 1930s, so they must have had their own 'respect' for the site.



*Men Amber near Crowan*

Other logan stones have been identified by Stanier\* at **Helman Tor**, at least one on top of the Tor [SX0620 6155], and one called the Cup and Saucer Rock which lies south of the main hill [SX0619 6125]. One of the smaller stones on one side of the hill that is a logan rock is actually a double, rocking the stone underneath as well. There are several logan stones on Bodmin Moor: one on the top of **Roughtor** [SX1452 8075] with rock basins in its upper surface; one further along the ridge at **Showery Tor**, that is surrounded by a ring cairn [SX1490 8125]; one on **Louden Hill** [SX1375 8037]; the topmost stone of the **Cheesewring** [SX2575 7242] which Borlase claimed could be rocked with a pole; and the strangely-named **Elephant Rock** [SX1951 7908] which lies on the south-west slopes of The Beacon on Hendra Downs near to Trezelland. Logan rocks were traditionally used in Cornwall to make vows because it was said that no one with treachery in their heart could make one rock, and John Michell claimed that they were often at the end of alignments in Cornwall, and that they played an important part in the generation of the terrestrial current and its transmission down alignments of pillars and stone circles.

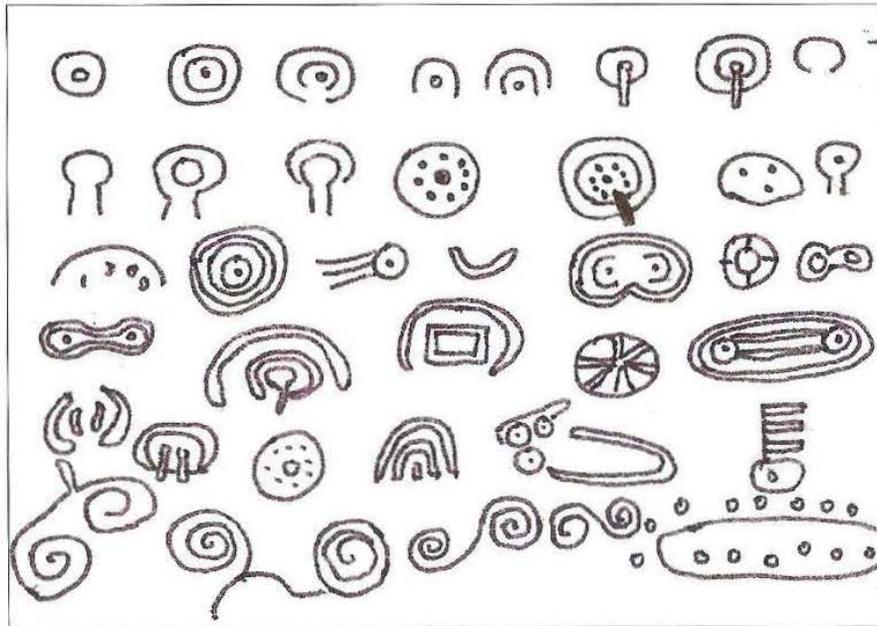
\**"The Work of Giants: Great Granite Rocks of Cornwall and Scilly"* by Peter Stanier [St.Ives, 1988]. Additional information by Andy Norfolk.

## PREHISTORIC ROCK ART IN CORNWALL

by Cheryl Traffon

Until quite recently, it was thought that there was very little prehistoric rock art in Cornwall. The areas in the north of Britain, most notably the Peak District, the Yorkshire moors, Cumbria, Northumberland, and SW Scotland, along with parts of Ireland, were considered to be the richest in rock art, as it has come to be called. So what does prehistoric rock art consist of? Typically, it has been created using a hard stone to peck out abstract grooves and shapes (sometimes called petroglyphs) in natural rocks in the landscape. By their very nature, these sites are hard to date, though it is generally assumed that they were created in prehistoric times, probably as far back as the Palaeolithic and Neolithic periods. These abstract motifs have also been made on a number of megaliths (standing stones, kerb stones, barrows, etc) that can be securely dated to the Neolithic period. Well known examples of the latter are the stones at Newgrange and Knowth in Ireland, and the standing stones of Long Meg in Cumbria and Temple Wood in SW Scotland.

Although no two rock art stone patterns are identical, nevertheless there are common motifs to nearly all of them. These are sometimes referred to as 'cup and ring' carvings, and consist of cups, with or without curved grooves, cups with grooves running from them, rings (complete and gapped), arcs, grooves enclosing multiple cups, rosettes, petals, spirals and circular dots (sun bursts). Some rock art is very simple, consisting of mainly cup marks and grooves; others are incredibly complex with intricate patterns and motifs. Some examples, taken from a number of sites across Britain and Ireland, are shown below:-



So, what were these symbols and shapes intended to represent? There are nearly as many theories and ideas about this as there are motifs themselves! Kate Wilson, inspector of ancient monuments at Historic England (formerly English Heritage) said: “There are many theories as to what rock art carvings mean. They may have played a role in fire, feasting and offering activities, or been used as signposts, or to mark territory. They may have a spiritual significance. In hunter-gatherer communities those places where mountains touch the sky or the sea reaches the shore are often considered the domain of supernatural ancestors, and most rock art is found in those areas.”

Amongst the researchers who have sought for meaning in the motifs are Richard Bradley [1], who in 1997 suggested that they are depictions of ‘phosphenes’, entropic phenomenon produced through the disturbance of the optic nerve that resulted from altered states of consciousness. Such altered states might have been induced by the use of hallucinogenic drugs, evidence for which exists from Neolithic and Bronze Age Europe. He later went on to suggest that the circular designs on the open air petroglyphs might have represented a pathway that led into the rock itself.

