

- MYTHIC PATHWAYS ● REDISCOVERED MENHIR
  - STANNON MOOR STONE ROW ● FOGOUS ●
  - DOWSING ● FOLKLORE ● WELLS CORNER ●
- \*ALL PHOTOS NOW IN FULL COLOUR\****

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

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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 PLP (Penwith Landscape Partnership), of which CASPN is a lead partner, have been really getting into their stride over recent months, including the clearing (with volunteers) of some major sites. Excellent work was done at Chûn Castle, and the site now looks as fresh and accessible as the day it was last in use. Work has also begun on Bosulow Trehyllis courtyard house settlement, a large site that was much in need of some TLC and attention; and continued



*Chûn Castle after clear-up [c] Carolyn Kennett*

at Mulfra Vein Courtyard House settlement, which is clearer than it has ever been. The site is also being surveyed by a volunteer team, trained by PLP archaeologists. Contractors have also been busy clearing the vegetation at Bosiliack settlement, so that new Trails around the ancient sites (to be launched later this year) will give a much enhanced and improved visitor experience for those wanting to visit the sites on foot.

The PLP is now into its second year of operation, and time will go very quickly on its 5-year programme. There are now a good team working at the PLP Offices in St. Just, under the guiding hand of Project Manager Pattie Richmond. The PLP Access Officer, Matt Watts, has established weekly volunteer tasks, with a focus on Open Access paths providing key links between ancient sites. During the last quarter of the year one programme, 2,535m of paths were cleared by volunteers across 7 tasks, equating to 22 days and a value of over £1000 in unskilled work. A highlight of the quarter was their first weekend Walking Festival, which consisted of three guided walks to their cleared sites. 107 people attended over 2 days, and there was good coverage in the local press.

We are now really beginning to see the on-site effects of the PLP's existence, thanks to the Grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Co-operation between the PLP and CASPN has been excellent, and some of CASPN's Management Team help to oversee the APPO (Ancient Penwith Project Officer) of the PLP. For more information on the Project please visit the informative website [www.penwithlandscape.com](http://www.penwithlandscape.com), and their lively Facebook page - Penwith Landscape Partnership.

## DOWSING NEWS

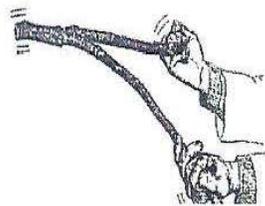
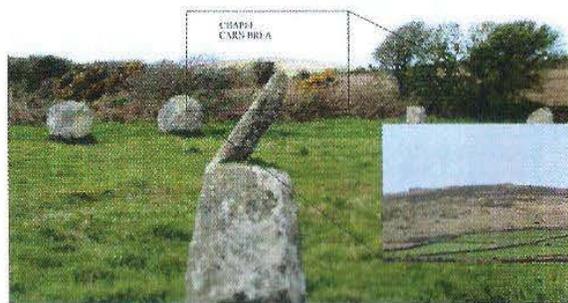


Image [c]  
Jean Hands

The winter season of talks started in October, with a presentation to both **Trencrom Dowsers** and **Tamar Dowsers** in the same weekend, by *Gary Biltcliffe & Caroline Hoare* on ‘The Power of Centre’. The speakers were the authors of ‘The Spine of Albion: an exploration of earth energies and landscape mysteries along the Belinus Line’, which has created a lot of interest in dowsing circles. This talk was based on their new book, which explores the energies of ancient tribal Celtic centres of Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Isle of Man, England and Scotland, including modern geographical centres and ancient meetings of tracks and focal-points in the landscape. They describe their research as ‘rediscovering ancient cosmology and the Celtic Goddess at the omphalos sites of the British Isles’. In 1994 John Michell published a book ‘At the centre of the world’ which was about omphalos sites all over the world, including Britain and Cornwall, but the Biltcliffe/Hoare research has focussed on the ‘Celtic’ nations of Britain and Ireland + England. The Cornish element in their talk centred on Lanivet [see article in MM22 p.12-13] and the nearby St.Benet’s Abbey and well [see Wells Corner on p.11] but there was much else of interest as well in their wide-ranging talk.

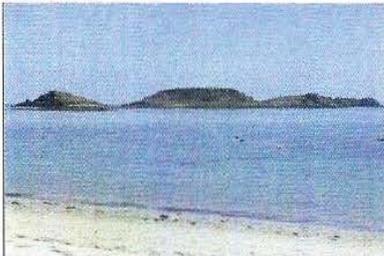
In November **Trencrom Dowsers** had a presentation by archaeo-astronomer *Carolyn Kennett* on ‘Astronomy Heritage in Ancient Penwith’. Carolyn spoke about the history of archaeo-astronomy in West Penwith, and the discovery of the metonic cycle of 19 years, before turning her attention to her research at Boscawen-ûn stone circle [see her article in MM95 p.9-13]. She showed the possible solar and lunar alignments from this circle, including the winter solstice sunrise out of the Lamorna gap, the summer solstice sunset over a barrow, and two lunar standstill events over the field menhir and Creeg Tol. She also suggested that the Pleides star system (the seven Sisters) would have set over Chapel Carn Brea in about 1500 BCE. Finally, she mentioned some possible alignments at three other circles: from the Merry Maidens a northern major lunar standstill setting over Caer Bran; from the Nine Maidens a similar one over Carn Galva; and from Tregeseal a winter solstice sunset into the sea in a gap towards the Isles of Scilly. Carolyn really brought her research alive, and provoked some interesting discussion and ideas afterwards, including the observation that the Mary Line at Boscawen-ûn changed direction at the centre stone itself.



Chapel Carn Brea from Boscawen-ûn circle  
[c] Carolyn Kennett

Two (different) presentations by BSD past-President *John Moss* were subsequently made. In November he gave a talk to **Tamar Dowzers** entitled “Pasties, cream teas and dowsing rods: the dowsing story of West Cornwall”. He showed that from the earliest of days the peninsula had been the home of peoples who knew, or at least sensed, the invisible currents and the telluric flows of their domestic land. He took the story forward over the centuries up to the present era, and showed the connection of many geomancers and dowzers to this special place, including Guy Underwood, John Michell, Hamish Miller and Don Wilkins. This was a well-attended presentation that provided a succinct summary, with some interesting revelations, of a place where light, geology, atmosphere and earth energies all lend themselves to a special inspiration, meditation and intuition.

In December, John gave a talk to **Trencrom Dowzers**, an adaptation of his talk to the south-west Dowsing Festival earlier in the year on the theme of “Consciously communicating with our surroundings” and asked the question: Do we?. As an ex-President of the British Society of Dowzers, he has presided over “everything from physics to fairies and everything in between”, and his talk was peppered with examples and anecdotes from his time there. He made the point that dowzers have to be careful that their beliefs do not limit or influence their findings, and that they must learn to listen to the land rather than bombard it with a long list of questions. He said that the spirit of place was important to respect, and he thought that the Earth was some kind of conscious being, and that the energy lines that can be dowsed are a manifestation of that. A lively discussion followed about how dowsing is not susceptible to double-blind tests. The session was followed by seasonal fare and rounded off a good year for the Dowzers.



## GO SCILLY WITH THE LEY HUNTERS!

Come and join The Ley Hunters Moot on the Isles of Scilly, from Saturday June 8th to Friday June 14th 2019.

Guided by Cheryl Traffon, author of *'The Earth Mysteries Guide to Ancient Sites on the Scillies'*.

A week of visits to ancient sites on all the islands with a friendly group of dowzers and ley-hunters.

