

- HONOURING THE ANCESTORS ON THE SCILLIES ●
- HANNIBALS CARN & CARN GULVA AREA ●
- LOST & FOUND ● PENGLAZ ● NEWS ●
- \* **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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## STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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

The row about grazing and fencing the West Penwith moors continues to rumble on - though perhaps 'rumble' is not the right word, given the vociferous opposition and activism of the Save Penwith Moors Group. They have at least scored one major success. The Nine Maidens Downs Commoners have now withdrawn their application to have the Commons grazed and fenced, saying that basically it wasn't worth the hassle for the limited amount of funding they would get. However, it appears that the HEATH Project are still backing landowners to manage other parts of the moorland. At Lanyon Farm, owned by the Bolitho Estate, more than 3000 metres of barbed wire fencing will be erected along parts of the 327 acre site to allow grazing by 33 cows for spring, summer and autumn grazing; at Carnyorth Moor at St. Just, owned by the Tregothnan Estate and Warren Farm Trust, 1000 metres of fencing will be put up in various parts of the 250 acre moorland for similar grazing; and at Carn Gulva, the National Trust plans to graze 30 cows on the 150 acre site, which will involve cattle grids on the B3306 north coast road. Taken all together, this is still a considerable amount of 'managing' and fencing, and the Save Penwith Moors Group continue to fight these proposals. MM can see both sides of the argument. More fencing on the moors (especially barbed wire fencing) means less open access and 'freedom to roam'; however it is obvious that the moors have become badly overgrown with gorse and bracken, and prehistoric barrows and hut circles have disappeared under it. I (editor) was up on Bodmin Moor recently, and it was a pleasure to be able to walk across the Moor, where the gorse has obviously been kept under control by grazing cattle and ponies. However, the site I was visiting - the Nine Stones circle - was a waterlogged pit, where the same cattle had obviously churned up the ground while visiting the stones for a good scratch! There seems to be no easy solution to the problems, and no doubt there will continue to be strongly-held opinions about it on both sides of the argument.

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

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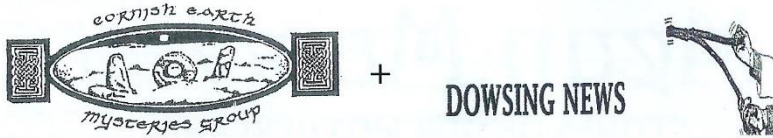
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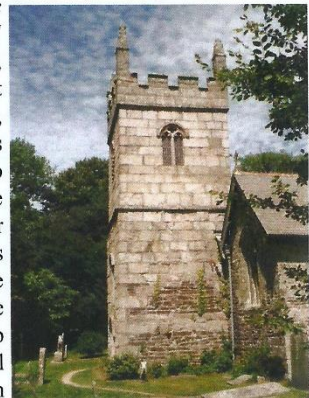
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Summer 2008 activities continued with the **Celtic Dowzers** visit to St.Piran's Round on the evening of July 17th. The round which is situated between Goonhaven and Perranporth, had a very pleasant feeling. There was a blind spring close to the entrance and a few watercourses crossing the centre, and at the far side of the Round the dowzers got a feeling that they were not alone. There was also a negative energy line there. They then walked on the outside of the Round, which was like a ditch, where they got a lot of energy lines, and small skirmishes, being almost knocked out by a buzzard as it took off from the hedge! It was a good evening for those who turned up.

A week later on Sunday July 27th the **Celtic Dowzers** visited Mawnan Church on one of the rare lovely Summer days. Mawnan Church is of course the site of the famous Owlman sightings in the mid-1970s [see *'Morgawr & the Mawnan Owlman'* by Tony Doc Shiels MM11 p.20-21] though as Larry, who organised the day, pointed out, sightings have actually continued right up to the present time. Inside the church there were some unusual energies, lines of watercourses, plus a lot of very strong hot spots and down spirals. The Group then turned their attention to the outside. There was a lot of energy at the end of the church by a large tree with a large up spiral. At the tower end water energy crossed under the tower and some of this was stressed, making a lot of energy going up through the tower, ending in a powerful vortex at the top, to match the one at the other end of the church in the trees. The Group speculated about this, and wondered if this was the portal for supernatural manifestations of the Owlman from another dimension, especially as it was the tower where many of the sightings have been made. The north side of the churchyard was interesting, and felt quite peaceful, but the south side had a very unpleasant energy line that came from the Helford area and up through the woods below the church. Apparently, the woods were in fact the location of at least three local suicides. Finally, a very curious 17thC 'gravestone' was examined in the churchyard. It has an effigy carved on it, which the Church Guide Book says is a 'skull and crossbones' but which does not look like that at all. Some of us wondered if it could have been a representation of the Owlman itself? The Group then proceeded to the hill above Helford River where they found Bronze Age hut circles and an Iron Age hill fort, ending with a dowsed remains of a Roman building, which they found to be last occupied just before the Romans left Britain. Altogether, a most unusual and different day.