In 1999 Stan Beckensall [2] reviewed a great number of possible theories, including the possibility that they were used for boundary or route markers, or that they were maps of local sacred areas and sites, or even maps of stars. Other theories included suggestions that they represented the passage of the sun throughout the solar year, particularly at the solstices and equinoxes, or the passage of the moon throughout a lunar month. Some credence may be given to at least some of these symbols that are placed on megalithic stones in barrows or entrance graves that have solar or lunar alignments, such as Newgrange and Loughcrew in Ireland.

In 2005 David Lewis-Williams and David Pearce [3] applied ideas of religious experiences caused by neurological elements in the human brain, combined with different levels of consciousness, to the petroglyphs. The extension of this theory suggests that the rock art sites were shrines of some kind, where Neolithic peoples went to connect with their deities. Finally, in 2011 Brian A. Smith and Alan Walker [4] argued that sunlight and water, essentials for survival, were key to the Neolithic mind, and were the reason for the creation of a complex ritual landscape reflected in the siting and motifs of the rock art. They believed that prehistoric rock art was created as a celebration of life and the cyclical passage of time, a form of early spirituality, accompanied by unknown ritual practices.

#### References

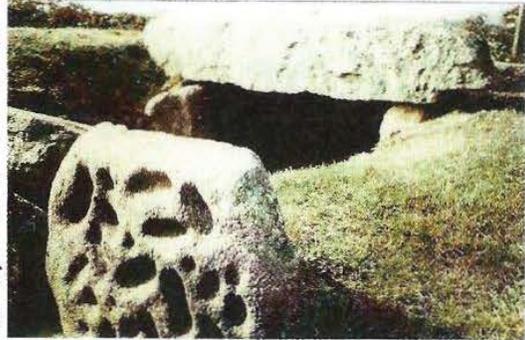
- [1] Bradley, Richard: *Rock Art and the Prehistory of Atlantic Europe: Signing the Land*. [Routledge, 1997].
- [2] Beckensall, Stan: *British Prehistoric Rock Art*. [Tempus, 1999]; *Prehistoric Rock Art in Britain* [Amberley, 2009].
- [3] Lewis-Williams, David & Pearce, David: *Inside the Neolithic Mind: Consciousness, Cosmos and the Realm of the Gods*. [Thames and Hudson, 2005].
- [4] Smith, Brian A. & Walker, Alan A. (2011). *Rock Art and Ritual: Mindscapes of Prehistory*. [Amberley, 2011]

With all these theories in mind, it is now time to turn to the examples of prehistoric rock art from Cornwall.

### CUPMARKED STONES

#### TREGIFFIAN BARROW [SW4303 2442]

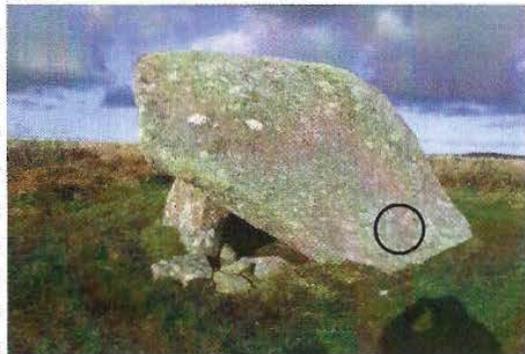
This site is perhaps the best known cupmarked stone site in Cornwall. The entrance grave dates from the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, and the eastern entrance stone (original in Truro Museum and replica on-site) was inscribed with 13 cupmarks and 12 ovals, which Ian Cooke has suggested were intended to represent the 12 new or full moons and 13 full or new moons of a lunar year. The stone was originally pointing *inwards* to the tomb, showing that it was



originally intended to be seen by the dead. There are other cupmarks on other stones in the tomb: one on top of a roofing stone, and others on stones found inside during a 1967 excavation. The site lies on an alignment that runs through several holed stones, which points to an azimuth of  $45^{\circ} 47'$ , very close to the midwinter moonrise at its northerly extreme. The meaning of the rock art may therefore relate to the moon's cycles and the spirits of the dead ancestors buried within the grave.

#### CHÛN QUIT [SW4023 3396] & MULFRA QUIT [SW 4518 3526]

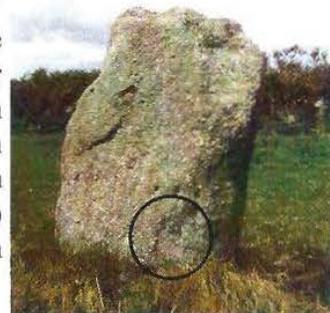
Both of these two quoits (or dolmens as they are archaeologically known) have a cupmark on the top side of the capstone. Current thinking is that dolmens were covered with a mound up to the capstone, which may have been used for excarnation (the laying out of dead bodies for carrion birds to remove the flesh). The presence of just one cupmark on each of the capstones is unlikely to be a coincidence, and may have been intended to represent the sun. If it is similar to Tregiffian then it also clearly relates to the dead and the afterlife.

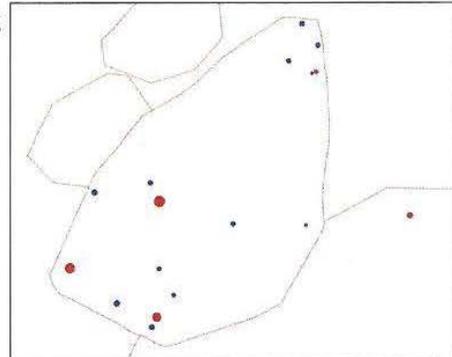


*Mulfra Quoit (cupmark ringed)*

#### CASTALLACK STONE [SW4540 2545] *Cupmarks ringed*

Castallack stone stands about a mile to the east from the Tregiffian Barrow on the Lamorna plateau. On the stone near the base are a horizontal line of 7 cupmarked stones, with 2 at an angle below. As far as is known, none of the other menhirs in West Penwith have cup marks on them, so this one is rather an anomaly. Does it mark an alignment of sites (the stone is on two such alignments)? Or perhaps even a star map, as the pattern resembles to some extent the Pleiades (Seven Sisters)?