Book for this **now** by sending £90 (cheque payable to the Network of Ley Hunters) to Laurence Main, 9 Mawddwy Cottages, Minllyn, Dinas Mawddwy, Machynlleth, SY20 9LW. You will be advised about the payment for the inter-island ferry trips when the NoLH know the number of group bookings. For information on travel and accommodation visit [www.simpliscilly.co.uk](http://www.simpliscilly.co.uk), or tel: 01720 424031 (You must book early for b & b or self catering accommodation). To camp at the Garrison campsite (where some NoLH members will be camping), tel: 01720 422670.

[www.networkofleyhunters.com](http://www.networkofleyhunters.com)

Tel: 01650 531354

## LOST & FOUND

### Treryn Dinas (Treen cliff) menhir

Towards the end of last year, a field was cleared below Treryn Dinas Cliff Castle, that had some prehistoric field systems, which were irrevocably lost. However, in the process the landowner discovered a fallen standing stone, which he erected on site at SW39843 22421. It stands just off the coastal path going eastwards from the cliff castle, and is visible from the path. MM went to have a look, and dowsed where it had been found (about 20ft away from where it now stands), and that it had been re-erected where it originally stood. It dowsed as a definite Bronze Age menhir, and a strong energy line ran from it to a rocky outcrop nearby. Palden Jenkins checked it out on his Ancient Penwith alignments map, and discovered that it stands on 2 alignments: no.37 (Nine Maidens stone circle to Treryn Dinas cliff castle), and no.165 (Treryn Dinas cliff castle to Castle-an-Dinas. It also narrowly misses no.108: (Treryn Dinas cliff castle to Carn Brea). It is a lovely stone, and well worth a visit.

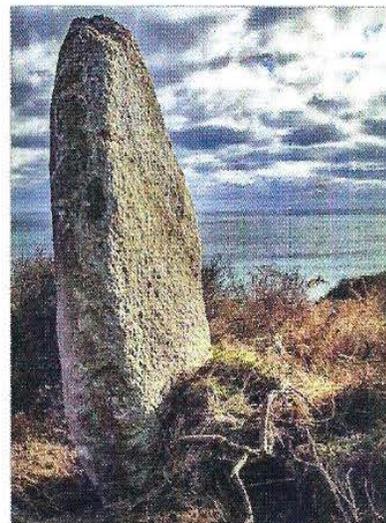


Photo [c] Alan Barker

*Alignments map is at [www.ancientpenwith.org/map.html](http://www.ancientpenwith.org/map.html) . List available from MM.*

### Bolatherick boundary stone

It has been suggested on the Megalithic Portal on-line site ([www.megalithic.co.uk](http://www.megalithic.co.uk)) that a little-known boundary stone on Bodmin Moor may in fact be a re-used standing stone. It stands at SX12658 76845, beside a track leading from St.Breward to Leaze water treatment works. It is not far from the site of the two King Arthur's Downs stone circles on Emblance Downs to the NE [see MM63 p.13 & MM74 p.20]. Although relatively small in size, nevertheless its shape and location make it a candidate for being a re-used menhir.



Photo [c] DrNickLeB

Kenny Price has created an online blog called **Ancient Whispers Penwith** that focuses on long-distant geomantic alignments across the country. His current page follows the first half of the Michael/Mary line by satellite and focuses on some events along the way, including the geometry at the Hurlers stone circles, and a look at the Tintagel-Bodmin Moor-Jersey alignment. This begins at Tintagel Castle in North Cornwall, goes through the Hurlers stone circles, and ends at a dolmen on Jersey. Well worth a look!

*<http://ancientwhisperspenwith.blogspot.com>*



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

*Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network*



CASPAN is now 21 years old, and has much to celebrate over two decades. It has a lovely updated user-friendly website, and a very lively and well-supported Facebook page. It has a network of Site Monitors, who look after most of the principal ancient sites in West Penwith, and it continues its work doing small-scale Clear-ups at the ancient sites. There is a full programme of these planned for this year with details on the website and on the back page of MM.



*Sancreed Well clear-up [c] Roger Driscoll*

It also organises 'Pathways to the Past' weekend of walks and talks around West Penwith, this year on the weekend of May 25th-26th. All are welcome to these events.

### **Saturday May 25th**

10.00-12.30 **Saints and Stones.** Guided Walk with John & Jill Moss from St.Just church to lesser-known sites on Tregeseal Common.

2.00-5.00 **From working mines to World Heritage sites.** Guided Walk with David Giddings through industrial heritage of Botallack and Kenidjack valleys. Meet Counthouse.

7.30- 9.00 **Tintagel, Dumnonia and post-Roman Britain.** An illustrated talk on Tintagel by Jackie Nowakowski, Site Director. St.Just Town Hall.

### **Sunday May 26th**

11.00-12.30 **Introduction to Cornish Crosses** by Andrew Langdon. St.Just Town Hall

2.00-5.00 **Mermaids, wrecks and tombs.** Guided Walk to Maen Castle and Land's End, with legendary storytelling by Adrian Rodda. Meet Sennen Cove (west) car park.

7.30-9.00 **Folklore of Bodmin Moor & East Cornwall** talk by Alex Langstone. St.Just Town Hall.

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

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

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

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

**To support CASPAN please join:** (£10/year waged, £14 couples, £7 unwaged)

E-mail [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com), visit CASPAN web site (PayPal/downloadable application form/standing order), or write to address above

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

**Sites Clear-Ups:** e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com), or telephone above

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

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

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

**Sites Clear-Ups:** e-mail: [info@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:info@cornishancientsites.com), or telephone above

*newsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsnewsne*  
**AUSSIE ARCHAEOLOGIST FINDS CORNISH  
 BARROW WITH 4000 YEAR OLD INTACT POT**

An archaeologist at the Australian National University (ANU), Dr. Catherine Frieman, has recently discovered a hitherto unidentified Bronze Age burial mound at Hendersick near Looe [SX2396 5196]. The site was discovered by chance when she was conducting geophysical surveys nearby, and was approached by a farmer about a possible site in a neighbouring field. "He told us about a 'lump' on his land and asked us to take a look at it" she said. "So we ran our



equipment over the area and found a quite obvious circular ditch - about 15 metres across - with a single entrance pointing south-east and a bunch of pits in the middle". This was obviously the remains of a barrow, so, with co-operation from the CAS, the CAU and the National Trust, she assembled a team of local volunteers to lead an excavation.

This excavation turned up a remarkable find: an intact clay urn buried 4000 years ago that contained some fragments of human bone among the cremated remains [*photo above*]. These fragments will be analysed to determine if possible the age, gender, diet and original location of the individuals buried there. Other items found include various examples of Cornish Bronze Age pottery, flint tools and two high-quality hammer stones, used to make flint tools. Dr Frieman said: "This is a very beautiful, very complete burial, and we're very excited".

However, what has puzzled Dr. Frieman and her team was the discovery of medieval activity on the same site. She said: "The site has thrown up a big mystery for us because we found what we believe is an entire - albeit crushed - medieval pot from the 12th or 13th century AD (CE), carefully placed under a couple of layers of flat stones. It had some cooked food remains adhering to it and we don't know what it's doing there or why. Hundreds of years after the barrow was built, someone from the 12th or 13th century came back to this site and dug into it to bury this pot. At this stage there were two local monasteries in view of this site, as Looe Island was a satellite monastery of Glastonbury Abbey, so it would be very strange to have non-Christian activity on this site. The evidence looks quite ritualistic, but what the ritual was we don't know". The team also excavated an Iron Age round house, possibly from about 500 BCE, and are trying to deduce reasons for the location of both barrow and round house. Dr. Frieman said: "This was a traversed place and regularly visited over the millennia. We know that there are a series of Bronze Age shipwrecks off this coast, so this was an important shipping highway in prehistory, probably for the movement of metals, especially tin".