*Mawnan Church tower, site of the Owlman sightings*

A week later on Sunday August 3rd **CEMG** along with **West Cornwall Dowsers** went to Carn Brea near Redruth. Morning drizzle stopped long enough for us to look over the Hill Fort, which has been dowsed by WCD in the past. Andy Norfolk showed us the Neolithic ramparts and the Eastern Summit, with its view to St.Euny's church and well, and legends about an underground tunnel linking the two sites. The little well on the side of Carn Brea was then visited, and Andy pointed out that it did not have the usual dowsing 'signature' for holy well. We speculated that perhaps the usual holy well 'signature' comes from Christian blessings at the site, whereas this one had never been Christianised. We then passed the Iron Age huts which had an unpleasant feel and several dowsers reported feeling a heavy weight on their chests, and they also dowsed for 'bad grain'. We wondered if there had been an outbreak of ergot here in the Iron Age (a fungus caused by infected grain) which causes hallucinations and experiences of being pinned down by 'daemons', called incubus and succubus in medieval times. Happier feelings were experienced at a rock on the Central Summit which dowsed as a sacred enclosure, and there was discussion about the two standing stones in the fields below to the SW at SW6837 4033 & 6838 4032. Together in one direction they align to N-S towards Tregajorran Carn, and in the other direction they are on an energy line running to Men Amber rock [see MM67 p.16].

The Group then went on to Carwynnen Quoit [SW6500 3720] where Pip Richards from the Sustainable Trust gave an account of how the Trust is purchasing the land that includes the Quoit, and their plans for restoring it. There was discussion about alternative forms for its restoration (the 19thC illustration where it looks like Lanyon Quoit or something closer to its possible original construction?) and why there is just this isolated example in this place, far from the Quoits of West Penwith (field names indicate that there may have been many more, now destroyed). The visit was curtailed by heavy drizzle that now came in, so the Group made their way back to the cars after what had been a very satisfying day.



On the last Sunday in August (31st), **Celtic Dowsers** met at Chysauster Iron Age courtyard house settlement on what turned out to be a nice sunny day. Nine dowsers explored the Courtyard Houses, and there was general agreement that Hut 2 had an unpleasant energy, whereas Hut 4 contained a very nice energy line and a spiral energy whorl in the corner, where a free-standing stone had been originally placed, perhaps for sitting on for healing purposes. The large hut enclosure near the entrance to the site was felt to be a Meeting Hall for the people who lived there, and was buzzing with energy and a good feeling. Discussion over lunch focussed on why the site (along with other Courtyard House settlements) was abandoned in about the 3rdC CE when it was in such a favourable location, and ideas varied between water courses drying up and the arrival of Christianity.

## SOL MOOT IN CORNWALL - Sept 08

In September 1990 the Cornish Earth Mysteries Group hosted the annual Ley Hunter Moot at CAER at Lamorna. Talks included: Cheryl Traffon on sacred sites of West Penwith; the late Monica Sjöö on Goddess sites; Paul Bennett on sites, lights, faults & phenomena; Andy Roberts & David Clarke on the Celtic head cult; Nigel Pennick on straight-line alignments around the world; Paul Devereux on Silbury Hill Beltane sunrise; and Helen Roberts on ancient site shape correspondences in Ireland & Scotland. In the evening there was a concert with Bob Stewart, and on the Sunday a site visit with John Michelle & Cheryl to Boscawen-ûn circle, followed by a ley walk across the West Penwith moors from Tregeseal circle to Boswens menhir.

