

● SPECIAL FEATURE ON CARN GALVA ●
MEYN MAMVRO & THE RE-ENCHANTED LANDSCAPE
● DOWSING ● FOLKLORE ● WELLS CORNER ●
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CONTENTS

Editorial p. 1
Dowsing News p. 2
Spring into Summer p. 4
CASPN news p. 5
Carn Galva special feature:-
 Into Alignment: Nine Maidens Downs cairns p. 6
 More propped stones on Carn Galva - Kenny Price p. 8
 Landscape, Human scape & Celestial scape - Graham Hill p. 10
Curious and enigmatic monuments: Boskednan 'fogou' p. 12
Meyn Mamvro and the re-enchanted landscape - Rupert White p. 14
Wells Corner p. 17
Cornish Folklore: St.Morwenna and Reverend Hawker - Alex Langstone p. 18
Book Reviews p. 20
20 years ago p. 22
30 years ago p. 23
The Pipers Tune p. 24

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STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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The new APPO (Ancient Penwith Project Officer), appointed by the Penwith Landscape Partnership Board (with Heritage Lottery Funding) has now taken up her post. Laura Ratcliffe-Warren has a great deal of experience with Cornish archaeology, having previously worked for the Cornwall Archaeological Unit and the Royal Cornwall Museum at Truro. Although it is early days she has already hit the ground running, and is working on specific prehistoric sites to improve their condition and access (such as Bodrifty settlement and Bosigran Courtyard Houses) and is working closely with the new Access Officer, Matt Watts to develop a series of Trails, linking together ancient sites, throughout the landscape of West Penwith. The APPO post is being managed by CASPN, through a sub-group of three CASPN Board managers, John Moss, David Giddings and MM editor Cheryl Traffon, and this triumverate are working closely with Laura to implement the Management Plan that has been drawn up for the historic landscape in West Penwith. This is the culmination of 15 years wishing and hoping for CASPN, and is a very exciting time.

Of course, Meyn Mamvro has been around even longer (unbelievably 32 years at the end of 2018!) and as we are getting near to our 100th issue, we have been thinking about its future. Your editor brought the magazine into existence in December 1986, and has single-handedly edited and published it 3 times a year for all those decades - though of course it owes its success to all the contributors who have freely given their time and expertise to it over that period. I am of course 32 years older than when I first produced it, and now well past retirement age, but I have always loved producing the magazine. Initially I thought it might be time to call it a day when we reached issue no.100, but those with whom I shared this intention all asked me to reconsider, as they thought it continued to provide a valuable service, even in this digital age of on-line instant information. So I have relented, though after issue 100 MM will probably become a yearly or twice-yearly publication for as long as I am able to produce it, and as long as contributors continue to offer new and original material for us to include.

Finally, a warm welcome to a new venture - Cornwall's Pagan Radio internet station. You can listen to it on www.pagancornwall.com and it's well worth following.

MM's postal address has now changed. Please address all correspondence, renewals etc to:
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DOWSING NEWS

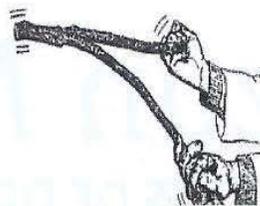


Image [c]
Jean Hands

This year started with a **Tamar Dowzers** workshop facilitated by *Denise Lockwood* on 'Hypnotherapy and Dowsing'. She began by saying that hypnotherapy and dowsing/healing were close cousins and fellow travellers. She then explained how hypnotherapy differs from meditation. The latter can bring about an altered state of consciousness, but hypnotherapy delves deeper into the unconscious, enabling the client to effectively heal themselves. The attendees were invited to take part in some demonstrations of the power of the mind. They were asked to sense the energy being squeezed between their hands, which appeared to expand as they focussed on it, until it was as almost as wide as they could reach. They then combined this energy with others, until the room hosted three or four giant energy balls, which they then sent to anyone they knew in need of some help. Other demonstrations followed, which created a great deal of interest for the dowzers.

The event planned for January by **Trencrom Dowzers**, a workshop by *Peter Stott* on 'Dowsing and Feng Shui' had to be cancelled at the last minute due to family illness.

In February **Tamar Dowzers** had a talk by *Gwynn Paulett*, intriguingly titled 'Did Julius Caesar cross my lawn?' during which he gave a number of anecdotes from many years of dowsing in Kent, the USA and Devon. These included the invasion of Britain in 55/54 BCE (hence the title); the discovery of a well at a castle at Lidwell in Kent (the photograph of which when magnified showed some anomalous 'figures'; dowsing for a well on a farm in North Dakota; dowsing some crop circle marks on the same farm, which were alien in origin; and a story of the significance of a lost dowsing rod at Berry Castle in Devon. The discussion afterwards centered on whether the 'figures' revealed by the photograph had in fact been nature spirits.

In the same month, **Trencrom Dowzers** had a talk by *Beverley Davis* on 'Crystals, Dowsing and the Interconnectedness of Everything'. Beverley, who had recently retired from dentistry to explore the wonderful and wide-ranging world of dowsing, attracted a good audience. She brought a wonderful collection of crystals which made a beautiful display across several tables. Coming from a scientific background, her approach to dowsing was refreshingly questioning. She asked the group to experiment with dowsing the aura of different crystals in different conditions, such as perched on top of a mobile phone. John Moss had produced a supply of his famous patented metal nuts on pieces of string, which everyone used to avoid any interference from their own crystal pendulums. She demonstrated how she chooses and uses different crystals to focus specific intent when doing her healing work. Care and cleansing of crystals was also covered. This was an interesting, enjoyable and refreshingly different presentation.

Later in March **Trencrom Dowzers** had a talk by *Grahame Gardner*, author and past President of the British Society of Dowzers, on 'Dowsing Magic - Symbols, Shapes and Sigils'. He showed that a sigil, used in magic for centuries, is a way of encoding your intention into a symbol - like a personal monogram. It is a graphical distillation of purpose that can be programmed as an ongoing emitting matrix, requiring no further consideration. This session explored the power and impact of a range of symbols and shapes, both ancient and new, using dowsing to compare the effects of them. Grahame then explained the value and use of sigils and guided the group through the process of making their own on wooden discs. A fascinating process and a splendid final presentation for their season of inside events at Marazion.

Also in March, a small group from **Tamar Dowzers** attended an event at *Pentillie Estate*, where a new stone circle has been constructed [see *MM95 p.24*]. Dowsing this new circle, they found that the outlier to the circle, which marks the direction of the midwinter solstice sunrise, was less than a metre off the centre of a ley that lines up, on a clear day, with distant Great Links Tor on northern Dartmoor. The quality of the energy in the circle had not been materially changed by the installation of the stones, probably because a pre-existing earth energy spiral remained intact within the formation. They also dowsed the site of a prehistoric standing stone that had once stood to the SW of the new circle, but this was neither on the ley nor the energy spiral. It was however, the point from where a series of ancient sight lines reached out to surrounding peaks, from Kit Hill to Brentor, Dartmoor, North Hessary Tor and round to Plymouth Sound.

In April **Trencrom Dowzers** had their first dowsing trip of the season, this time to *Tregonning Hill*, with its stunning view of the sea all round the summit: Mount's Bay, Penwith Moors, St Ives Island, Godrevy, St Agnes Beacon, Falmouth bay and the Lizard. Remains of Bronze Age settlements and burial mounds made interesting dowsing, as did Wesley's Preaching Pit. The curve of the Mary Line was dowsed, which made its way to the hill from St. Michael's Mount, visible to the south, and on to Godolphin crossroads.