## CURIOUS AND ENIGMATIC MONUMENTS

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

### **ROSTARLOCK—STADDLE STONES or CHEVAUX-DE-FRISE?**

Found in north-west Spain and Portugal, western Wales, western Ireland and Scotland, *chevaux-de-frise* are a feature of some Iron Age sites, their distribution demonstrating cultural contact along the west coast of Europe during the Iron Age. Up until now, none have been positively identified in Cornwall, but recently John Peters from the Cornwall AONB, featured an enigmatic monument at Rostarlock, near Advent on Bodmin Moor [SX 1145 8035]. Rostarlock is a medieval settlement, but the feature has several Bronze Age hut circles nearby, so it could date from any period. Carl Thorpe of the CAU suggested that it could be a *chevaux-de-frise*, which consists of a band of upright stones outside the main defensive circuit of a hillfort or defended enclosure. However, Craig Weatherhill thought that a *chevaux-de-frise* would be far more tightly packed with sharp-topped stones than this example. He thought that the structure had supported off-ground timber buildings for drying grain and the like, much as staddle stones do. Jackie Nowakowski, of the CAU, also thought it might be staddle stones for a mowhay (meadow), and added: "Often mowhays are located on lanes leading in the farmstead itself - this was a pattern I saw when I examined all the layouts of farms on Bodmin Moor for my undergraduate research many years ago. I recorded quite a few mowhays where the staddle stones had survived - like Carnaglaze and Leaze".



*Enigmatic feature at Rostarlock  
[c] John Peters*



*Chevaux-de-Frise outside Dun Aengus,  
Aran Isles, Ireland [c] Craig Weath-*

So the feature remains unidentified, and perhaps a *chevaux-de-frise* has yet to be found in Cornwall. Although their presence would certainly have slowed the progress of attackers, their defensive function has been questioned, particularly as their construction sometimes seems quite fragile. It is clear that *chevaux-de-frise* are vulnerable, and it is noteworthy that most examples survive in landscapes that have not been cultivated or occupied since the Iron Age, or they have been protected by later earthworks. Clearly many more examples may exist on unexcavated earthwork sites.

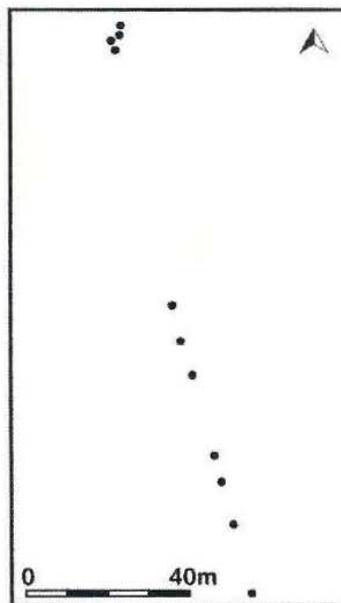
## STANNON MOOR STONE ROW

by Alan Simkins

The stone circle on Stannon Moor will doubtless be familiar to many readers. What is not so well known is an enigmatic 'stone setting' of four stones close to the circle, listed on the HER [SX12507 80075]. This marks the beginning of a stone row which is not included on the HER



[above] The stone setting, with Stannon circle on the horizon



[right] 1:500 Plan of stone row, with stone setting to the north.

[c] Sandy Gerrard, Gordon Fisher and Janet Daynes adap. Paul Williment

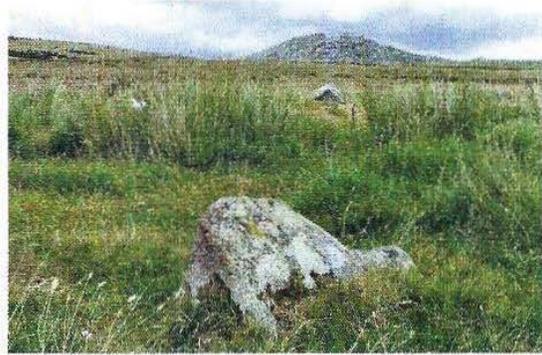
In August 2018 I arranged to meet up with Dr. Sandy Gerrard along with Gordon Fisher and Janet Daynes from ACE Archaeology Club in Devon for a visit to the circle and environs to take a closer look at this setting. The setting is a staggered linear arrangement of four small end-set granite slabs to the north-west of the circle, and is known as the Dragon's Teeth or Devil's Teeth. The setting is mentioned in Robin Payne's *Romance of the Stones* as the potential start point of a stone row, aligned to some (destroyed) cairns to the north, where the china clay quarry now resides..

With the quarry to the north we took a look around and espied a small stone on the horizon to the south, which appeared to be in **direct** alignment with the two southern stones of the Dragon's Teeth.\* Without the recent dry weather, I doubt we would have spotted this stone from the setting. Leaving a ranging pole as a guide we walked south where 9 further stones also appeared to line up, for a distance of around 150m. Did we have a row? The southernmost stone of this row appeared to have the attributes of a 'blocking' stone, a common feature of Neolithic stone rows [at SX12537 79943]

\*Andy Norfolk has suggested that the Dragon's Teeth stone setting may in fact have been a double stone row at this point.

Walking up and down the row several landscape treats and tricks, which are common features of stone rows, immediately became apparent:

- From the north walking south, Brown Willy appears on the south-east horizon as soon as the stone setting is left behind, a view which grows the further south you travel.
- Around 2/3rds along the row, Alex Tor to the south-west dips below the horizon, disappearing from view.
- From the southern blocking stone, the viewer appears to be in the centre of a landscape bowl, an omphalos moment perhaps?
- Looking roughly north-east, the blocking stone lines up with a large moorstone to point directly at the notch on Rough Tor.
- Walking north, there are three ‘sea triangles’ to be seen to the west, which disappear one by one as you move north.

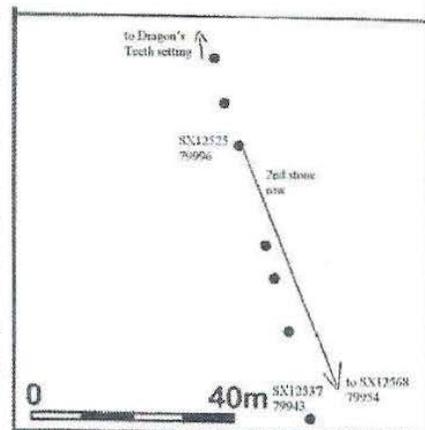


*View from the southern blocking stone towards Rough Tor.*

There are many other rows in Britain which are close to stone circles, but are not aligned to them. Those local to Cornwall include the rows at Shoveldown, Fernworthy and Merrivale on Dartmoor, and Leskernick on Bodmin Moor.

The row at Stannon, if that is what it is – and all the signs currently point that way – is not currently listed on the HER. It was suggested as a possible monument back in 2013, but was not considered significant at that time and so was not listed. The site has now been fully surveyed by Dr Sandy Gerrard and we believe it should now be reconsidered for inclusion. Full details of the row can be found on <https://stonerows.wordpress.com/gazetteer/region/bodmin-moor/stannon/>

[Ed.] The old West Cornwall Dowzers Group visited the area in August 2013 [see MM83 p.3] and identified a putative stone row then, though it does not appear to be the same one as the one in Alan’s article [above]. A return visit was made in February 2019 by Alan, Andy Norfolk, MM editor Cheryl Traffon and Lana Jarvis, and ‘Alan’s row’ was identified and confirmed. The one found by WCD in 2013 was also found, which appeared to run at approx 140 degrees, starting from the third stone south from ‘Alan’s row’ and running in a SSE direction to its southerly blocking stone at SX12568 79954. On Google Maps it seems to follow the line of an old trackway, though not prehistoric.