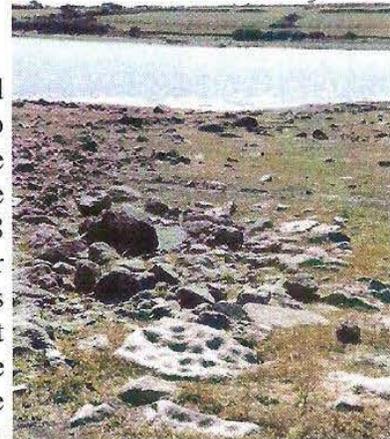
**THREE BROTHERS OF GRUGWITH [SW7616 1978]**

*Survey by James Gossip [CAU].  
Red indicates prominent  
cupmarks, blue less obvious ones.*

This enigmatic site stands behind Zoar Garage on the Lizard peninsula, and may be the remains of an entrance grave. It incorporates a natural boulder (grounder) within the monument, but also has an artificially shaped capstone that is covered with cupmarks - at least 17 in total, though some are more prominent than others. Again this has similarities with the cupmark on the capstones of Chûn and Mulfra Quoits.

**STITHIANS RESERVOIR [SW7171 3536]**

Lying beneath the waters of Stithians reservoir (but revealed in the summer droughts of 1984, 1989 and 1990) are 10 cup marked stones, all with multiple cup marks, one stone having been broken into three, making 12 stones in all. One stone (the broken one) was decorated with at least 48 cupmarks, but some of the others had only half a dozen or so. On most of the stones the arrangement of the cupmarks seems to be quite random, but on others, particularly the flat slabs, it is possible to see some degree of organisation in the form of straight lines, arcs and circles. The size of the cupmarks is similar to those on Tregiffian barrow, averaging 5-7cm in diameter and 2-3cm deep. The stones are situated over a distance of

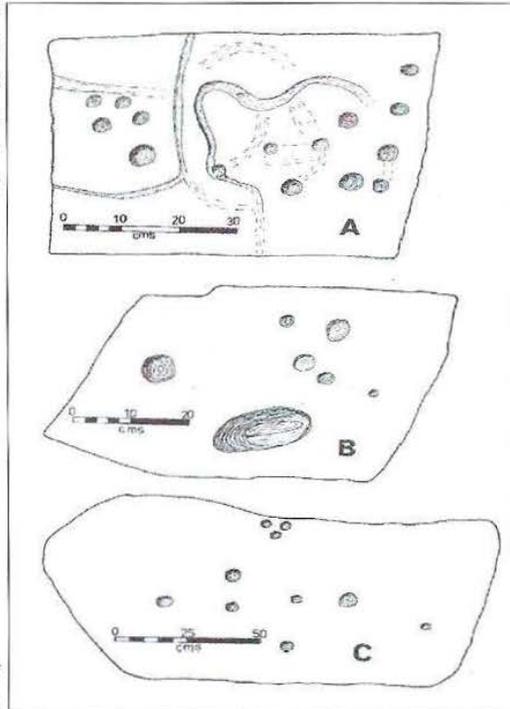


approx. 150m, and the HER says that "they may have had a symbolic significance or ritual function". Unlike the stones already listed (on quoits, entrance graves and a standing stone), these Stithian stones seem to be standalone, as no monuments have been recorded in this spot. However, possible upper Paleolithic and Mesolithic activity has been recorded here, and Neolithic artefacts found on the E shoreline.

**TRETHELLAN FARM. NEWQUAY [SW7980 6140].** A cupmarked stone was found in a Bronze Age round house, with others deposited in 'ritual hollows' nearby.

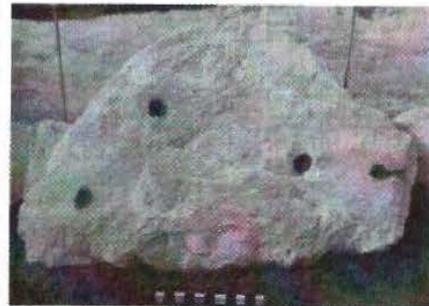
**STARAPARK BARROW [SX1336 8630]**

In 1968 a barrow at Starapark near Camelford was ploughed out and three cup marked kerb stones removed [drawing right from *Cornish Archaeology* 15 (1976)]. These three stones (of Cornish slate or killas) were heavily indented with round and oval cupmarks, and one with deep grooves. Two of the stones were displayed outside a local school, and are now in the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro. A photograph of one of them taken by Mark Camp is shown below.

**TREGULLAND BURROW [SX 2001 8674]**

About 5mls (8km) east of Starapark was another barrow that was excavated by Paul Ashbee in 1958 and also produced evidence of up to 18 cup marked stones. Ashbee says\*: “The ruined and gutted barrow proved to have had a complex structure. Stake holes denoting withdrawn stakes, an infilled ‘ritual’ pit, a satellite grave containing a cremation and arrowheads, and most probably the central grave pit, were the features of the first phase of its construction. A cairn-ring, with a buttressing bank, the soil for which was dug from an encircling ditch, and its turf covering, comprised the second. A great slab bearing cup-marks and an ‘eyebrow’ motif [photos right], and also other lesser cup-marked and ornamented slabs, were incorporated in the cairn-ring and bank. Cup-marked stones recovered from the disturbed central area suggested the one-time existence of a stone-built grave incorporating such elements.” It has been suggested [by Aileen Fox in *South-West England 3500BC-600AD*] that these cup marks resemble eyes intended as a protection for the dead buried within the grave.