Fast forward 18 years to September 2008, and, although The Ley Hunter is now defunct, ley-hunting still thrives under the aegis of the Society of Ley Hunters and its Hon. Secretary Laurence Main. It too has an annual Moot in different parts of Britain, and in September it came to West Cornwall, where once again CEMG were the hosts. It all kicked off on Sunday Sept 7th with a joint CEMG/SOL field day, which was also supported by representatives from the West Cornwall Dowzers and Celtic Dowzers. Just as in 1990, the Group visited Tregeseal stone circle, and then went on to the holed stones on Truthwall Common, where there was much interesting discussion as to their purpose and meaning. An alignment to Boswens menhir on the horizon was one of the suggestions, and dowzers also detected an energy line going in the other direction to St. Just Church. From here, a smaller group walked on to Chûn Quoit, where they talked about the energy line from Chûn Castle to the winter solstice sunset notch in Carn Kenidjack.

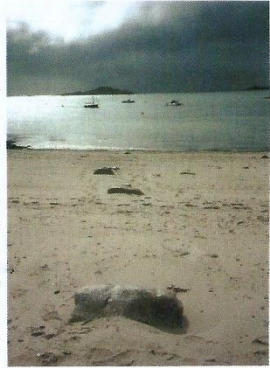


*Investigating the Tregeseal holed stones*

In the evening **Cheryl Traffon** gave a slide talk at Age Concern, St. Just on 'Megalithic Mysteries of Cornwall'. Then, on the next day, the Group went to Madron and followed the ley to Lanyon Quoit, the Mên-an-Tol, Men Scryfa & Nine Maidens stone circle. In the evening **Andy Norfolk** gave a talk on 'Song Lines'. On Tuesday, the Group went to Sancreed holy well, Caer Bran, Carn Euny settlement, and then on to Chapel Carn Brea & Crows-an-Wra, where they got the bus to Trencom Hill to meet up with dowser **Bart O'Farrell**, who showed them the 'Bart Line' that arrives there from Twelve O'Clock Rock on Trink Hill. In the evening Bart gave further details of energy and ley lines in other parts of west Cornwall, including the ones given in the article in the last issue of MM (p.14-19). This rounded off a great few days for the Group, but some of them prolonged their stay here by going to the Isles of Scilly for a further week of fascinating ley hunting.

## GOING SCILLY with Laurence Main

Having our Moot in Cornwall tempted five of us to go that little bit extra to the Blessed Isles in the west, the Scillies. We set sail on The Scillonian to St.Marys where we camped on The Garrison. Spending a day on each island, we explored St.Marys bit by bit each evening, starting with Bants Carn entrance grave [photo on p.14] and Halingey Down settlement. We went to Tresco on Thursday, and St.Martins on Friday. On St.Martins we found the recorded row of three stones running along the beach, pointing to Chapel Downs. However we also discovered another alignment of seven stones running down the beach towards Great Ganilly [photo right]. Chapel Down welcomed us with cairns, entrance grave, and a little statue from the late Neolithic [photo on p.18].



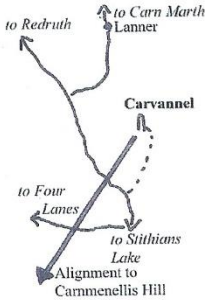
Summer seemed to reserve all its sunshine for us on Saturday, when we visited Bryher. Of all the islands, this was the most nurturing and feminine, especially on Gweal Hill, where an entrance grave overlooked sweeping bays. This is where the base chakra of the Merlin line is located [c.f 'The Grail Journey through Wales' by Megan Wingfield]. We also admired the rugged coastline of Hell Bay, with Shipman Head part of Cancer's boat in Jimmy Goddard's Scilly Zodiac [see MM27 p.10-11 for more details]. Back on St.Marys, we worked our way round to the Long Rock menhir, which tapers like a seal; and two entrance graves, Upper & Lower Innisidgen [photo on p.16]. Our sunny Saturday was completed by dowsing a 310° ley (summer solstice sunset) at Buzza Hill entrance grave. Impressively, this pointed towards the prominent peak of Castle Bryher, jutting up between the breasts of Samson. Other key ley points we found during the week were the prongs of Men-a-Vaur and the distinctive Hanjague.