Dowsing the Mary line from St.M.Mount

Saturday 5th May was International Dowsing Day and Hamish Miller's birthday, marked by **Trencrom Dowzers'** Celebration of Wells in West Penwith. Ros Briagha came down from west Wales to sing at the wells with them - with the perfect song for each setting. Starting at the well on Trencrom Hill, they visited Sancreed well, Chapel Euny wells and Alsia well. There was a well-deserved Cakey Tea at the Apple Tree cafe at Trevescan, and then the final walk to Carn Lês Boel, near Land's End, where they celebrate each year. A day of perfect weather and a glorious sparkly energy at the end of the day, though they took care not to linger lest the Little People took them away at dusk!

SPRING INTO SUMMER 2018

Good Friday came early this year (at the end of March) for the 13th year of the revived custom of visiting **Fenton Bebibell** (“well of the little people”) on the West Penwith moors. Despite the early time, it turned out to be a lovely sunny day, and the event attracted 15 adults and 4 youngsters, including Greg Martin from The Cornishman, who ran a half page feature on it the following week, and Liz Dale, who did an enthusiastic on-line Cornishbirdblog of the event. The well



was cleared, the land blessed, and copious quantities of buns, chocky eggs, lemon drizzle cake and mead consumed! Many thanks to everyone who came to keep the tradition alive.

May Day was welcomed in on the previous evening with **Maypole Dancing** at Carn Bosavern Farm in St. Just, followed on the next day by **Padstow Obby Oss**. The morning was fine, though it clouded over with rain in the afternoon. The crowds were less dense this year, which made for a more pleasant time watching and dancing with the Osses. Back in West Penwith, on the same evening the **Parallel Community** had their own Beltane celebrations at Treviscoe at Trencrom. Ba Miller, Ammaprema Grace & Helen Angel welcomed everyone to a ceremony that built a new foundation for the future, both personal and planetary. Fragrant herbs were offered to the fire, and crystals charged in the mandala. Stories, songs and poems were shared, along with food and drink, a community coming together to create new hopes and dreams.

On the following Saturday May 5th, the **Living Well Centre** at Sancreed was blessed with a lovely sunny afternoon for their Beltane ceremony. A good number of people gathered for an afternoon and evening of activities, which had as its focus a blessing of the waters of the well. This was a multi-faith affair, with representatives from the Methodist, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu and Pagan faiths all offering prayers and blessings for the Earth and well-being of the planet. A lovely joining together of people who shared a love of the earth and all her creatures. On the next evening, the Cornish Cultural Association led the annual **Penzance May Horns walk** from Tolcarne in Newlyn to the Admiral Benbow in Penzance. Participants, who were dressed in green and white, made a great deal of lively noise to drive out the devil of winter. Old Ned, the crow, made his appearance and died and was reborn three times during the walk to symbolise the return of summer. Finally, the maytime festivities ended on the 8th with a sunshine and showers day for **Helston Flora Day**. As always in Cornwall, Maytime was a very full and rich occasion.

The **Summer Solstice** saw the usual events in Cornwall, including the **Midsummer Bonfires** on hilltops, and **Mazey Day** in Penzance with parades and dancing.



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

Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network



The 12th annual year of Pathways to the Past walks and talks on May 26th & 27th was a very successful weekend. The weather was kind all weekend, and was well supported, with 40+ people for each of the three walks, and a good turn out for the talks. On the Saturday morning **John and Jill Moss** led a walk around *Trencrom Hill* entitled 'Just a hammer throw away'. They visited the prehistoric structure and the three wells on the flanks of the hill, and told the story of the giants and their hammer throwing. This was followed in the afternoon with a guided walk by **David Giddings** to 'The First and Last hills' *Chapel Carn Brea and Bartinney*. A number of barrows were visited (including some difficult-to-find ones), and the china clay works on Bartinney explored. In the evening in St. Just Town Hall archaeologist **Andy Jones** gave an illustrated talk entitled 'Viewed in a new light: Hendraburnick Quoit and rock art in the South-West'. This attracted a lot of interest, and gave a lot of detail about the excavations at Hendraburnick and theories of how it was used. [see MM95 p.6 for more details].

Sunday morning saw another well-attended talk by archaeo-astronomer **Carolyn Kennett** entitled 'Cornwall's celestial stones: reflections of the sky in an ancient landscape'. Carolyn presented her original research on the solar and lunar alignments at Boscawen-ûn and other stone circles in West Penwith [see MM95 p.9-13 for more details]. After lunch it was the turn of **Adrian Rodda** whose walk was intriguingly titled 'Phantoms, Lovers, a Witch and a Saint'. Meeting at *St. Levan*, Adrian visited the church where he read two of his story poems, and then led the large group on to the coastal path for a walk past St. Levan's Cell to Porthgarra, location for tales of lovers parted by a shipwreck and the Cornish witch Madgy Figgy. Finally, the weekend ended with a fascinating talk at the North Inn, Pendeen entitled 'A Miner's Tale' by Geevor miner **Steve Carter**.

The weekend (all of which was free to CASPN members) was a feast of interest and enjoyment. For 2019 the dates will be **Saturday 25th & Sunday 26th May** and the programme will be available from early 2019 on the website www.cornishancientsites.com.

CORNISH ANCIENT SITES PROTECTION NETWORK [CASP]

Address: Elowen, Wheal Kitty, Lelant Downs, Hayle TR27 6NS. Tel: 01736-740093

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*Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature **

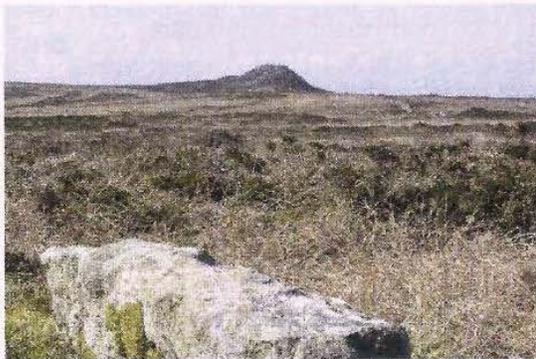
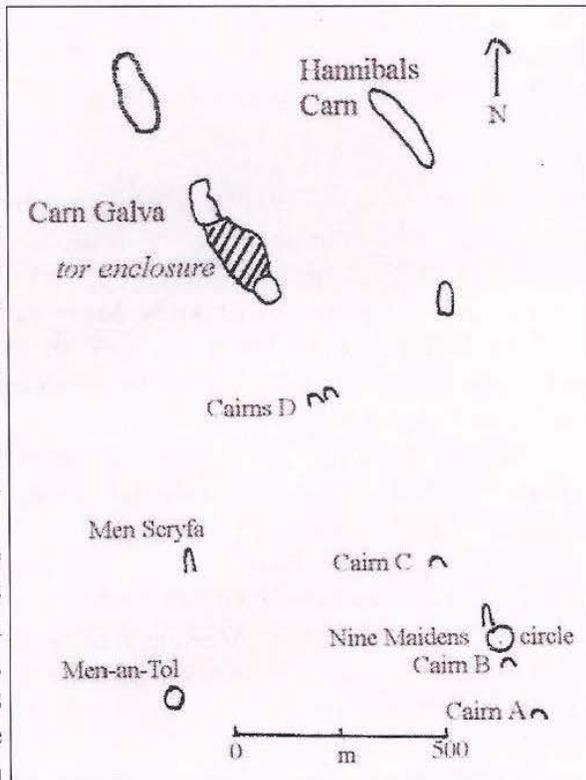
«————— INTO ALIGNMENT —————»

The Nine Maidens Downs cairns

In the recent book “Archaeology and Landscape at the Land’s End” [Cornwall Council, 2016] Peter Herring examined the barrows on Nine Maidens Downs and their relationship to the dominant landscape feature of Carn Galva. Herring says that Carn Galva “was made culturally meaningful by having the early Neolithic tor enclosure built on it”. Several later monuments, apparently dating from the end of the Neolithic and the early Bronze Age, formed a complex that was aligned on to the tor, which may have had ancestral significance for them.