\* “The excavation of Tregulland Burrow” from *The Antiquaries Journal* Vol 38 issue 2-4, July 1958



A. Tregulland Burrow. The great slab (left) inner face



A. Tregulland Burrow. The great slab (left) inner face

Other cup-marked stones found in barrows include **TRELIGGA** (near Trebarwith), where barrow 2 [SX0450 8559] and barrow 7 [SX0431 8515] both had cup-marked stones within.

### **HENDRABURNICK** [SX1321 8818]

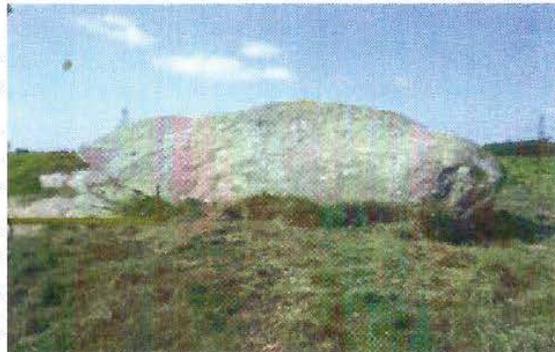
In the same area as Starapark and Tregulland barrows, to the north of Starapark and near to the source of the River Camel, lies a field, where a large propped stone, the Hendraburnick stone, stands. This stone is made of very hard material, epidiorite or greenstone, which had probably been sourced from the river valley below and dragged 600m (650 yds) up the slope to sit on the slate bedrock, propped at one end by smaller slate stones. It is narrower at one end than the other, and is 5.3m (17.2ft) long. Nearby at the eastern end lies a smaller, but still substantial, stone that may have originally been standing, but which dated from a later period to the propped stone. It is an unusual and enigmatic monument, that is nevertheless prehistoric in origin and is likely to have had a ritual or ceremonial function.

A few cup marks had been seen on the upper surface of the stone, but most of it was covered in lichen. The possibility of extracting a date for the creation of the stone led to a CAS excavation of the site in 2013, led by archaeologist Andy Jones.\* Once the lichen had been pulled off the stone, an astounding total of 60 cupmarks were found, together with long grooved channels running down the stone in a kind of sunburst pattern. Excavation around the stone showed that it sat on a platform of slate

that was edged by a kerb of water-rolled quartz stones. A barbed and angled arrowhead and a faience bead were also recovered, along with charcoal that gave a date of 2750-2350 BCE, the late Neolithic, and comparable with similar dated sites in Kilmartin, SW Scotland. There were also found many smashed pieces of quartz, and subsequent study of them revealed that they had not been used as tools for carving the cup marks. This suggested that the stone had been worked elsewhere and that the quartz had been brought to the site and deliberately smashed there. Andy Jones suggested that the abundance of smashed quartz might imply night time rituals. Quartz has triboluminescent properties, that is, it gives off light when smashed, and of course reflects moonlight eerily. There is ethnographic evidence for this type of ritual from studies of Native Americans.

This is a major site for cup mark study, and is in fact the most decorated site in the whole of the south-west. It combines elements of sunburst pattern, quartz, and possible light creation and manipulation, all indicators of ritual activity at this site.

\* *Excavations at Hendraburnick, 2013. CAS Newsletter 138, June 2015.*



*Photos [c] Carl Thorpe*

## PETROSOMATOGLYPHS

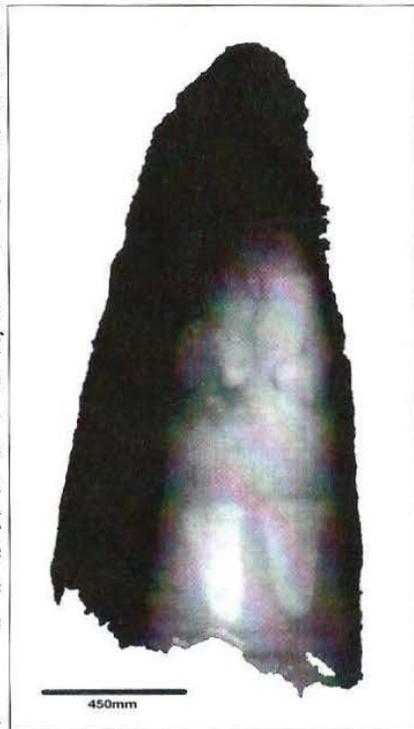
### BOSCAWEN-ÛN CENTRE STONE [SW4122 2736]

In 1986 Ian Cooke first recorded the presence of a pair of carvings on the north-east side of the centre stone at Boscawen-ûn stone circle, which he interpreted as representations of stone axes. Recently, Thomas Goskar has suggested that in fact they may have been intended to represent a pair of feet with soles outward. He undertook a photogrammetry [3D] survey of the stone which confirmed the carvings and suggested the presence of a row of what might be 'toes' on the right hand foot. These are not dissimilar to a relief found on a lost (but recorded) stone from the Dolmen du Petit-Mont at Morbihan in Brittany, though the Breton ones are much more clearly delineated. Interestingly, among cup and ring marks on a boulder at Carnasserie, 2 miles from Kilmartin in Argyll (SW Scotland), are also carved a pair of feet. There are other examples of feet carvings, which are probably natural in origin, in Cornwall and other places. It is impossible to date these, but at many of them legends and folklore have become attached [see below].

Goskar has also suggested that 500mm above the feet carvings are a pair of circular features in low relief that are similar to those found in Brittany, which have been interpreted as breasts. For example, in the gallery-grave of Kerguntuil at Tregastel in Brittany are nine pairs of breasts above engraved necklaces. If these on Boscawen-ûn are deliberate, this is a very exciting discovery, showing that such images carved into the stone can be found in Cornwall as well. They have traditionally been interpreted as representations of the Mother Goddess.