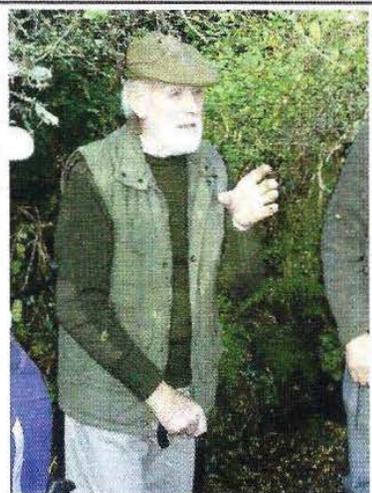
## OLD MOLL'S WELL UNCOVERED

An historic well on Kenidjack Common near St. Just [SW39130 32492] has recently been uncovered by Matt Watts of the PLP and Cheryl Traffon of CASPN. It lies down the side of valley from the Holed Stones below Carn Kenidjack, and is where a fresh spring arises. The well was found to be very deep, and there were stones surrounding it, with a rudimentary step down to the well [photo right]. Craig Weatherhill believes this to be the well referred to in an old tale by Robert Hunt, published in 1871.



“On the tract called the ‘Gump,’ near Kenidzhek, is a beautiful well of clear water, not far from which was a miner’s cot, in which dwelt two miners with their sister. They told her never to go to the well after daylight; they would fetch the water for her. However, on one Saturday night she had forgotten to get in a supply for the morrow, so she went off to the well. Passing by a gap in a broken-down hedge (called a gurgo) near the well, she saw an old woman sitting down, wrapped in a red shawl; she asked her what she did there at that time of night, but received no reply; she thought this rather strange, but plunged her pitcher in the well; when she drew it up, though a perfectly sound vessel, it contained no water; she tried again and again, and, though she saw the water rushing in at the mouth of the pitcher, it was sure to be empty when lifted out. She then became rather frightened; spoke again to the old woman, but receiving no answer, hastened away, and came in great alarm to her brothers. They told her that it was on account of this old woman they did not wish her to go to the well at night. What she saw was the ghost of old Moll, a witch who had been a great terror to the people in her lifetime, and had laid many fearful spells on them. They said they saw her sitting in the gap by the wall every night when going to bed”

**Trevor Rogers**, aged 88, of Alsia Barns, owner of the land where Alsia Holy Well stood, died in a nursing home after a short illness on December 27th 2018. Trevor was a dedicated and faithful guardian of the well, and spent much time and resources on maintaining and upkeeping the structure and its surrounds. He told the story of how he came to live at the site in his book “There are pagans at the bottom of my garden” [2011 - reviewed in MM77 p.22], and subsequently wrote an article for MM on “Alsia’s Other Well” [MM82 p.11-13]. At the time of writing, his property, including the holy well, was up for sale



*Trevor at Alsia Well*

## WELLS CORNER

*A regular feature on Cornwall's holy wells*

### St. Benet's Abbey well [SX0382 6365]

The new owners of St. Benet's Abbey, near Lanivet in mid-Cornwall, have uncovered and cleared a well in the gardens. St. Benet's Abbey of the Benedictine order was founded in 1411 as a lazaret house or hospital, and was used in the 16th century as the house of the Courtney family, with alterations at that time. The well therefore presumably dates from the time of the Abbey's foundation, or later when it was converted into a house. There was formerly a St. Benedict's Chapel at the house, licensed in 1411, and the well may have been associated with that. If it was from the time of the Abbey's original foundation as a lazaret house, then it is undoubtedly a healing well that may also have had a domestic use. Lanivet means "sacred grove or place", and is often considered to be the sacred centre of Cornwall. Another holy well, dedicated to **St. Congar**, once stood about a mile to the east. Most of its remains [at SX0575 6355] were thought to have been destroyed by the dualing of the A30, but recently John Litton has found stones in a stream near the farmhouse.



*www.facebook.com/HolyWellsOfCornwall*

*On-line map by Andy Norfolk at: <https://tinyurl.com/yd6rez9k>*

## The Fourth John Michell Symposium

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**JOSCELYN GODWIN**, author, editor & translator, Professor of Music Emeritus at Colgate University, Honorary Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries: "The Philosophy of Charles Fort"

**JULIA CLEAVE**, independent researcher & lecturer, Member of the Academic Board of the Temenos Academy: "The Shakespeare Authorship Question"

**GARY LACHMAN**, former musician & author of *Lost Knowledge of the Imagination*: "John Michell in the Stream of the Sixties"

**Symposium bookings:** Stephen Overly, The Temenos Academy, PO Box 203, Ashford, Kent TN25 5ZT (01233) 813-663 / [temenosacademy@myfastmail.com](mailto:temenosacademy@myfastmail.com) / [www.temenosacademy.org](http://www.temenosacademy.org)

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**Bookings:** Leon Conrad, [leon@lifeloreinstitute.com](mailto:leon@lifeloreinstitute.com) / [www.lifeloreinstitute.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.lifeloreinstitute.eventbrite.co.uk)

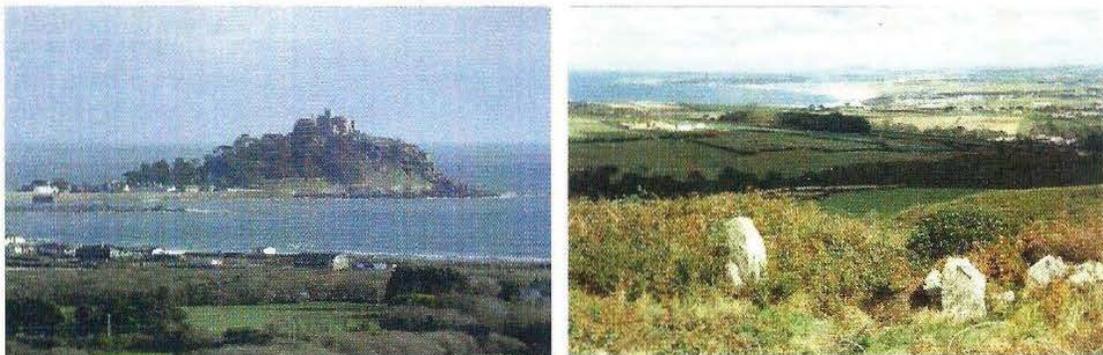
**Further information / Mailing list:** Christine Rhone, [rhonchristine@hotmail.com](mailto:rhonchristine@hotmail.com)