Around the same time, or a little later, the Nine Maidens stone circle was built along the line of the barrows, which provided a significant visual alignment, and which also may have been walked as part of a ceremonial path across the landscape towards the tor. The direction of the alignment is NW, the winter solstice sunset, so the walk may have been undertaken at this time, as the sun set behind the tor itself.

A number of barrows, or cairns, that formed part of this alignment can still be traced on the Downs. Cairn A [4350 3496] has a good stone surround and an excellent view of Carn Galva, and Cairn B [4366 3509], though overgrown, is still identifiable.



Cairn A



Cairn B

Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature *

From Cairn B, the Nine Maidens circle is also clearly visible in direct alignment to Carn Galva, and the circle itself [4343 3512] also seems to deliberately reference Carn Galva, as its two largest (portal) stones frame the tor itself. This was not a coincidence: the builders of the circle must have been aware not only of the significance of the Tor Enclosure, built by their ancestors, but of the barrows that formed this visual alignment and ceremonial pathway to it.

*Nine Maidens Circle, Boskednan*

To the north-west of the circle, is another barrow (Cairn C) at 4327 3531. Although to the west of the main alignment, nevertheless this now-denuded cairn may have been a significant stopping place along the ceremonial pathway to the Tor Enclosure. Each cairn would have been a reminder of the dead ancestors whose remains had been placed in the landscape along this significant ceremonial route, and the walking of the path towards Carn Galva may have been a way of honouring them.

*Cairn C*

Finally, continuing along the alignment, the walkers would have come to a 35m long set of four small cairns (Cairns D) 300m from the tor itself, and at a point where Carn Galva is at its most impressive. These were placed in a line set transversely to the alignment, as if closing further movement towards the Tor. Or perhaps this was the place where the walkers paused to make final offerings or dedications before climbing Carn Galva itself. Peter Herring recreates the scenario: "Around four thousand years ago an individual, or a community, may have moved between these monuments travelling north-westwards towards Carn Galva from a kerbed platform cairn (Cairn A) on the hilltop south-east of the Nine Maidens. Platform cairns, which groups of people can step onto, were often placed where important landscape features could be appreciated. From this cairn it is possible to see not only Carn Galva but also St. Michael's Mount. From the Platform Cairn people moving towards the Carn might have descended to the Nine Maidens and another cairn on its southern flank (Cairn B). When standing on this cairn's eastern edge Carn Galva is seen framed by the two tallest stones in the circle. North of this circle are a now-broken menhir, and another kerbed platform cairn (Cairn C) from which both Carn Galva and the Mount can be appreciated. People may have continued all the way to the Carn, but may also have stopped at the line of four small cairns (D) at the point where the tor rears most magnificently above the observer". A powerful landscape alignment indeed.

*Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature **

MORE PROPPED STONES ON CARN GALVA

by **Kenny Price**

There are many propped, upended and placed stones on Carn Galva. I stopped counting at 20, the best known probably being the propped loggan stone on the saddle between the carns (propped with a stone with a lovely quartz vein line) *[photo above right]*.



Propped stone with quartz vein

However, my favourite lies between the twin peaks of the most southerly carn. When you approach the carn, with Men Scryfa behind you, a triangular, propped horizon marker stone can clearly be seen between the peaks, halfway up the left hand peak. As you climb the tor it lies next to the path as you climb up *[photos below]*. On the ground there is a large granite slab that has been hewn, into three "bars" one has been pulled forward (pointing approximately towards Gurnards Head) and propped, with a flat stone up on a ridge (caused by a quartz vein, used in the hewing) that runs the length of the opposite underside edge.



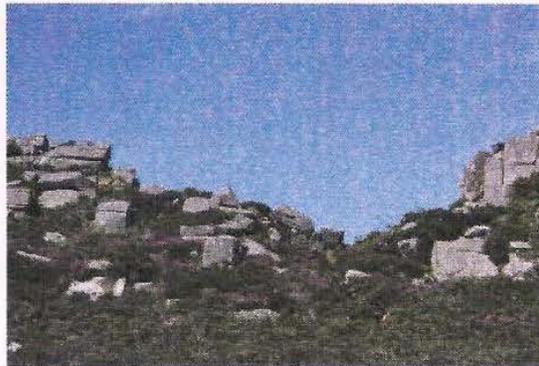
Second propped stone structure

At the other end of the slab there is a 3 sided "box" formed by the stone itself, the next bar to it and the triangular horizon marker stone, this box is open to the south east. When you sit in the box (facing the open end) an obvious propped marker stone can be seen on the slope of the opposite peak. This stone is a "slab claw" shape or "shark fin". If you place your head in the rear left corner of the box with your left eye level with the surface edge, you can see, in the distance, the castle of St. Michael's mount at the very tip of the marker. On the compass the Mount lies at 53 deg. east from south which is towards the mid-winter solstice sunrise *[photos on next page]*.

*Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature ***Propped stone structure - box**Outlying St. Michael Mount indicator stone*

If you turn around in the box to face Watch Croft (there is even space provided for your feet), Carn Kenidjack can clearly be seen on the horizon. On the compass, Carn Kenidjack lies 53 deg. west from south, which is towards the mid-winter sunset. This, I think, makes it part of an alignment which starts at Pennance entrance grave, passes through or next to Hannibals Carn, Carn Galva, Chûn Quoit, Carn Kenidjack etc. The 53 deg. 'solstice cross' give or take a degree, is quite common in Cornwall; for example, Pendeen watch/ fogou, Chûn Castle, Trewern Round, Lesingey Round, Lizard point; or the one that starts at Carn Lês Boel and ends at Stannon stone circle on Bodmin Moor, taking in Boscawen-ûn circle (the centre stone at Boscawen-ûn actually points 53 deg. east of north), Lesingey round, Trevarnon round, Pirans Round etc; or even the one that links Tintagel Head, Rough Tor, Brown Willy, the Hurlers circle, Caradon Hill and Plymouth Hoe.

I wondered why there is a pinpoint marker for St. Michael's Mount and not one for Carn Kenidjack, and concluded that, without the castle and possibly without the sea framing it, the Mount would be much harder to make out than it is today, while Carn Kenidjack stands out as obviously and majestically as it does from many places (including as far as the Isles of Scilly). I think that "Galva" in Cornish means "look out point", but could it not also mean "observatory"?