### OTHER FOOTPRINT CARVINGS

Interestingly, at Creeg Tol, a rocky outcrop overlooking the circle, there is the shaped footprint of what was supposedly a giant. In many places, particularly in Scotland and Ireland, natural footprints carved into rock were places where local rulers or chieftans had to stand to establish their right to rule over the land, symbolically to 'wed' the Goddess of the Land. One such footprint, called 'King Arthur's Footprint' is on the rock high above King Arthur's Castle in Tintagel, that Professor Charles Thomas has suggested may have served a similar function for the early Medieval rulers there. There are also other marks on a large stone not far from the Devil's Quoit in St. Columb, at the edge of Goss Moor, said to have been made by the horse upon which Arthur rode when he resided at Castle-an-Dinas and hunted on the moors.



[Above] centre stone showing carvings [Below] photogrammetry of stone © Thomas Goskar

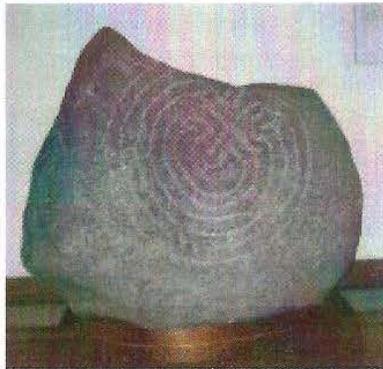
## OTHER PETROGLYPHS OR PETROGRAPHS

### ROCKY VALLEY LABYRINTHS [SX 0727 8935]

At Rocky Valley, between Tintagel and Boscastle in North Cornwall, about half way down the valley lies the ruins of a 17thC mill. On a rock face behind the mill are carved two left-hand unicursal labyrinths. A plaque nearby confidently ascribes them to the Bronze Age, but more recent research has suggested that they may be much more recent, perhaps only a few hundred years old. The argument for this is that they were not pecked out in the manner of other



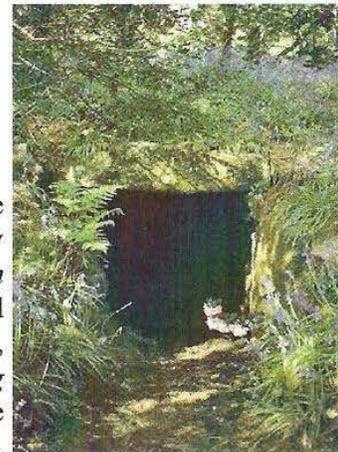
Neolithic and Bronze Age rock art, but were carved in a continuous line. Also, although spirals can be frequently found in prehistoric rock art (especially in Ireland), there is no record anywhere else of a complete labyrinth. There is however, record of a very similar right-hand unicursal labyrinth carving (made as a continuous line) on a stone found at Hollywood in Co. Wicklow, Ireland (now in the Dublin Archaeological Museum). This can be securely dated to the 6th century CE, so it is perfectly possible that the Rocky Valley carvings may date from this same period, the time when people from Ireland were travelling to Cornwall. It may be too fanciful to suggest that both the Irish and Cornish carvings were made by the same people, who left Ireland for Cornwall, but it is an intriguing possibility.



[Above] one of the Rocky Valley carvings  
[Below] the Hollywood stone

### BOLEIGH FOGOU [SW4370 2520]

This Iron Age fogou has a possible indistinct carving on the on the left hand upright stone of the present-day SW entrance [drawing right]. This has been seen as an upper part of a figure, carrying a stave or spear in one hand and a lozenge or possibly serpent's head in the other. It has been variously interpreted as a symbol of a fertility cult to ensure a successful harvest (Evelyn Clarke in *Cornish Fogous*); a Celtic hooded godlet (*genii cucullati*) found elsewhere in Gaul (Craig Weatherhill); a Celtic god of healing, Clew an Nemed, found elsewhere in Brittany (Jo May in *Living with a Fogou* Meyn Mamvro no.3); or a Cernunnos figure, the Celtic horned god with his serpent and remains of a horn. However, it was recently reported that that a Scottish University researcher had taken a scan of the mouth of the fogou and declared the 'figure' to be the result of natural fissures in the rock.



## MISCELLANEOUS EXAMPLES

Finally, we take a brief look at some cupmarked stones that may, or may not, have had anything to do with prehistoric sites:-

**GIANTS QUOIT, PROSPIDNICK** [SW6537 3107]. This rock, recorded in a tithe map of 1788 on Prospidnick Hill in Kerrier district, was considered to be a genuine cromlech, though HES thought it might be natural. West Cornwall Dowsers visited it in 2009 and it dowsed as a megalithic structure, perhaps a pseudo-quoit. On the top of the stone there are some cup marks which are said to be the finger prints of the giant.



**CUP MARKED STONE, GOLDHERRING** [SW412 281]. In 1866 the antiquarian J.T. Blight recorded a cup-marked stone at Goldherring within 180m (195 yds) of the prehistoric settlement of Goldherring [see MM80 p.7] and close to an ancient trackway to Caer Bran hill fort. The markings consisted of five small circular depressions varying from 5 - 7.6cm (2 - 3in) in diameter incised with a curved line above them.



ROCK MARKINGS, SARCKEEN, CORNWALL,  
Scale, 3-inches to 1 foot.

The OS who visited the site in 1940 recorded that the farmer said that the West Cornwall Field Club had looked for the rock without success.

**TREAVE FARM** [SW3862 2732]. Treave Farm lies next to the A30 Penzance to Land's End road, west of Crows-an-Wra and south of Chapel Carn Brea. In 1996 Rory Te'Tigo noted a cup-marked stone in the outbuildings of the farm, approx. 1 m west of the farm buildings. The stone has at least a dozen cup marks on its eastern face, and the HES [CAU] believe it to be Bronze Age.