We took it easy on Sunday by joining a guided archaeological walk on the uninhabited island of Samson. The evidence for prehistoric burials was overwhelming, including several impressive entrance graves. On Monday we went to St.Agnes, timing our arrival in order to take advantage of the maximum low tide in order to cross over to Gugh. In the Scilly Zodiac, St.Agnes is the dove of Libra and Gugh forms its great fan tail. The standing stone known as the Old Man of Gugh did resemble a tail feather. Nearing the dove's beak at Long Point, St.Agnes, I felt the most powerful energy of the whole trip at Nag's Head, a rock shaped like a horse's head (with Pegasus wings?). We also visited St.Warna's Well and Troy Town maze before leaving the island. Tuesday was spent on a boat trip to the Eastern Isles. We landed on St.Helens and Tean, then came close enough to Nornour to see the remains of the shrine to the Goddess, plus cairns on Great Arthur. Our evening rambles on St.Marys reached entrance graves on Normandy Down, aligned with sunrise at the equinoxes. Finally, we managed a quick visit to the Museum on St.Marys on Wednesday. The Bryher sword and mirror and collection of votive offerings to the Goddess found on Nornour couldn't be missed!

*For more on the Scillies see p.14-18*

## LOST AND FOUND

### CARVANNEL MENHIR DISCOVERED



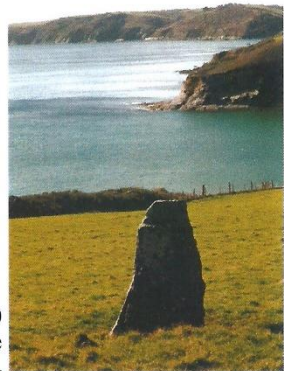
Following on from the article on the Carnmenellis area in MM67 p.14-19, Chris Sawle has reported to MM the discovery of a possible hitherto unrecorded standing stone, now serving as a gatepost, on the lowland to the NE of Carnmenellis Hill at SW7116 3877. He says: "I came across it on a meander around the Cammenellis hinterland. It is quite hidden in a shallow valley, on a footpath, but one which looks to be heavily underused. It occupies



*MM editor at the stone*

the position of a gatepost at the entrance to a narrow stream-side paddock. The stone is over 7ft high, at least 4ft broad, with a visible width of 2ft. It's one hell of a stone!" MM checked out the map alignment and found that it was on a direct line to the barrow on top of Carnmenellis Hill [SW6955 3640] in a SW direction, and on to Burras menhir [SW6759 3445] on the other side of the hill. This was confirmed 'in situ' as an energy line going through the stone, which also dowsed as a genuine standing stone with a gentle energy field around it about 3ft away.

### CAERHAYS STONE VISITED



MM also visited (with reader Sandra Hutchings) the beautifully-positioned small standing stone above Porth Luney beach [SW9760 4120] which lies near Caerhays Castle, to the west of Gorran Haven and the Dodman. The stone stands on a field slope overlooking Veryan Bay, and could well be a genuine standing stone, as it seems to be aligned to Gull Rock out to sea at the midwinter sunset, and is also visually aligned to Carne Beacon [SW9125 3865] visible on the next headland [*photo right*]. The coastal path runs nearby so it is certainly worth including in a day's coastal walk in the area.



## **NEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWSNEWS**

### **ARCHAEOLOGISTS RETURN TO BODEN VEAN**

The Boden multi-phased site [SW7685 2406], just south of Manaccan on the Lizard Peninsula, which was first excavated in 2003 [see *MM55 p.16-17*] has now been re-visited by HES archaeologist James Gossip and a team of volunteers from CAS. In a period of 5 weekends in Autumn 2008, the team concentrated not on the fogou and possible Iron Age enclosure and houses, but on an earlier Bronze Age Roundhouse, some 10m in diameter. In the 2003 excavation, fragments of a very large pot were discovered. This Trevisker Ware vessel was radiocarbon-dated to c.1300 BCE, and this excavation found more sherds of the pot as well as fragments of other pots from the same period. Postholes were also found, some of which contained deposits, including two fired clay perforated weights and a copper alloy knife. All this has led James Gossip to suggest that the finds had a ritual function, and that the pots, and perhaps the deposits, were part of ritual abandonment practices in the Cornish Bronze Age. Post-excavation tests should help to answer some of these questions.