*Propped stone structure - skyline indicator*

*Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature **

LANDSCAPE, HUMAN SCAPE AND CELESTIAL SCAPE AT CARN GALVA

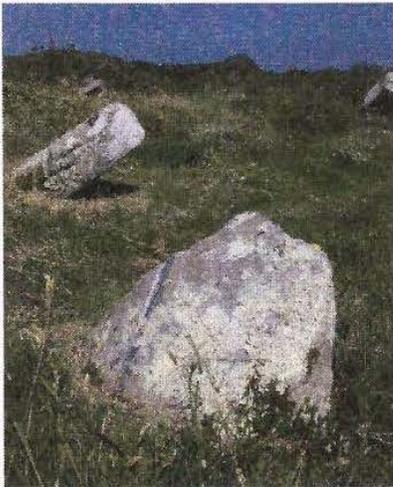
by Graham Hill

Carn Galva appears as a conical tor from the two cairns on Nine Maidens Downs and the alignment from the Nine Maidens circle alignment [see p.6-7]. Its appearance changes to two mountains with a chasm between as you follow the path clockwise around it from the east. I reached the southern-most rocks through the bracken and climbed and jumped along the ridge-line finding occasional fragments of paths or animal tracks. I noted the hollow mountain effect and the almost sculpted 'Grooved Ware' style fracturing, imagining a temple or shrine at one place. Across the chasm I reached another pinnacle and it had bands of quartz to the left of a cleft running through the ridge with a guiding threshold step, whose path was directed onto it and through the cleft by a quartz vein running through the step. At the far end of the pinnacles a standing stone looked out north-west towards the far sea. Through weathering, it may never give up its secret but has the aspect of a statue menhir.



Triangular leaning rock that points north to Little Galva

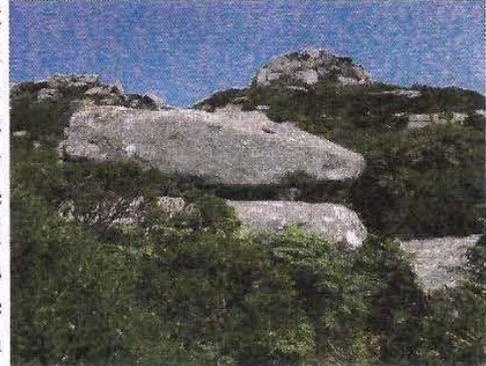
The next day a buzzard circled for me at the same place above the road so with my camera I took its image and we flew together. Submerged in the ridgeline I took the path to where the absence of Sunday people formed the shape of the cairn. A quartz veined boulder at the cairn at SW4327 3531 points to Carn Galva, with its back to the Nine Maidens circle and St. Michaels Mount beyond.



Quartz-veined rock at cairn, with vein aligned on Carn Galva

*Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature * Carn Galva special feature **

On the horizon to the right another pinnacle, Little Galva, asks the question and the outrageously leaning triangular stone answers, pointing due north to it. Above Little Galva the stars wheeled about the pole star Thuban (and now Polaris). To Carn Galva the footpath cuts a section through two feet to the ice age and braids. The settlement is not here according to the lack of flint. A straight path appears, and this time the way that people walked: a processional way between worn rocks towards the chasm between the peaks. To the path's right edge is an upright granite parish boundary stone (Madron/Zennor). The ascent steepens and climbs to a horizontal gap between great rocks that the path has to break right to avoid. At SW4279 3597 [photo right] the capstone floats a few inches above the base that it cracked away from over millenia. It frames the view between the peaks that we are drawn toward. Three small granite rocks hold the great slab airborne and at its back two great boulders are prised away to leave clean space all around. I lie on the excarnation platform slab with generous room to spare and look up. Today the sky is empty.

*Excarnation platform stone*

From the chasm there is a choice and a backtrack to climb the southern pinnacle. From its foot a thin stone hedge winds into the bracken valley: on its right edge a puzzling ribbed square of gorse and to the left of the hedge a gorse circle. Is this the settlement that even the plants respect? The ground crushes into ridges that split into 'Grooved Ware' patterns from Bosigran Castle to St.Michael's Mount with inward pointing slabs reflecting its grandeur in cairns and stone circles along the ridges from coast to coast like processions of waves carrying flotsam.

*Stone at threshold of gap*

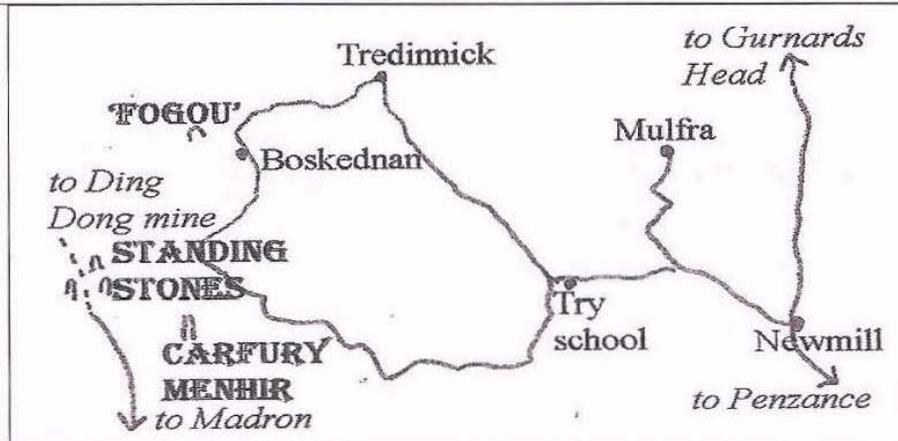
I look back to the northern sea and climb the rocks rather than plunging into unknown beneath the thorns. The rock wall splits and at its threshold is a quartz-veined step pointing the way through to the other side [at SW4274 3606 - photo left]. At the edge of the last pinnacle I can see the back of the head of an imaginary statue menhir [SW4272 3609-photo right] who knows my presence. She stares out to sea but hears every intruder.

*'Statue menhir' stone*

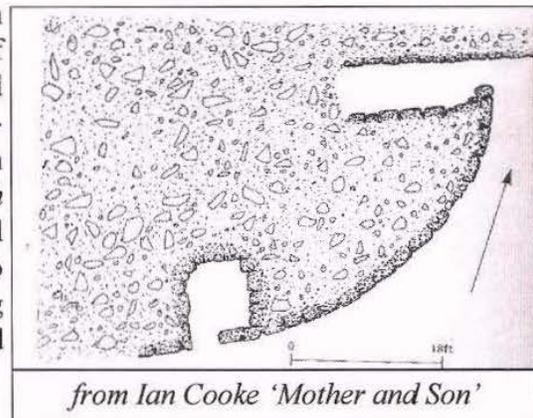
CURIOUS AND ENIGMATIC MONUMENTS

An occasional series that takes a look at some megalithic sites that do not easily fit into existing categories

BOSKEDNAN 'FOGOU'



The structure known as Boskednan 'fogou' stands in a very inaccessible part of West Penwith at SW4404 3467 (in a field behind Boskednan farmhouse, where permission to view should be sought), and is listed in Ian Cooke's book *Mother and Son: the Cornish fogou* as a 'possible' fogou. It is an odd structure, consisting of two chambers built into a mound, behind which there is much mining disturbance, which fortunately has not extended into the structure.



from Ian Cooke 'Mother and Son'

The two chambers are different in nature: the south-easterly facing one (at 150°-180°) is a kind of 'beehive chamber', carefully constructed with large and small granite stones and high enough to stand up in; whereas the easterly facing one (at 63°-75°) is a long low passage that extends about 5.4m (18ft) into the mound, and was built with partially corbelled walls, roofed by eight granite capstones. It is probable that the passage has silted up over time, and originally it was possible to crawl along its length.