*Photo [c] John Gould, HER*

There is a further list of over 50 cupmarked stones on the HER database, which was also given in *Cornish Archaeology* 26 [1987] and a selection given in MM17 p.14-15.

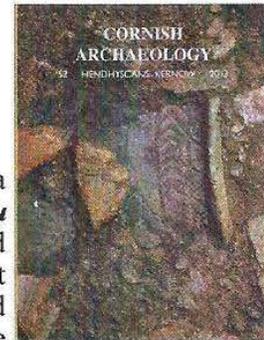


The rock art found in Cornwall consists largely of cupmarked stones, and the elaborate designs found in some other areas [illustrated on p.14] are mainly absent (with the possible exception of Hendraburnick [see p.19]). Nevertheless, many have been found in a prehistoric context, which can be dated to the Bronze Age period. The recent discoveries at Boscawen-ûn [see p.20] also show that further research may produce some interesting new finds, that could take rock art here into intriguing new directions.

## JOURNAL REVIEWS

Cornish Archaeology 52 [2013]

Published by Cornwall Archaeological Society

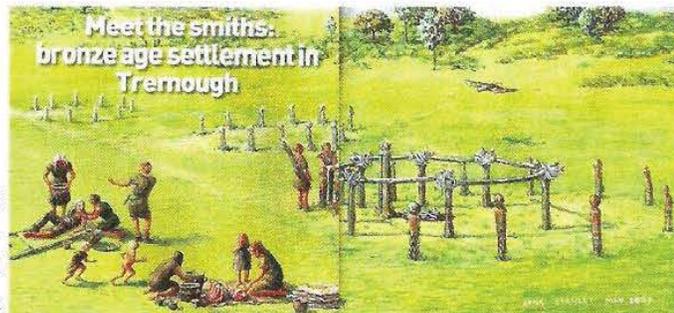


The latest volume of the CAS's annual publication includes a major article on the excavations at *Boden prehistoric site and fogou* by James Gossip. As always, the technical data is detailed and comprehensive, but it is the discussion of fogous that will be of most interest to MM readers. After reviewing all the possible uses and functions of these enigmatic monuments, Gossip concludes: "The physical attributes of fogous that influenced how they were portrayed in folklore may also have been the elements which shaped how they were used and perceived in ritual and ceremony. Restricted access and the restrictions often built into passages - their small lintelled 'doorways', bottlenecks and 'creep' passages, as demonstrated at Boden, Halligye, Carn Euny and others - support the notion of fogous as 'secret' places, to be visited perhaps only by those that were powerful, initiated, invited or sacred, in order to engage in spiritual ceremonies or, detached from the world above, to commune with the world of spirits below. The long approach trench at Boden, ultimately leading people underground and into the main fogou passage, could be seen as a design feature that reinforces a ritual function for the structure." Can't say much fairer than that!

### British Archaeology

Jan/Feb 2016

Published by Council  
for British Archaeology



The first volume this year of this bi-monthly publication is something of a 'Cornish' issue. As well as the report on the Boscawen-ûn centre stone carvings [see p.20 of

this MM]. there is a further article by Tom Goskar and Michelle Brown on the carvings on a medieval cross base in Gulval churchyard, and a major piece entitled *Meeting the smiths: Bronze Age settlement in Tremough* by CAU & University of Exeter archaeologists Andy M. Jones, James Gossip and Henrietta Quinnell. The results of these excavations have already been written up by James Gossip & Andy M. Jones in 'Cornish Archaeology no. 48-49, and in a publication by James Gossip & Andy M. Jones entitled 'Archaeological investigations of a later Prehistoric and Romano-British landscape at Tremough, Penryn, Cornwall' [BAR, 2007]. This British Archaeology article summarises the findings and shows that there were originally 5 timber circles there (well illustrated by Jane Stanley) used for formal ceremonial activity that was also linked to the production of bronze at the site. A settlement with two round houses and associated buildings was also found. A good summary of what has been a lengthy and complex archaeological investigation.

## 20 YEARS AGO

### *Delving into the pages of MM from the past*

Twenty years ago, the Cornish Earth Mysteries Group was in full swing, with its programme of talks in the winter and site visits in the summer. One such site visit was to the Nine Maidens stone row on St.Breck Downs, where a group of dowsers tried to find out if there had originally been a second stone row, running parallel to the existing one. They found that the existing row of nine stones originally had another four at the northern end, and that there had indeed been a parallel row of stones about 25ft to the west. A subsequent search of a nearby ditch revealed one of the original stones, 2m (6ft 4in) in height.



After lunch, the Group visit the Mên Gurtha standing stone on St.Breck Downs, and also found the stone mentioned by Copeland Borlase in 1872 as a quasi-dolmen, lying in the undergrowth. From there they went to the St.Evel Airfield standing stone, and discovered another small (1.2m or 4ft) upright stone in the woods opposite. Finally, on what proved to be a very productive day for the Group, they were led by Howard Balmer to a standing stone that he had discovered near to St.Evel, the Treburrick menhir [SW8588 7011] *[photo right]*. This was a 2.2m (7ft) high stone made of white quartz, similar to others in the area. This stone was subsequently included, with other smaller ones in the area, in a booklet written and published by Howard, entitled 'Stone to Rock, River to Sea' and was accepted by the Cornish Archaeological Unit as a genuine menhir and placed on their Historic Environment Record. It is a reminder of how archaeologically rich, but still little known and appreciated, is this area of St.Breck Downs and its hinterland, and how unprotected and under threat it remains today with a huge wind farm application next to the Nine Maidens stone row having recently been made.