### **ROMAN NECK RING FOUND AT NEWQUAY**

Following on from the recent discoveries of a stronger Roman presence in Cornwall [see *New Roman Fort at Restormel MM65 p.6*; *3rd Roman Fort at Calstock MM66 p.5*] Sue Joiner wrote to MM [MM67 p.7] about a possible old Roman road (the B3314) running from Camelford to Pentire head. Now comes news of the discovery of a neck-ring dug up in the garden of Mike Salter of Newquay that dates to the 1st century CE (AD). Mike actually found it in 1966, but did not report the find until last year, when it was authenticated by the British Museum. The neck-ring weighs 540g and is made from two cast sections, and the upper side has cross-hatched decoration at both terminals. The item could have come from a grave of a high-status person within an Iron Age community living in the Newquay area. Sarah Cooper of the Royal Cornwall Museum, where the neck-ring is currently displayed, said: "This is one of the most stunning and exciting recent archaeological discoveries in Cornwall. It increases the evidence of an early Roman presence in the South West and points to local people adopting the Roman's new metalworking techniques".



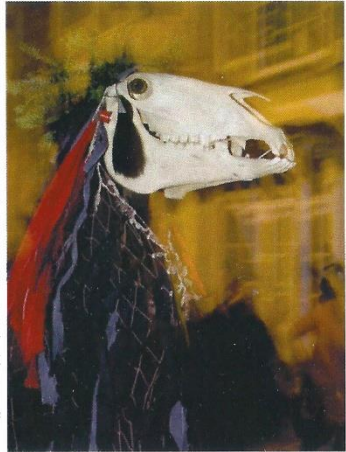
(c) Carl Thorpe, HES

### **BRONZE AGE BONES FOUND ON BEACH SITE**

A walker on the beach at Constantine Island on the north Cornwall coast has discovered part of the skeleton of a Bronze-Age man protruding from the remains of a stone cist. Trevor Renals reported the find to HES & NT, who, in a race against time and the elements, excavated the site and recovered the remains of the skeleton. This is a rare find as Bronze Age people were usually cremated, but this was of a middle-aged man buried in a cist in a N-S alignment. Constantine Island would originally have been part of the mainland, and this find dates from Middle Bronze Age 1380-1100 BCE.

## 'NEW' PENGLAZ AT MONTOL FESTIVAL

Montol, the Penzance Midwinter festival, was revived in 2007, and included Penglaz, teased by Cassandra Latham [see MM65 p.20-21 & photo right]. This last Yule (2008) it again took place, but with a 'new' Penglaz [see next page]. Montol was the Cornish word for the Midwinter Solstice, according to Edward Lhuyd in his 1700 MSS Vocabulary. He translated it as "balance", which some might think was more appropriate to the Spring & Autumn Equinoxes than the Winter Solstice. However, the organisers of the festival, who are part of the same team who organise the very successful Golowan Festival at the Summer Solstice, interpreted this as a balance to the Golowan Festival at the opposite point of the year. Light, fire and darkness were the themes of the festival, based on earlier references to people lighting the Mock or Block (Yule log) at this time.



In 2007 the Montol Committee incorporated many traditional elements from recorded Cornish folklore in the first festival, and once again brought these elements into the 2008 celebrations. **The Guise Dancers** were re-formed. These were originally recorded as strangely dressed performers who travelled throughout the town and went from door to door celebrating the topsy turvy and the spirit of misrule; they also gatecrashed parties and were involved with the "testing of the ale". Richard Edmonds, writing in *Archaeologia Cambrensis* (1858) said: "The guise dancers (the same as the guisards of Scotland) may be always seen in the streets of Penzance in the evenings from Christmas-day to Twelfth-day, going to or from houses wherein they are permitted to perform, attired in fantastic dresses and variously disguised". The Guise Dancers had a band of followers who wore Venetian style carnival masks and black clothes or 'tatters' i.e. coloured tattered rags attached to black cloth. Some wore the skin and horns of cattle, recalling the ancient tradition of shamans cloaking themselves in animal skins to take on the spirit of the animal itself. The wearing of sprigs of mistletoe, ivy, holly and yew tree were also part of the celebrations. In 2008 all participants in Montol were encouraged to disguise themselves in some way and be masked (i.e. a domino eye mask). or mask in the Venetian style or wear tatters in the same style as the Guise dancers. The Guise Dancers also performed **The Guise Dance Plays**, short comedy plays performed by characters with names like Duffy and the Devil and St George and the Turkish Knight. In 2008 there was a Lord of Misrule Mummies Play, and Guise dancing in the pubs, with traditional Cornish carol singing, and Cornish music from the Golowan and Turkey Rhubarb bands.