Entrance to the 'beehive' chamber

Ian Cooke suggested in his book that the long passage should be considered as the remains of a fogou, possibly with a side passage or modified creep where the beehive is located and extending further at either end. Certainly, from inside the beehive chamber it looks as if there could have been a passage extending further back, though whether both passages originally connected or not we cannot tell without excavation. MM recently dowsed the site, and received an interesting, if rather unexpected, response. The long chamber dowsed as Bronze Age not Iron Age, and when asked for its function, said that it had been a 'healing chamber'. The beehive chamber dowsed as an Iron Age fogou with an original chamber that extended back to join the long chamber, that was incorporated into the fogou. Ian Cooke has suggested that during the 18th or early 19th centuries the site was remodelled, and stone was robbed to turn the beehive chamber into a 'crow', a type of monument found elsewhere in West Penwith used for holding small animals, such as a goat or chicken. These structures are sometimes mistaken for fogou entrances, so this may be the case here. Whatever its original structure and purpose, or subsequent modifications, it remains today an enigmatic and curious structure.



Beehive chamber [left] entrance looking in and [right] inside looking out



[left] East-facing passage [right] looking into the passage

All photographs [c] James Kitto

MEYN MAMVRO AND THE RE-ENCHANTED LANDSCAPE

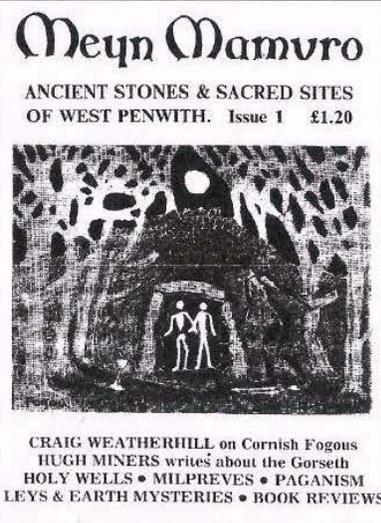
by Rupert White

Rupert White's new book 'The Re-enchanted Landscape' [reviewed in MM95] explores the history of the mythopoeic creative responses to the neo-pagan and earth mysteries aspects of the area of West Penwith in the late 20th century. This extract looks at the role played by Meyn Mamvro in this process.

In Cornwall, the launch of Cheryl Traffon's 'Meyn Mamvro' in 1986, marked a watershed. It also provided a platform for the expression of a uniquely Cornish blend of Paganism and Earth Mysteries, which was very much embedded in a specific landscape and place. The next 10 years (1986-1996) would be a productive period for Earth Mysteries and Paganism in Cornwall, with more publications and new organisations appearing, but as it became more widespread, mainstream and accessible, it also lost some of its radical edge. However, arguably, by then perhaps it didn't matter, because many of its arguments had been settled, and its goals achieved.

Meyn Mamvro magazine was launched at 'Visions and Journeys' gallery in St. Just at the Winter Solstice (December) of 1986. The intention from the outset was to cover a range of material, as the first editorial announced: *Meyn Mamvro aims to provide a forum, an outlet, for an exchange of ideas and interests in the fields of earth studies, archaeology, Cornish culture and paganism. These different categories are not mutually exclusive - what they all have in common is a respect for our land, a great interest in the monuments and sites of the past built on it.*

The words are those of its 'editress' Cheryl Traffon who had recently moved to West Cornwall. Traffon (b.1947) was brought up in Calstock in the Tamar Valley, and went to King's College, London to study English and Comparative Religion. As Cheryl Garside, in the early 1980s she contributed a series of articles in 'The Ley Hunter' magazine on Dartmoor, Exmoor and Bodmin Moor, carrying out field trips with Arthur Traffon, whom she would later marry. As she explains: *I was part of the scene that emerged in the 60s and 70s, given its impetus by people like John Michell. John and I inevitably met in London - we clicked because we both had Cornwall in common - and I knew Paul Devereux who at the time was doing a lot of early work on alternative archaeology. I went to one of his evening classes in Kensington on some of this material, and so we became friends.*



Straffon, who also studied for a DipEd at Cambridge University, came to take up a job as the Library Manager at St. Just Library: *I moved back to Cornwall when I was 39 (1986). I was used to the idea of a regional Earth Mysteries magazine, but when I looked around I was surprised that there wasn't one for Cornwall. There were a few people who were interested in these things, but they were not connected at that time. There were the Earth Mysteries magazines and Pagan magazines, and I brought both into Meyn Mamvro and it seemed to touch a nerve. It brought together all these isolated people who started to subscribe, and write for it and link up with each other.*

At that time, she saw Paganism and Earth Mysteries as inseparable. This was unlike others, such as Paul Devereux: *It wasn't as though he (Devereux) was against Paganism, but he didn't want it to intrude on what he was increasingly beginning to define as a pseudo-scientific discipline. I think that he thought that it muddied the waters a bit. To me it was vital because the sites were nothing unless we began to understand the people who used them, and what they might have used them for. And that's how my interests came together. But there weren't many of us. Many of the EM mags were very definitely not into the spirituality side. You don't go there you know!*



Paul and Charla Devereux at the Merry Maidens (late 80s/early 90s)

Electicism thus became a key characteristic of Meyn Mamvro, and one which helped ensure the magazine's longevity. As with Jo O'Cleirigh, contact with pagans in London had played a role in encouraging Straffon's wide interests: *I was not brought up as a Christian - my parents were atheists - but I was always interested in a spirituality that was earth-connected. If I had to be labelled in my younger days, I was a Pantheist, like the Romantic poets who saw spirit in nature everywhere. But the Sixties saw the rise of the Neo-Pagan movement, which was still quite hidden.*

The turning point for me was an evening class in London with Ken Rees called 'Mythology, Folklore and Witchcraft'. All the hippies that went would go to him and ask where they could join a coven. He couldn't be open about it, because he was doing a Local Authority class and it would have been closed down! It was a very different world in those days - Paganism was still very underground. But one day Ken called me at work. He said 'I was very interested in what you were saying in the pub. Would you be interested in coming to something in Highgate woods? Bring some good walking boots and a candle in a jar, and we'll meet at the tube station at 10 o'clock'. He was very non-specific. I agonised as to whether I should go, but I did and it was a working coven, a spin-off of the Regency coven that met there. This was my first experience of ritual and it blew me away.

I stayed with them for a year and a day, and learnt all the basics. Then the group broke up, but I felt I'd now got enough knowledge to carry on, so I started a small group of interested people, one of whom was Ken. We formed a little mini-coven and used to meet in our garden in south London, and we did that for about a year in the early 80s.