The final visit of that summer was to Halligye fogou on the Lizard for an unusual day of imaging (going into an altered state of consciousness to see what images might arise). Several people received entropic images of suns with rays and of shapes and faces in the rock. In the darkness, devoid of any sensory input, a number of people heard loud and continuous chirruping sounds (like speeded-up voices) for the duration of the session. Afterwards the Group did some ohmning and chanting in the chamber, and a digerydoo was played in the creep passage, to round off an intriguing day's investigation.

## ***John Michell Symposium 2016: The Earth Spirit***

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# Thoughts and Observations

## About the Map of Penwith Ancient Sites and Alignments

by *Palden Jenkins* - Part 3  
[www.ancientpenwith.org](http://www.ancientpenwith.org)

### Cognitive landscapes

I was interested to find that the lines I found often had a different character to most of the existing lines in the Meyn Mamvro list, identified by other researchers, particularly John Michell. This has something to do with differing perceptions of the magical landscape. Many of my lines tend to be longer-distance – partially because using the facility of Google Maps, with their zoomable function, permitted me to view the terrain differently from what I would see on taped-together, tea-splattered Ordnance Survey maps spread out across the floor. But it's also a matter of what you're looking for. Ley-hunting in Penwith developed out of John Michell's seminal work. He ranked stone circles and standing stones highly, paying less attention to hills and headlands. I have tended to rank hilltops, stone circles and quoits highly, followed by standing stones. This has led to different results.

Much thinking in ley-hunting was also greatly affected by rancour and scepticism in the late 1970s and 1980s, causing researchers to tighten their criteria and restrain their imaginations. It helped with accuracy and verifiability, but it restricted intuition, soured creativity and also drove many people off ley-hunting. It also largely failed to convince the sceptics, who cooked up all sorts of ifs and buts to wriggle out of the challenge. In discovering new alignments, sometimes I made logical assumptions, looking at a site such as Gurnards Head and trying out alignments from it, but the best discoveries were more fortuitous and intuitive, found on an impulse.

By way of an example, the thought came to me of the topographic similarity between St Michael's Mount and Cape Cornwall as conical hills with a seascape backdrop. I checked whether there was an alignment between these two hills and, lo behold, there was, and it went straight through the Botrea Barrows, just up the hill behind my house! Suddenly, these old Bronze Age barrows took on a new significance. As the ley system of Penwith developed, forming two different zones, as mentioned above, the Botrea barrows became a sort of hinge or axle for Penwith. This alignment, #77, also divides Penwith in two halves, separating the northern and southern zones mentioned above.



*The largest (southernmost) Botrea Barrow*

The thought also came to mind that Caer Bran, just over the valley from Botrea, also on the hinge, might have been a gathering and meeting place, perhaps a neutral space, for the people of the two sectors. Its roundness is uncanny. Its location doesn't make a lot of defensive sense. Perhaps trading might have gone on there. But there is a feeling there also of a sealed-off space, separated from the surrounding landscape, where the focus then becomes inwards or upwards – a magical or ceremonial space, perhaps. The additional point on the St Michael's Mount to Cape Cornwall alignment is Caergwydden Round, an iron age round from around 500-300 BCE. So does this mean that Caergwydden Round was located and built there because of the pre-existing alignment, perhaps to plug into it, or that it is older than iron age, coeval with Botrea Barrows, then later modified into a round during the iron age? Geomancy would suggest the latter, though archaeology the former.

### Judgement calls

Some might doubt and question the alignments I have found crossing from Penwith to the Scillies – it makes sense that they exist, but from an accuracy viewpoint it's rather a head-scratcher. I had my doubts too, rooted in the norms and rules of earlier geomancers. However, when I found that some sites on the islands seemed intentionally aligned on prominent mainland features such as Cape Cornwall, Chapel Carn Brea, Maen Castle (near Sennen) and Carn Les Boel, all prominent bumps as seen from Scilly, things got more interesting and my antennae were twitching. I reflected on the emotional, ancestral and mythic connections ancient people in the Scillies and Penwith will have had – Sennen beach was then the harbour for the Scillies.

The ancients were avid travellers and mariners – the megalithic culture extended from Portugal to Sweden, and there was substantial traffic from West Penwith to Brittany, Wales and Ireland, and tin trading during the Bronze Age, 3,500 years ago, from St Michael's Mount. Then there's the question of signalling and ritual fires spanning the straits between Penwith and Scilly. I even found myself wondering whether any of the chambered cairns on the islands or the mainland coast were used for watching for fires and signals – the closest they had to a telescope. Though I might be wrong in that. For sailors, taking a fix on a particular point on the other side of the sound will have been important, as well as triangulating to Cape Cornwall and Carn Les Boel on each side of Sennen beach. Sail toward a point halfway between them as you head for the mainland and you'll come into sight of Sennen. It was alignment #78 that clinched it: an alignment from St Michael's Mount to Boscawen-ûn which, when extended, went through Maen Castle (one of the oldest 'cliff castles'), to Bonfire Carn on Bryher. Also on the alignment were the Chapel Downs cairns on St Martin's, the Longships Rocks off Sennen, and Ennis Farm menhir on Penwith. The matter was sealed. This was too significant, and the major sites connected chimed well with each other. Both Maen Castle and Bonfire Carn were signalling and sighting points (Chapel Carn Brea was another).