## MYTHIC PATHWAYS

### 2: 'The Giants Way' [St.Michael's Mount to St.Ives Island]

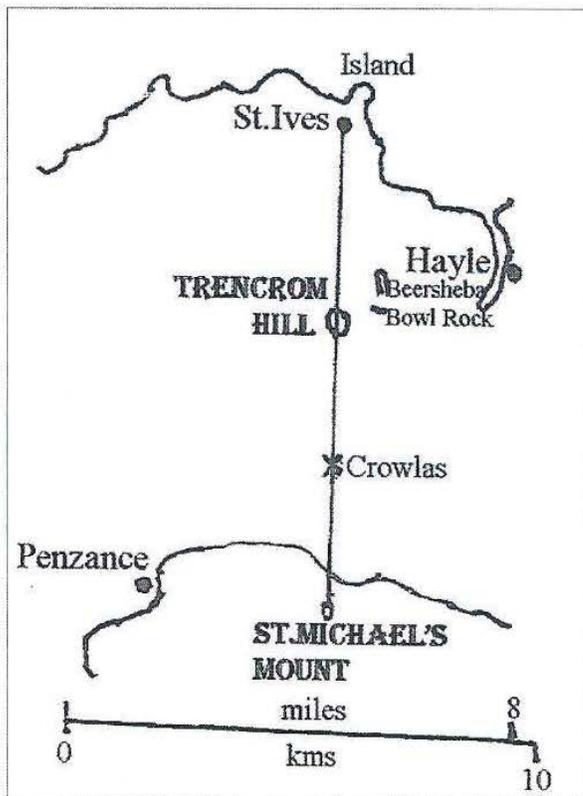
*A new series of features that looks at ancient pathways in West Penwith, that may be on classic 'ley' lines, which in addition have myths and legends associated with them, recorded by the folklore collectors William Bottrell and Robert Hunt in the 19th Century. These Mythic Pathways combine elements of landscape tracks, alignments and myths and legends, and may therefore have ancient origins.*

Bottrell and Hunt both have several stories about the Giants of Cornwall. In one of Bottrell's stories, Tom (who was "no more than eight feet high") takes beer from Marazion to St.Ives for someone described as "a famous tin-dealer, brewer and mayor as well". He collects the beer from a public house near the road to St.Michael's Mount and along the way encounters an aged giant Denbras (meaning "big man"), whom he engages in a fight, and accidentally kills him. This occurs on the eve of midsummer, a magical 'between-the-worlds' time and in the evening Tom goes up on the hills where the bonfires are blazing. The next day he buries the giant and places a dolmen over his body. He inherits Denbras' castle, which is on a high spot in the land, which Andy Norfolk suggests was Trencrom Hill'. This stands at almost the mid-point between St.Michael's Mount and St.Ives.



*[left] St.Michaels's Mount and [right] Trencrom Hill, looking towards St.Ives Bay*

Both St.Michael's Mount and St.Ives Island were probable holy hilltops in the Neolithic period, and by the Iron Age both were utilised as 'cliff castles' [see MM84 p.11 & 13]. Trade in tin most probably took place at both harbours (and St.Michael's Mount was probably the fabled 'Ictis')<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, both places must have been considered 'special' in prehistoric times, and, as it so happens, there is a straight alignment between St.Michael's Mount, Trencrom Hill and St.Ives and its Island. There may be a memory here in this story of a 'sacred way' running between all three sites, which is dowsable as an energy line today. St.Michael's Mount is a nodal point, where the four great energy lines (named by Hamish Miller & Paul Broadhurst as the Michael, Mary, Apollo and Athena lines) meet, and the Athena line itself meanders from Trencrom Hill to St.Michael's Mount. In addition, the modern-day St.Michael's Way follows a path across the land linking together St.Ives, Trencrom Hill and St.Michael's Mount.



Parts of this St. Michael's Way may run along old stretches of trackway which were part of the "old road" that Tom goes along. The story says that Tom passes through Crowlas, which also happens to be on the direct route from St. Michael's Mount to Trencrom Hill. There he collects a woman, Joan, that he had "been courting" and together they go up to Denbras' "castle" (in all probability Trencrom Hill) where they find "no end of tin and treasures". This may be a reference to the tin trade route, which went to St. Ives Bay and St. Michael's Mount, and it may not be too fanciful to think that some of it may have been stored at Trencrom Hill, or that an Iron Age tribal leader may have had his headquarters there, and may have kept some of the tin as payment. Another legend tells of the spriggans of Trencrom Hill who guarded the treasure kept there, which may also refer to this story.

Finally, there is another giants' legend that links together Trencrom Hill and St. Michael's Mount. The Mount was said to have been the home of the giant Cormoran and his wife Cormelian, who were also said to have lived in the forest now submerged beneath Mounts Bay (the old Cornish name for the Mount "Carrek Loos y'n Goos" = 'grey rock in the wood' refers to this). They quarried the granite stones to make the island, and Cormelian carried the stones in her apron. Both Cormoran and the Giant of Trencrom Hill threw stones at each other, but one day Cormelian was squinting at the sun and did not see a stone hammer arrive which hit her on the head and killed her. A grieving Cormoran buried her under the small greenstone island at the start of the causeway over to the Mount. The legend of this is enshrined in Bowl Rock, which lies close to this path and is on the St. Michael's Way, and a nearby plaque tells the story of the giants throwing quoits. This may be a memory of the geomantic marking of the land in prehistoric times along this ancient mythic pathway.



*Bowl Rock on St. Michael's Way*

<sup>1</sup> 'Songlines—legends in the landscape' Part 1 by Andy Norfolk - MM62 p.14-17.

<sup>2</sup> 'Cliff Castles—reading for tin' by Roger Farnworth - MM84 p.14-17.

## A NEW LOOK AT OLD FOGOUSTONES

by Alan Crutch



*Now what on earth is this somewhat disturbing image, and what has it to do with fogous and West Penwith?*

Long ago I gave up on trying to work out the original function of fogous. It now seems harsh to reduce those wonderfully built curved and corbelled avenues, usually entered from a narrow creep passage, to mere utility. The scale of work involved means they had meaning for the communities that built them over 2,000 years ago but to survive to the present day they have all had to endure significant changes over time and different eras seem to have looked at them with different eyes.

*Boleigh fogou [left]*

At Porthmeor and Carn Euny the development of the Courtyard House community saw houses attach themselves to the original structure and to use the fogous for the new neighbours' own purposes. At Porthmeor, most of the right hand passage wall from the current entrance has clearly been removed in the area adjacent to the adjoining Courtyard House. The current end of the passage is also blocked by what looks like later walling, behind which, and slightly uphill from it, is a circular structure with a paved entrance. There are two drains that run from this hut through passages that pass through the base of the 'blocking' wall along part of the fogou to the outside. Following clearance in 2016 light could be seen by looking up both these drains from the base of the passage to the hut (although one is now blocked up with stones again!).

At Carn Euny a new entrance to the passage was made directly from a new Courtyard House. Halligye was used as a hiding place for Cavaliers in the civil war, and at Pendeen and others, the fogou has made a convenient animal shelter. Pendeen fogou is still entered through the farmyard where cattle often congregate. I suspect that one or more may also have proved a useful temporary storage place for smuggled contraband.

These days the handful of fogous that remain with a substantial passage provide a haven for various creatures including curious humans. Halligye is closed from the end of September until the following spring as it provides a convenient roost for the Horseshoe Bat. Boleigh fogou is home to one of the largest spiders in the UK, creatures that decorate its ceiling with beautiful, perfect teardrop-shaped, sacs. These are the containers for their eggs and baby spiders once they hatch. This is one from the roof of the creep passage *[right]*.



The photograph shows one of the many egg sacs illuminated by torchlight. Unfortunately the beam also illuminated a large number of adult spiders on the roof, so I felt it may be time to leave. As I exited the creep I saw a stone that reflected light. It turned out to be covered in shiny black crystals and I thought it might have been deliberately chosen for this significant part of the site so I took a photograph and thought no more about it.

A few days earlier I had visited Halligye for the first time in many years and my magpie mind had been attracted by another shiny stone inside the creep which formed part of the wall with the fogou passage so would also have been apparent to anyone entering the fogou. This interestingly patterned stone forms part of the walling inside the creep passage leading to the long passage at Halligye fogou.