The garden in question belonged to Arthur Straffon: *I moved into Arthur's house there, and we built a stone circle with stones we'd brought up from Dartmoor and Cornwall. When we were moving to St.Just, the removals men were boxing things up and I said 'I've got something in the garden I want you to take'. I nipped outside and deconsecrated the stones quickly, but the removals men couldn't believe it. 'You want us to take these rocks to Cornwall?!' When Ken knew we were moving down he gave me Jo O'Cleirigh's contact details. Jo was living in the woods in Lamorna, and he cleared a lovely space in the woodland behind his caravan, and that's where the stone circle went. Jo and I worked together and attracted other people who were interested as well. He was the only person in Cornwall I knew who was experienced as I was.*



Caravan at Chy-an-Gaverrow, Lamorna

Early editions of Meyn Mamvro magazine were well received and the number of willing stockists rapidly multiplied from two (originally Visions and Journeys, St.Just and The Quay Bookshop, Penzance) to eighteen. Some outlets were not so accommodating. The refusal of the small folk museum in Zennor to stock it on the grounds that it was an 'affront to Christians' was reported in the local media (newspapers and radio). It provoked a proud and defiant response from Straffon, who quickly found herself becoming a spokesperson for Paganism [see MM no.4]: "As a faith Paganism holds the earth sacred, as our Mother who sustains and nurtures us, and believes that all fellow creatures should be respected not exploited. To pagans all life is interconnected and love for our Mother Earth and thanks for what she gives us is expressed in ritual and celebration. The ancient sites are held as sacred places to be approached with reverence and curiosity. The ancient ways are sources of wisdom and understanding and should be followed up and kept alive. If paganism means caring for our Earth, the ancient sites and traditional ways, then we are indeed proud to be called a pagan magazine".

Straffon was thrust into the spotlight on a few other occasions in the early days of the magazine. Kevin Carlyon was a media-friendly witch - often in the tabloids - who knew Alex Sanders during his final years. Based in St.Leonards-on-Sea, Carlyon also, incidentally, acted as the printer of both Meyn Mamvro and The Ley Hunter. He and wife Ingrid performed open, public rituals in Cornwall on three successive summer solstices (Merry Maidens in 1987, Mên-an-Tol in 1988 and Nine Maidens in 1989); and also Halloween/Samhain (at the Nine Maidens) in 1991.

As well as receiving front page coverage in the Cornishman newspaper, in 1989 two vicars were invited to challenge the Carlyons on their beliefs live on Radio Cornwall [see *MM no.10*]. The appearance was then followed by Straffon, who was concerned to convey the fact that Paganism was not in conflict with Christianity, and shouldn't be presented in that way by the media.

Straffon herself continued to perform rituals, though her own group was more discreet than the Carlyons', and was never explicitly mentioned by name in Meyn Mamvro: *We had a small mixed group called 'Lor Hag Mor', Cornish for 'moon and sea'. It was always semi-closed in the sense that new people could join but they had to be the right people. It grew out of the work with Jo, but it was re-envisioned because I was getting more into Goddess. We did ritual drama that was linked to legends in the Cornish landscape. So for example we used the beehive hut at Bosporthenis for a Lammastide ritual to do with the death of the Corn King/Grain Goddess. Lor Hag Mor was a very powerful group and the people involved in it were very committed. Steve Patterson said: Cheryl's rituals around the standing stones were some of my very first ritual experiences. This was when I first started coming down to Cornwall.* For many years, from 1987, Straffon also organised public May Day celebrations around a maypole she had erected near her house on Carn Bosavern.

Part 2 of this article will be in the next issue of Meyn Mamvro.

WELLS CORNER

A regular feature on Cornwall's holy wells

Quethiock well [SX3127 6474]

Vennings Directory of East Cornwall (1901) says that before the restoration of Quethiock church in the 1880s, there was a holy well with steps leading down to it. No trace of this well remains in the church, but outside, directly opposite the church, there is a beautifully constructed well house. It has been dated to the middle of the 19th century, so it may have been there before the restoration of the church, or it may have been specially constructed at the time of the restoration. It consists of a gable-ended roof made from four large stone slabs bolted together, with a rectangular opening and slightly arched slate lintel. The well itself is associated with Cadoc, a 6thC Abbot of Llancarven in Wales, who was reputed to have had the miraculous power of making water rise in dry places (water dowsing?). Quethiock lies about 5 miles east of Liskeard, and its place name derives from the Old Cornish *cuidoc* meaning 'wooded place'. The parish church was dedicated to St. Hugh of Lincoln in 1288, and stands on a lan, possibly pre-Christian in origin.

*Photo [c] John Litton. www.facebook.com/HolyWellsOfCornwall
On-line map at: https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?hl=en_US...*



CORNISH FOLKLORE

A regular column by folklorist Alex Langstone

St Morwenna and Reverend Hawker

July 8th is the feast of Morwenna, patron saint of the most northerly parish in Cornwall. Morwenstow lies six miles north of Bude and close to the source of the River Tamar. The story of Morwenna is, like so many of the Celtic saints, one of pilgrimage and the sacredness of place. Morwenna was born during the early part of the 6th century in South Wales. She is listed as one of the many children of Brychan, which would mean that she came from Brecon. Her name is thought to be cognate with Welsh morwyn, meaning “maiden”, and poetically as “fair as the sea”. Her legend states that she trained in Ireland before coming to North Cornwall where she built her cell on the cliff top. The story goes that Morwenna carried all the building stones needed to build her hermitage from the beach far below. One day she dropped one large stone on her way back up the cliff path. Where the stone fell a miraculous spring gushed forth. The holy well of Morwenna can still be seen half way up the cliff, perched precariously overlooking the wild and stormy ocean. Morwenna is said to have died here, and her body was buried close to where the Norman church now stands.



St. Morwenna's well

No story of Morwenstow is complete, however, without the mention of folklorist, antiquarian, poet and eccentric, the Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker, composer of the Cornish anthem, “Song of the Western Men” and remembered for re-introducing the harvest festival into the church calendar in October 1843, where bread was made from the last wheat harvest for the communion, and food was given to the poor. Hawker has become part of the folklore of Morwenstow, and indeed he completely championed St Morwenna as patron of his parish. Sabine Baring Gould once called to question the reality of the story of Morwenna, and Hawker replied:

“What! Morwenna not lie in the holy place at Morwenstow! Of that you will never persuade me, -- no, never. I know that she lies there. I have seen her, and she has told me as much; and at her feet ere long I hope to lay my old bones.”

Hawker arrived in Morwenstow in 1834 and spent the rest of his life in the parish. He earned a compassionate but eccentric reputation and he regularly attended ship wrecks at the nearby coast, where he helped the unfortunate sailors and buried the dead in the churchyard. The figurehead of the ship *Caledonia*, which foundered in September 1842, marks the grave in Morwenstow churchyard of five of the nine-man crew.

There are two landmarks that are particularly associated with Hawker. He built a small hut on the cliff top from driftwood and wood from the wrecks of the Phoenix in January 1843 and the Alonzo in October of the same year. Here, in his look-out retreat, he would smoke opium, write poetry and entertain guests. He also built the beautiful and unusual vicarage behind the church with chimneys modelled on the towers of the churches in his life: Tamerton, where he had been curate; Morwenstow and Welcombe; plus, that of Magdalen College, Oxford. The old kitchen chimney is a replica of Hawker's mother's tomb.