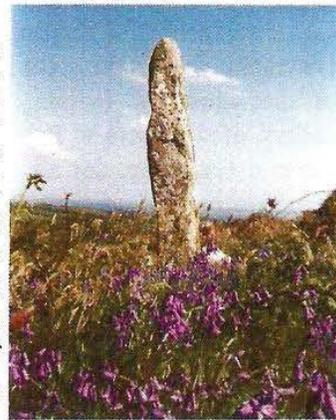
*Maen Castle, Sennen*

### Network nodes

Carn Brea near Camborne is known archaeologically as a very ancient and major site, going back at least to 3700 BCE. Judging by the alignments I've found connecting it with key sites in West Penwith, and also with its being on the Michael Line, Carn Brea seems to be a geomantic switching point between West Penwith and upcountry. Alignment #80 is quite impressive, going from Carn Brea to Trencrom Hill, then to Lanyon Quoit and one of the outlying cairns in the Tregeseal complex. A similar alignment, #108, goes from Carn Brea to St Michael's Mount, then to Boscawen-ûn and on to Treen Circle at Treryn Dinas (Logan Rock). Four major sites in an exact straight line – that's what I mean by a 'backbone' line.

But it doesn't always work. A hypothetical line from Carn Brea to Boscawen-ûn passes through no sites at all. So, for some reason, they're not connected. Progress it onwards and it arrives 50 metres south of Pordenack Point. This location happens to be perhaps the greatest single site for simulacra (rocks that look like beings) in the Isles of Britain – but it isn't a specific site, being more like a theme park of natural archetypal rock-sculptures. Potentially this is an exciting line, but it just doesn't click. It doesn't qualify and isn't there. Many are the times when I have chosen a significant site, found some likely destinations for potential alignments from it, but nothing is there, or it just doesn't fit. But at other times an alignment jumps out in an almost attention-seeking way. Some evenings I try to find lines and it just doesn't work, and other evenings three alignments can appear in quick succession.

It's not just hills, stone circles and quoits that can act as major nodes. Notably, some cairns (such as Lower Numphra, Tregiffian Vean and Bosiliack Barrow) and menhirs (Carfury, Pipers NE and the Drift menhirs) are quite major alignment nodes. Perhaps they are specifically placed there as nodes or exchanges – in distinction perhaps to being sources and destinations. As has been demonstrated in the making of this map, different people's perceptions will yield rather different results. But the deciding factor is the accuracy of alignments and also perhaps a fair judgement of their plausibility in each case. Quality is more important than quantity, and it is important not to undermine this work by adding weak or inaccurate lines to such a map as this. The aim, after all, is to try to gain as good and true a picture of the megalithic mindset and worldview as we can, through studying the traces the ancients left behind. One case in point is three-point alignments, which must have some sort of plausibility to be accepted. Here, careful judgement is needed. However, the omission of plausible three-point lines because of the rigid application of rules should also be practiced moderately. At least in Penwith, they are proving to be valid, but we must also be careful. One indication of validity is the kind of sites they connect, and a bit of 'geographical sense'.

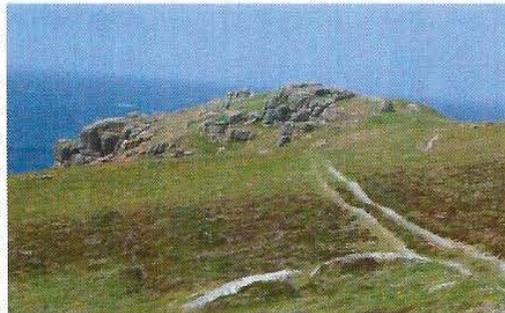


*Carfury menhir -  
a major alignment node*

### Clustering

Looking at the map, one thing that quickly emerges is that the overall distribution of ancient sites in Penwith is focused in two main zones. These are the hills of the northern half of the peninsula, roughly between the Tregesal complex and the area of Zennor Hill and the Trendrine cairns, and the low rolling plateau of the south, between Chapel Carn Brea and the south-east coast. Nowadays the south is more agricultural than the north, and in the past it will have been more wooded. There is a distinct gap between these two halves, with a 'hinge' connecting them roughly at the Botrea Barrows. These barrows are visually not greatly exciting to visit, yet the map suggests they are quite important. They are wide and low barrows today – higher in former days – and covered in heather and brambles, generally ignored. Yet they lie on the Cape Cornwall to St Michael's Mount alignment and seem to act as a hinge or axle for the whole peninsula.

There are noticeable relatively empty areas of Penwith too, especially in the southwestern and northeastern corners of the peninsula. I don't get the feeling these parts were just forgotten or left out – there's something about these gaps that is yet to reveal itself. Apart from a gaggle of sites around Sennen and some cliff-top sites along the southwestern coast between Land's End and Treryn Dinas, the area is noticeably empty of known sites. It is of course possible that people living in these areas were lazy or saw them as un-special, but this seems odd. Or that sites there have been destroyed. The emptiness of the southwest corner of Penwith strikes me as strange, especially since Carn Les Boel marks the end of the Michael line, Gwennap Head is the southwesternmost point of the whole of Britain, and the cliffside gallery of simulacra at Pordenack Point, with more at Gwennap, are all rather special. But then, we cannot rule out the possibility that the ancients might have left an area relatively empty precisely because they saw it to be special, or perhaps an abode of spirits and beings in which humans were guests.



*Carn Les Boel - end of the Michael line*

Around St Ives, along the north coast toward Zennor and southwards from St Ives to Hayle, there is another significant gap. Why? St Ives Head itself ('the Island' or Pen Dinas), contains no known prehistoric remains, yet a number of significant alignments meet there, suggesting a significant site. Godrevy Head at the other side of St Ives Bay was important in very ancient times (it's as ancient as Carn Brea), so it follows that St Ives Head would be important too. St Ives and Hayle were significant harbours for boats coming from Wales, Ireland and the Severn estuary, and in medieval times they were on a pilgrimage route from the Irish Sea area, heading to St Michael's Mount, then to France and ultimately to Santiago di Compostela in Spain – it's likely that Christians weren't the first to ply such a route either.

*'Clustering' continues in Part 4 of this supplement*