*Halligye fogou stone*

I had assumed my photo from the Boleigh fogou would be similar but as you will see from the photograph at the beginning of this article the Boleigh stone seemed to be looking out with a malevolent eye and a face bearing a striking resemblance to the reputed 'God of the Fogou' carving on one of the current entrance stones. Is this co-incidence? The answer is emphatically 'Yes' I am afraid. The photo image is greatly magnified and is certainly not visible to the human eye. We really should have learned by now that nothing is ever as it seems with fogous! Maybe we should learn to just accept them as they are and that it is our own reactions to them that we should investigate. In conversation I have heard many theories: an amplifier of earth energy; a place for religious ceremony; a place of initiation or rite of passage; a storage chamber; a shelter in times of trouble; a birthing chamber; a place of healing; a place where tin was smelted (or stored); and a place that merely demonstrates the power of whoever controlled those who were engaged in the building work. Some or maybe most of these may have been correct at one time or another in the long history of some of these enigmatic structures. I will not be tempted to speculate on the question of why communities decided they would construct fogous. I am just glad that they did.



For anyone who has not read it please try to obtain a copy of *Mother and Son The Cornish Fogou* by Ian Cooke who can claim the credit for noticing that all fogous seem to be orientated towards the sun's position at either midwinter sunrise or sunset. The book describes and gives a full history of all known fogous and a few that may once have been such. A briefer summary is contained in *The Earth Mysteries Guide to Ancient sites in West Penwith* whose author needs no introduction to any regular reader of this magazine! It was while re-reading that guide that I discovered that Pendeen fogou contains a shiny quartz stone placed at the point where the main passage bends, (which is also where the creep joins the passage). So it seems Pendeen, Boleigh and Halligye all have stones that are shiny and significantly different from the other stones that were used in construction incorporated in a position that would be visible to anyone using the creep.

I then remembered that Porthmeor also had a stone lying in the passage in a position about half way along. Not shiny but very visible! It was a large, round, white, beach pebble lying abandoned in the main passage. The photograph [right] is dated August 2016 and is now beneath the bracken. There are several similar stones in the nearby enclosed Courtyard House Settlement. Of course, the stone may be quite unrelated to the fogou. It is very large and, I imagine, very heavy, so there must be a possibility that it was part of the demolished right hand wall and whereas the building stone was all taken away this was left.



*Beach pebble at Porthmeor passage*

The only other local fogou with sizeable remains was Carn Euny so I went to look. Sadly the creep passage is currently closed at both ends so I was unable to see anything from there. The main passage is open to the light at both ends which has encouraged moss and lichen growth on the walls making it difficult to see if there are any unusual stones. The large dark smooth stone near the entrance shown in the photograph does look as if it may be on guard though.



*Carn Euny main passage*

I hope you may be tempted to visit or revisit some of the above sites. Take a torch to look at the stones themselves and form your own views. Please remember to ask for permission before visiting the sites:

Boleigh—Rob & Laura [tel: 01736 810530 in advance]

Carn Euny—Open any time during daylight hours

Pendeen—Call at Pendeen Manor House & Farm for permission

Porthmeor—Mr and Mrs Berryman [tel: 01736 796923 in advance]

Halligye—Open any time during daylight hours, access from minor road at back of Trelowarren Estate. Closed in the winter months because of bat colony.



I leave you with this image of a small figure left in Boleigh and now placed proudly on the top of the entrance to the fogou by the owner.

## ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTHERWORLD AT FOGOOU SITES

There have been a number of reports of supernatural or 'other-worldly' experiences at some of our fogous. This may be because the underground enclosed or semi-enclosed space lends itself to experiences of altered states of consciousness. The high levels of radiation measured at these places may also contribute towards this experience [when measured, Carn Euny was 87% and Boleigh 91% higher than background].

Three such accounts are reproduced here:-

"My fiancé and I enjoyed a wonderful holiday in St. Just. We chose Cornwall to explore umpteen Celtic/Pagan sites, but went to the areas open-minded, not with pre-conceived ideas. One hot day we visited Carn Euny fogou. After having explored it, my boyfriend decided to cool off in the fogou itself. I myself couldn't go in: it wasn't an unpleasant feeling. I just knew that I *shouldn't* go in at that particular time. So instead I propped against what I knew to be a window sill and started to sketch the entrance. Immediately I knew I was being watched from behind. I didn't turn around, carried on drawing, and let what would happen, happen. How I knew what I saw/felt I don't know, but I know that the mother of the house had been preparing some food, and came to the 'window' to see who was there. She had with her her little girl who asked her mother what I was doing. The mother then picked her up, so she could see. I dared not turn round for fear of losing 'contact'. On completion, I called my boyfriend, who was ready to leave. He felt nothing, or saw nothing. But again as we left the village I had the pleasant feeling of saying good-bye to a friendly community".

*Jackie Sutton [from MM21 p.15]*

"I was at Carn Euny beehive hut, with a small group of women, celebrating Samhain (Hallow'een), when I felt the presence of a spirit behind me. It manifested as a tall young man, who was very interested in what we were doing. We engaged telepathically in conversation, and he asked me what we were doing. I answered that we were celebrating Samhain, the start of the new Celtic year. He then asked me what was in the niche within the beehive hut, and I answered that it was a pumpkin. He asked me what that was, and I answered that it was a vegetable. He then asked where it originated from, and I answered that it was from America. He then asked where America was, but by that time I had to close the conversation, as I was within sacred space and participating in ritual!"

*[LJ]*

"We met for our Allentide ritual at Carn Euny fogou, entering the underground beehive hut at about 11pm. There were five of us present, plus a guest, making six in all. It was a damp evening with on and off drizzle throughout, and at the start of our preparations we all mentioned that we could hear a buzzing sound like a swarm of bees (the hummadruz?). When we were all silent and walking the round, this sound became stronger, and it was at this point that we started hearing what seemed like voices roughly coming from the entrance to the fogou. At one point these seemed so loud and distinguishable that we thought there were people out in the passage, but of course it was empty. Lee, who was standing nearest to the entrance, could even discern it was not English that was spoken but some other language she did not recognise. By the end of the session at 2am all was silent".

## CORNISH FOLKLORE

*A regular column by folklorist Alex Langstone*

### Roseland Folklore

The Roseland peninsula is situated roughly midway along the southern Cornish shore and lies between the Carrick Roads to the west and Mevagissey Bay in the east. The district boasts pretty villages, sandy beaches and the small town of St Mawes, which lies at the mouth of the Percuil River. The small port is named after St Maudez, a 6<sup>th</sup> Century monk, who was popular in Brittany [1]. He may have been Welsh or Irish and had one of his first settlements on the south coast of Cornwall. The town's holy well is named after the saint, and may have formed part of his hermitage, as local lore claims that Maudez created a chair in the rock above the well [2]. The old well later became a wishing well, where pins were dropped into it to gain favours [3].

At the other end of the peninsula lies the village of Veryan, where in the 19th century, vicar and local land owner Jeremiah Trist built the famous round house sentinels that guard the main road in and out of the village. They were built between 1815 and 1818 and each have a thatched roof crowned by a cross. The round nature of each building was described as '*preventing the devil from entering the village, as there are no corners to hide in*'. There is a curious tradition connected to Veryan parish church. It states that should the church clock strike on the Sunday morning during the singing of the hymn before the sermon, or before the 'collect against perils' at Evening Prayer, there will be a death in the parish before the following Sunday [4].

Just outside the village, around a mile or so lies Carne Beacon, a large Bronze Age barrow whose folkloric story lays claim to be the last resting place of King Gerennius. His body was brought across Gerrans Bay, from his castle at Dingerein, on a golden boat with silver oars, and both the boat, the oars and the king still wearing his crown were buried in the barrow [5]. Sadly, when Carne Beacon was excavated, only a cist with some cremated remains were discovered. Maybe they needed to dig deeper?