Parson Hawker's hut

He often conducted his church services in an unorthodox way, walking among the parishioners, muttering the liturgy and allowing his many pet cats entry to the church to attend services, though he excommunicated one of them for catching a mouse on a Sunday. He had a strong sense of the supernatural, and frequently referred to his belief in demons, many of whom reputedly haunted Hawker. One famous account records a demon, who leapt out of the sea at Marsland Mouth, at twilight during a wild storm. Hawker put his horse to a wild gallop to escape from his demonic pursuer. Interestingly the stream that drains across this remote beach, called Marsland Water marks the far northern Cornish border and a small wooden sign stands proudly by the stream marking the Duchy's most northerly point. Another occasion at Marsland Mill, Hawker's path was crossed by a small brown demon who appeared from under the gorse. Hawker pursued the demon, but it quickly slipped out of sight and into the river. And he described the event as "a nameless and indescribable sensation".

He also used to communicate with St Morwenna, and regularly saw her inside the church, around the graveyard and on the cliff-top at Morwenstow. Hawker also had a vision of an angel in the church, by the rood screen door, whilst conducting a baptism. After some delay, Hawker announced that the angel had communicated that he was now the guardian angel of the child he had just baptised. In his younger days, Hawker is said to have dressed as a mermaid and sat on the rocks at Bude: he continued this practice until a local man threatened to go out and shoot the mermaid dead. With all these tales in mind, it is easy to walk the ancient pathways around Morwenstow church and still feel the mighty presence of the Reverend Robert Stephen Hawker, and I for one am glad, as he was an eccentric visionary and a man of the people he served, who was always willing to help the poor and needy of the parish and beyond.

Excerpt taken from Alex Langstone's new book 'From Granite to Sea'. Available from www.troybooks.co.uk. There is an annual clear-up of St.Morwenna's well on July 8th, organised Cam Longmuir of Holy Wells of Cornwall Facebook page.

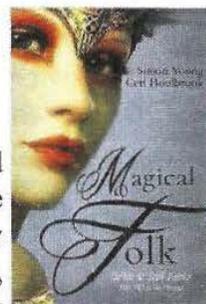
BOOK REVIEWS

Of Shadows: one hundred objects from The Museum of Witchcraft and Magic by Sara Hannant and Simon Costin
[Published by Strange Attractor Press, 2018 pbk - £25 hbk - £35]



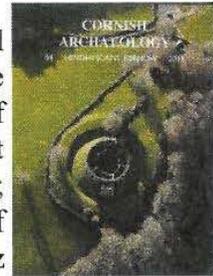
This is a unique book, consisting of 100 full size colour plates of selected objects from the Museum of Witchcraft and Magic in Boscastle, including wax dolls, wands, statues, daggers, pendants, robes and amulets. As the book says “each striking image tells its own vivid tale of belief and ceremonial practice”, and each image is accompanied by an informative text about the object and its history, provenance, use and significance. There are also introductory essays by the photographer Sara Hannant about the process of relating to the objects and photographing them; the Museum Director Simon Costin about how the Museum came about and its history; and historian Ronald Hutton, who provides some insights into the significance of the selection. There are many mysterious and curious objects revealed, including: a moon talisman, a hag stone, runes, an athame, a witch bottle, a poppet, a dried toad charm, a kern baby in a white dress, a chalice, a labyrinth and many others, and their power in the photographs seems palpable, something that the Museum’s original founder Cecil Williamson would have known. “To the witch, the spirit world is a reality, a living thing” he once said. “To her everything has a spirit, a soul, a personality, be it animal, mineral or vegetable”. His Ritual Skull, that was found in his home after his death, adorns the front cover of the book - a book to explore and savour and from which we can all learn a great deal about magic and its properties from the past and still current in the world today.

Magical Folk: British & Irish Fairies 500 AD to the Present
by Simon Young & Ceri Houlbrook [eds.]
[Published by Gibson Square, 2018 hbk - £16.99 Kindle - £6.64]

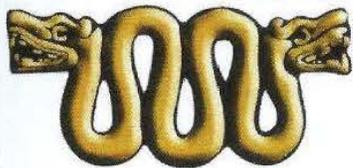


This book is a collection of essays on English, Celtic & Norse and North American fairy folk, with different counties of England in one section, and different Celtic countries in another. In the latter category comes Ireland, Scotland, Orkney & Shetland, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man - and Cornwall. The chapter on Cornwall, entitled ‘Piskies and Knockers’, is contributed by Ronald M. James, who doesn’t live in Cornwall, but studied at the Department of Irish Folklore in Dublin and the University of Nevada, Reno. However for his research work, he has been inducted as a Bard of the Cornish Gorsyth, and has another book on Cornwall due out this year [‘The Folklore Of Cornwall: The Oral Tradition of a Celtic Nation’]. His chapter in this book on fairies is knowledgeable enough, though he doesn’t gain any Brownie points by beginning it: “In 1873 William Bottrell published a legend ... set in Cornwall, a peninsula terminating at Land’s End in the south-west of *England*” (my italics). He goes on to look at Robert Hunt’s five species of Cornish fairies, Cornish fairy size, and an examination of piskies and knockers. He concludes that the Cornish piskie is an example of the North European fairy, but while the stories were widespread there, the Cornish adaptation of them was unique.

Cornish Archaeology no.54 (2015) is the most recently published annual volume from the Cornwall Archaeological Society. As always, there are an interesting selection of reports and essays, including investigations of an Iron Age settlement at Camelford; an early Bronze Age cist burial at Harlyn Bay; a Bronze Age greenstone axe from Pennare Farm, St.Allen; an assemblage of Middle Bronze Age pottery from St.Marys, Isles of Scilly; a late Bronze Age pit containing selected stones (such as quartz cobbles) at Manuels, Quintrell Downs; a rare example of an incised Mesolithic pebble from Trevoise Head, St.Merryn; a Romano-British settlement and enclosures at Gover Farm, St.Agnes; and a remarkable find of a piece of slate from Paul in West Penwith that has an ogham inscription on it, first identified by the late Charles Thomas. To purchase the volume go to: www.cornisharchaeology.org.uk



Lien Gwerin no.2, the journal of Cornish folklore, compiled and edited by Alex Langstone, is now out [Spring 2018]. It includes Folklore of Looe Island and The Black Dog of Tregrehan by Alex, The Cornish Otherworld by Cheryl Straffon, Colperra Day: folklore on the Lizard by Alan M.Kent, and Rillaton Folklore by Kathy Wallis. There are also reprints of traditional stories by Joanathan Couch, Robert Hunt, Enys Tregarthen and William Bottrell. With illustrations by Gemma Gary and Paul Atlas-Saunders, it costs £5 and is available from www.cornishfolklore.co.uk.



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Founded by Hamish Miller in the 1990s, Penwith Press is still based in west Cornwall and now includes titles by some of the best dowsers and researchers of this generation: Grahame Gardner, Billy Gawn, Nigel Twinn, David Leesley, Sig Lonegren, Christopher Strong and Palden Jenkins, as well as Hamish Miller's perennial favourites.

NEW! Craig Weatherhill: The Place-Names of the Land's End Peninsula

Craig is a Cornish archaeologist, historian, author, toponymist and Bard of the Cornish Gorsedh. His new book is a detailed analysis of the origins and translations of the place names of West Penwith, the last stronghold of the Cornish language as a traditional community tongue.