*Carne Beacon [c] Ocifant*

#### Notes

[1] *The Saints of Cornwall* by Catherine Rachel John, p 54

[2] *Ancient and Holy Wells* by L & M Quiller Couch p 147 [3] *Ibid* p 150

[4] *Cornish Feasts and Folklore* by M A Courtney, p 102

[5] *Popular Romances of the West of England* by Robert Hunt, p 459

See also article by Andy Norfolk on 'Gereint: a lost Cornish Sun God' in MM26 p.10-11

Nearby at Dingerein Castle lies the Mermaid's Hole, a subterranean passage, which was said to link the castle to the sea [6]. Possibly alluding to a lost tale or tradition. Folklorist Margaret Courtney had this to say about the legend of Dingerein and the Mermaid's Hole: "*His palace of Dingerein was in the neighbouring village of Gerrans. A subterranean passage, now known as Mermaid's Hole, one day discovered when ploughing a field, was supposed to have led from it to the sea*". There is a cave below Penarrin Point [7] which is named after one of the most famous sons of Cornish folklore, Jan Tregeagle, and when storms rage across this part of the Roseland coast, it is blamed on Tregeagle's spirit, which haunts the cave and conjures storms in league with the devil himself. Just to the north of Veryan, lies the hamlet of Bessy Beneath, where oral tradition concludes that either a witch or highwaywoman was hanged and buried at the crossroads. However, the name may possibly be an English corruption of the Cornish *bosveneth* meaning a hillside dwelling [8].

The ancient crossing at King Harry Ferry has an interesting tale associated with its founding. It was often repeated in days gone by that King Hal crossed the river at this spot with his queen on his back. The river here is several fathoms deep, so King Hal must have been a giant to be able to afford this great feat. Those that cross here today, will recall that just upstream of the ferry, mighty ocean-going ships are often laid up for repair, confirming how deep the river is at this particular crossing.

The old church at St Anthony, not far from the lighthouse, at the seaward end of the peninsula, lies close to where the former priory of St Mary-de-Vale once stood. The site of the Priory is cursed. The last prior laid the curse upon the site, after Henry VIII visited and told him that the priory and its surrounding lands days were numbered. The curse stated that the new owner and his family would all die prematurely. The new holder of the lands died soon after he took over, and so did all his family [9].



*St. Anthony-in-Roseland church*  
[c] David Ross

#### Notes

[6] *Cornish Feasts and Folklore* by M A Courtney, p 103

[7] *The Folklore of Cornwall* by Deane and Shaw p 84

[8] *A Concise Dictionary of Cornish Place-Names* by Craig Weatherhill

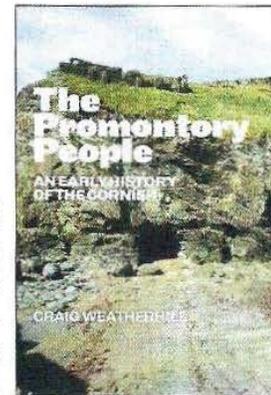
[9] *Cornish Feasts and Folklore* by M A Courtney, p 102

*Alex Langstone is editor of Lien Gwerin magazine and author of 'From Granite to Sea'. He is currently spending time researching a new book on the folklore of Mid Cornwall.*

## BOOK REVIEWS

**The Promontory People: an early history of the Cornish**  
by Craig Weatherhill

[Published by Francis Boutle, 2019 paperback - £12.99]

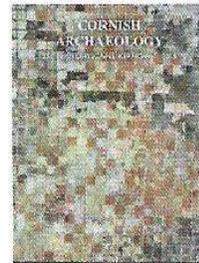


A new book by Craig Weatherhill, Cornish historian, and language and cultural expert, is a major event, and this one is more important than most: in fact, Craig has said that it is the most important book that he has written. Using up-to-date archaeological, archaeo-linguistic and genetic research Craig describes the history of the Cornish people from the earliest times to the Norman period, and places Cornwall in the context of its wider relationships with the rest of Britain and Europe. He begins by pointing out that in 2014 the Cornish were officially designated a national minority within the UK, and then goes back to the very beginnings of Cornwall as a land mass 500 million years ago. In the first chapter, the earliest Cornish settlers are identified as coming from the Iberian peninsula 9000 years ago, and as Craig says: “at this point the history of the Cornish people truly begins, because four out of five Cornish people today (79%) carry the intact genetic code that shows direct descent from arrivals from Atlantic Europe between 11,600 and 6,500 years ago”.

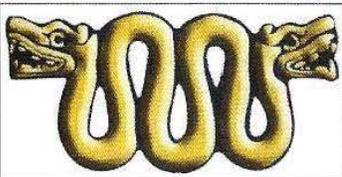
He goes on to study the Neolithic period, followed by the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Romano-Celtic period, and the early Christian and Medieval periods. In the Neolithic period (‘farmers and megaliths’) he talks about the transition from hunter-gatherers to settled farming, and about how it was women from the Mesolithic communities who sought partners from the Neolithic farmers, rather than the other way round. He focuses on tor enclosures, greenstone axe manufacture and megalith building, especially portal dolmens (quoits) and says that these monuments were revered and attended to for a long time after they were built. Chapter 2 (‘Towards Nationhood’) explores how tin and copper, both found in Cornwall, were the foundation of the bronze working that gave its name to the Bronze Age. He also looks at entrance graves, stone circles, menhirs, etc, and comments: “Stone circles strongly suggest a ceremonial function with a distinct astronomical significance defined by carefully planned alignments with outlying monuments or natural features to mark the rise or set of sun, moon or certain stars on particular dates such as the equinoxes or solstices”.

The book then carries the story forward through the Iron Age with its cliff castles and hill forts, and examines the possible spread of the q-Celtic language that later became Cornish, and the fact that Cornwall was in the hub of the Atlantic seaway routes, and not a remote land on the periphery. Later chapters look at the relationship between Dumnonia and Cornubia and its rulers (including the mythical Arthur at Tintagel) and finishes with a detailed look at the early medieval period in Cornwall. This is an immensely readable book, one that is factual and objective, but one that also shines through with a great love and understanding of what it means to be Cornish/Celtic, rather than English/Saxon. This Kernow-centric approach brings great insights into the history of this amazing land of Cornwall.

**Cornish Archaeology no.55 (2016)** is the most recently published annual volume from the Cornwall Archaeological Society. As always, there are an interesting selection of reports and essays, including excavations at Tolgarrick Farm, Truro (Bronze & Iron Age settlement); a middle Neolithic structure at Grampound; a group of barrows at Pelynt that may have marked a prehistoric routeway; excavation of a cist grave of a child on St.Martins, Isles of Scilly; inscribed and decorated stones at Lanivet, and a discussion of its pre-Christian significance; and an informative article entitled "A tomb for the living" by Peter Herring on the ruined Grumbla cromlech at Sancreed. The article makes the interesting point that cromlechs may have been constructed with their capstones as a deliberate feature to resemble nearby natural rock formations, in particular tors of neighbouring hills (in this case Sancreed Beacon) [*see also features on p.22 & p.24 of this MM*]. They would then have become prominent permanent monuments to the ancestors, and indicators of the place or territory with which the surviving community were attached. To purchase the volume go to [www.cornisharchaeology.org.uk](http://www.cornisharchaeology.org.uk)



**Lien Gwerin** no.3, the journal of Cornish folklore, compiled and edited by Alex Langstone, is now out [Spring 2019]. It includes The Pencarrow Hunt by Merv Davey, the mysterious carvings of Probus by Alan Kent, the Seaton mermaid, cruel Coppinger, traditions of Parcurno, some North Cornwall folklore by Alex Langstone, and the Battle of Vellan-Druchar by Craig Weatherhill. Price £5 from [www.cornishfolklore.co.uk](http://www.cornishfolklore.co.uk).