Visit www.penwithpress.co.uk for more information and the online shop

Or e-mail Jill: jill@penwithpress.co.uk

For those on their own inspiring journeys

20 YEARS AGO

Delving into the pages of MM from the past

MM36 [Spring/Summer 1998] included a special feature on Maytime Celebrations in Cornwall. It was the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the Maypole Dance in St. Just and the Three Wells Walk, and a number of articles visited aspects of all the Maytime festivals. Kelvin Jones explored the seasonal May Day Games throughout Europe, Britain and in particular Cornwall. He visited the Hal-an-Tow, “the most pagan survival of the Helston Furry Dance”, which he believed included the last remaining vestiges of an earlier mummer’s play, featuring Robin Hood and Maid Marian, an example of which was extant from Stithians. He also discussed the tradition of the Queen of May being carried in procession, represented by a doll in a basket, by young girls from house to house in West Cornwall; and the Maypole dancing rivalry practised widely in East Cornwall [*more on this in Cornish Folklore column in the last issue of MM - Spring/Summer 2018*].

The following article featured Padstow’s May Day celebrations by John Negus & Alexandra Lobban, together with an article by Cheryl Traffon on ‘How old is the Obby Oss’ there. Sidestepping the response “as old as ‘ee do feel””, she investigated the claim, which had recently been put forward by historian Ronald Hutton, that it only dated back to the early 19th century, as none of the earlier descriptions of Cornwall refer to the ‘horses’. However, as the article pointed out, there was a reference to a hobby horse much



Padstow's Obby Oss [approx. 1913]

earlier in 1502, where in the Cornish drama *Bewnans Meriasek* one of the characters says: “Me a be dhe’n Hobyhors ha’y gowetha”, meaning ‘I will pay out the Hobbyhorse and its pair (of men)’. This is unlikely to have been an isolated example. In fact, in 1595 when some Spaniards burned Paul church in West Penwith, their commander Captain Carlos de Amezola, reported that the church contained an effigy of a horse “carved in wood, greatly embellished and serving as an idol worshipped by the people”. Perhaps it was not an Obby Oss head, but it clearly related to it in some way.

According to a lecture by Thurston Peter in 1912 given to the Royal Institution of Cornwall, about 60 years previously, a certain Francis Docton of Padstow had informed his workmen that to his knowledge the Oss had appeared on the nearby cliffs to frighten off a French vessel during the Siege of Calais, which took place in 1346-7. Kelvin Jones certainly believed that the event went further back into the mists of the Celtic twilight, describing it “the only European pagan festival to have survived in its present form”. It is, if anything, more popular today than ever before, attracting thousands of people to the narrow streets of Padstow each May Day to experience its mystery and magic.

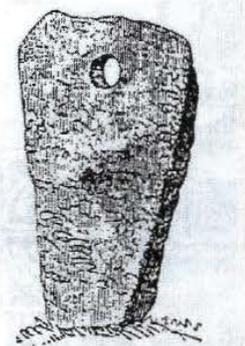
30 YEARS AGO

Delving into the pages of MM from the past

By the time of MM issue 6 [June 1988], the magazine had established a penchant for investigating and revealing undiscovered, little-known and out-of-the-way stones and sites, a theme that has continued throughout its 32 years and up to the present day.

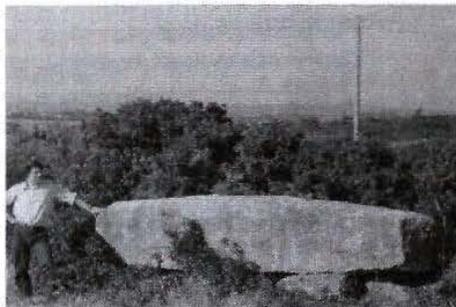
MM6 revealed a stone from Trewern Round near Newbridge that was reported by a visitor to Cornwall as having possible ogham markings. We went to investigate and thought that they were probably 'plough marks' from the stone being moved, but it was an interesting suggestion. There was also an article entitled "Where is the third Piper" which examined the missing stones from the Merry Maidens area, including the holed stones located on a map by W.C.Borlase in 1754. One of these was now a gatepost stone, but one, called Mên Frith [*drawing right*], appeared to have gone missing entirely, though it was rumoured to still be somewhere locally. It was not until

5 years later in MM20 that the stone was tracked down, recorded and photographed by MM [*photo right*], now lying in a hedge at nearby Tregurnow Farm [SW4432 2415]



[Above] Mên Frith
- drawing by
J.T.Blight (1864)
and [left]
photographed by
MM in 1993

The article explored the locations of other holed stones in the area, including one still extant in the wall of a field at Boleigh Farm [SW4352 2447]. It then turned its attention to the 'mythical' third Piper stone, saying: "The two Pipers are well known, being the tallest menhirs in West Penwith. But a short piece in Old Cornwall magazine of Winter 1939 [Vol.3 No.6] entitled 'The Third Piper' by Ashley Rowe said that a lady living near Penzance whose grandparents at one time lived at Boleigh had told him that there was a tradition in their family that there were at one time three Pipers." Rowe identified a possible location of this now fallen stone, which Vivien Russell gave at approx. 4360 2490. A year later [in MM10] MM had found it on the 1:25000 OS map marked as 'recumbent standing stone' and been to find an overgrown stone there. Meanwhile a reader had found another menhir nearby at 4374 2455 [*photo above*] which may have been a stone from the now destroyed Tregurnow stone circle. Exciting finds!



Mayes Creative

are a multimedia group who worked on the Dark Skies project on Bodmin Moor, supported by Cornwall Heritage Trust, which looked at the possible archaeoastronomical significance of The Hurlers stone circles on Bodmin Moor. [For more details go to: www.cornwallheritagetrust.org/project/darkskies/



Sound research at the Merry Maidens

Following on from that project they received a further grant to do some investigative work on sound frequencies at stone circles in West Penwith. In May this year, they took their sonic testing equipment to the Merry Maidens, Boscawen-ûn, and the Nine Maidens (Boskednan) circles to measure patterns of interference when sound bounces off the stones. This research can then be used to inform ideas about the use of sound instruments and voices by the prehistoric stone makers themselves, who may have been well aware of these phenomena.

Meyn Mamvro editor Cheryl Traffon, who was involved with similar work as part of the Dragon Project in the early 1980s, went along to one of their sessions, and shared some research and ideas with the Project organisers. Some of this work, led by researcher Paul Devereux, has also been subsequently undertaken at sites such as Maes Howe on Orkney, and it is hoped that this new work in Cornwall will add to this fascinating area of research.

THE PIPER'S TUNE

'Fairy Stacks' have once again appeared on Bodmin Moor this year.



Photo [c] Stuart Dow

First seen in 2017 on Stowe's Pound, they are made by people stacking up stones from the surrounding area. The practice was described as "historic vandalism" by Roy Goulté of the Time Keepers archaeological team, and condemned by Daniel Ratcliffe, inspector of Ancient Monuments at Historic England South West as "rubbing out history". He went on to add that the prehistoric site is protected by law under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979, and anyone damaging or removing objects from such sites could face criminal prosecution. While moving the stones to build the inevitably temporary fairy castles may seem benign, it is actually eroding nationally-protected archaeological features.

A year later, and in the summer of 2018 Stuart Dow returned to Stowe's Pound to find that the Fairy Stacks had unfortunately returned, with several stacks having appeared on the eastern walling. Stuart believes that education is better than prosecution, and perhaps a sign asking people not to do it may be of some help. "They may think they are being artistic, but they don't realise the damage they are doing" he added. "Some of these may be lovely to look at, but knowing what they represent, I believe it's disrespectful to our ancestors".

EXCHANGE MAGAZINES

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