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### **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.

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*For those on their own inspiring journeys*

## 20 YEARS AGO

*Delving into the pages of MM from the past*

20 years ago the worlds of Cornish archaeology and earth mysteries came together, with the publication of an article by Christopher Tilley [in *Cornish Archaeology* 34] entitled "Rocks as resources: landscape and power". This was examined in MM38 [Winter/Spring 1999] as it had much of interest for MM readers. In the article, Tilley considered relationships between archaeological sites and monuments and landscape features on Bodmin Moor, in particular the tors, which he believed were seen by Neolithic and Bronze-Age peoples as sacred places. "They had special significance in the form of stories, myths and events of cosmological import", particularly at Rough Tor to the north of the Moor, and Stowe's Pound and the Cheesewring to the south. "These places were meant to be seen, climbed up to, visited for ceremonial events, and then left". The article then went on to examine the stone circles, stone rows and cairns on the Moor, and concluded that they were all built in relationship to the tors to delineate a sacred relationship. He examined each of the 13 stone circles on the Moor in turn, and discovered that every one of them had a visual relationship with a distant tor (the majority being linked to Rough Tor) in a significant direction or orientation, some of which also had solar alignments.



*Rough Tor from Fernacre circle*

He then went on to examine stone rows, which he concluded were designed to mark the centres or margins of sacred spaces. Some very interesting perspectives of the tors come into view and disappear as one walks the rows, and in one case, Colvannick Row, the south coast of Cornwall and the sea is visible only from the north end of the row, and the north coast of Cornwall and the sea is visible from the south end, a deliberate use of sacred perspective. Finally, he examined the cairns (over 350 now known) which he believed were not simple burial chambers (except perhaps the small ones) but were designed to be seen as prominent visual landmarks close to the tors or along the high ridges of the Moor. "Through time they became the most significant permanent sacred reference points in the landscape of Bodmin Moor".

This article was followed by one on the ritual landscape of Leskernick on Bodmin Moor, where many of the same ideas were elaborated. MM concluded with the comment: "These articles are a remarkable approach by archaeologists to sacred landscape, incorporating ideas of ritual, of sacred space, of ceremony, of spirituality, of living land. Here at last on Bodmin Moor the archaeological establishment and the alternative earth mysteries approach seem to be in tune and perfectly synchronized, bringing alive the people, their lives and their spiritual beliefs from thousands of years ago". These ideas have been built upon and adapted over the last 20 years, but here was the first time they had been made.

## 30 YEARS AGO

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

MM7 [Winter 1988/9] & MM8 [Spring 1989] had several interesting articles about anomalous energies and quartz at ancient sites. Research had been done at the Merry Maidens stone circle near Lamorna with a Geiger Counter (part of the Dragon Project) that showed consistently that there were lower radiation readings inside the circle compared to the background. Indeed, some results showed that readings in the centre were practically zero, a result that has not been satisfactorily explained even up until today. However one MM reader, Peter Middleton, did have a suggestion about why the circle of stones itself seemed to be so highly charged. "I wonder if stone circles can be compared to synchrotrons (particle accelerators) found today in nuclear physics. The piezo-electric effect of quartz is well known. Touching stones raises the internal pressure and gives off minute charges of electrical potential difference (P.D)." This is presumably the cause of the tingles and shocks sometimes received by people off granite stones in circles. The article made reference to a report by Hamish Miller about the effect in MM5 (reproduced in this feature in MM95). Peter Middleton went on to say: "Imagine thousands of people tuned in pushing and relaxing, raising an ever-increasing PD, and by being physically joined together in a circle, a pulsating wave of power moving around the circle!"

As has been often noted, quartz does seem to have been deliberately chosen by the megalithic builders in Cornwall as a significant material, and its piezo-electric qualities may be at least part of the reason. The quartz stone at Boscawen-ûn stone circle is well known (also known as a healing stone), but some of the most notable examples lie on St. Breock Downs and at Duloe stone circle near Looe, where all 8 stones in the circle are made of quartz. The location of the source of these quartz stones is unknown, but in MM8 Lee & Gerry Jenkins wrote a piece suggesting that they had located it. They noticed that the entrance to the farm next to Dupath Well outside Callington was marked with large quartz stones. Upon asking the farmer's wife about this, they were told that there was a seam of quartz not far away from where they had come. Duloe circle is some 15 miles from Dupath well, which may be a bit too far to have dragged the stones, though not impossible, especially as it was such a good seam.

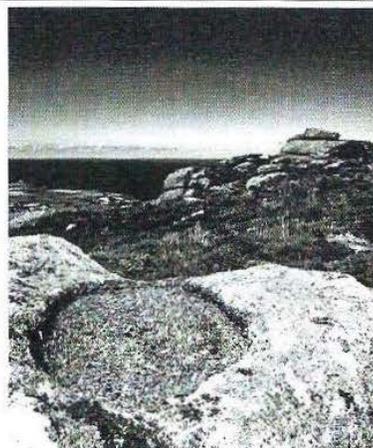


The energies at prehistoric sites such as these can be sensed today, particularly by dowsers. That many of these sites align across the land is well accepted today, but 30 years ago 'ley lines' were a hot topic of controversy. A book attacking the whole notion "Ley Lines in Question" (Williamson & Bellamy) was newly published, and John Michell made a robust refutation of it in an article in MM8. 30 years later, Michell is still remembered and respected, but who remembers Williamson & Bellamy's original book today?!

## THE PIPER'S TUNE

An article by **Jonathan Heron** [[www.wishingchairrecords.co.uk](http://www.wishingchairrecords.co.uk)] on 'Solution Pools and Supernatural Rocks' focuses on the 'solution hollows' on rocks and tors on Bodmin Moor and West Penwith. Solution Pools, or basins, are formed on the tallest rock outcrops, a product of normal erosion on the hardest granite with no cracks. Small indentations become progressively bigger as the granite dissolves over thousands of years, quartz crystals forming a layer at the bottom of the hollow.

Berah Tor long cairn on Bodmin Moor is orientated towards the highest concentration of solution pools and rock formations on Berah Tor edge. Louden Tor cairn is below the solution basins on the rock formations at the western end of Rough Tor, and within a short distance NE of the cairn is a large isolated grounder with a well-developed solution basin. The probable Neolithic enclosure at Stow Hill links and surrounds a series of rock stacks and solution pools. Trethevey Quoit has a probable eroded solution basin on its capstone that has produced a hole. This may have originally been brought from a higher tor, as indeed may also the holed stone at the Mên-an-Tol on the West Penwith moors.



Jonathan Heron goes on to say that the accumulation of quartz crystals within Solution Basins would almost certainly have been significant to peoples at the time as part of their belief systems. The liminal boundary location was a connection between earth and sky, 'perfect' pools on the top of high tors, reflecting clouds and light, and would have been powerful & symbolic.

The archaeologist Christopher Tilley asserted that these basins, eroded into each other, and interconnected, must have been seen as works of 'antiquity' by Neolithic cultures. The landscape itself was seen as the work of previous generations, and rock outcrops and formations imbued with specific meaning and purpose. These forms of ancestral beings were connections that knit together the Neolithic cultural fabric.

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