Richard Edmonds also added: "A well-known character amongst [the Guise Dancers], about fifty years ago, was the hobby-horse, represented by a man carrying a piece of wood in the form of a horse's head and neck, with some contrivance for opening and shutting the mouth with a loud snapping noise, the performer being so covered with a horse cloth, or hide of a horse, as to resemble the animal whose curvettings, biting, and other motions, he imitated. Some of these 'guise-dancers' occasionally masked themselves with the skins of the heads of bullocks, having the horns on."

This shamanic figure made its re-appearance at Penzance's Midsummer Golowan Festival in 1992, where it was named **Penglaze** after a reference by William Sandys in 1833 (in "Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern"). In talking about a game performed in west Cornwall at Yule time called 'The Corn Market', Sandys says: "Another essential character is old Penglaze, who has a blackened face, and a staff in his hand, and a person is girded round with a horse's hide, to serve as his horse.....Old Penglaze then comes in on his horse, which winces and capers about grotesquely. He is then told that a fine colt wants shoeing, for which he says his reward is a full gallon of moonlight, besides all other customs for shoeing in that market. The shoe of the colt is taken off, and Penglaze gives him one or two hard blows on the sole of the foot, after which he rides off again, his horse capering more than before and sometimes throwing the old gentleman off." Here it appears that Penglaze is the character, not the 'horse', though Barbara Spooner argued (in 'The Padstow Hobby Horse, Folklore Vol.69 March 1958) that: "The Hobby Horse that went with the Land's End mummers not so very long ago was the sort that consists of a horse's skull held up on a stick by a hide covered or sheet draped man, and had its own name in the Cornish Language Penglas or 'Grey head'."

Penglaz continued to make an annual appearance at Golowan (and at Montol 2007) with its teaser Cassandra Latham [*photo right*]. However, in April 2008 the person carrying Penglaz decided to 'retire', taking Penglaz with him. As a result of this, the Penglaz Co-operative was formed in order to create a reborn (mare) Oss. Meanwhile however the Golowan team set about creating their own replacement (stallion) Penglaze in time for the summer festival of Golowan 2008, who was then teased by someone new. It was then agreed that the 'new' Cassandra-led Penglaz would make her appearance at Montol, but as there are now two of them it is not known what will happen in future. There could be an interesting parallel here to Padstow's two rival Obby Osses! It is the nature of Penglaz to be wild, anarchic and unpredictable, so future festivals may see that true to form!



Photos [c] Jane Cox

## REMOTE & ANCIENT PLACES IN WEST PENWITH

by Raymond Cox

5: Hannibal's Carn

A view from the summit of Hannibal's Carn presents the observer with the real essence of the timeless Penwith moors, in addition to the expanse of the coastal plateau, where the old Iron Age - often called 'Celtic' - fields, still exist as they were so long ago. Here is revealed a network of seeming myriads of tiny fields of all shapes, with their bordering walls of unhewn granite blocks gathered from the surface of the land and very hard to change or remove.



*Fields at Bosporthennis from Hannibal's Carn*

When the sun shines they shine as white streaks in the landscape. Whilst there is no absolute proof of their continuous use and occupation down the centuries it is likely. On the wild and winding coast itself are further examples of Iron Age occupation: the fortified promontory enclosures, the cliff castles of Gurnard's Head and Bosigran, and close by the courtyard house settlements of Bosigran and Porthmeor, overgrown in summer.

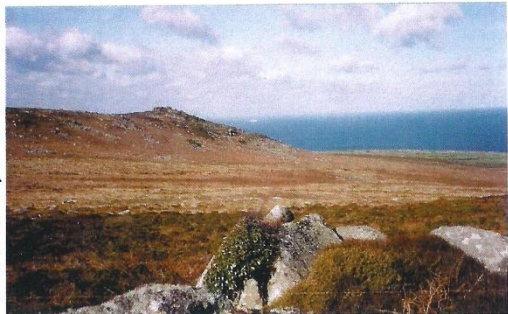
But cast your eyes to the right and along the little valley to Bosporthennis where there are more examples of the fields. On a clear and sunny day an expanse of ancient beauty is seen. This is a quiet and lonely, self-contained region of grassy fields where a few cattle may be grazing between the clear and bright walls. The area also has its own courtyard house settlement below Hannibal's Carn on the gentle slope in front of the fields, and there is also an example of human occupation from earlier times in the Bosporthennis quoit (SW 436366). Also at the corner of one field there is the singular beehive hut. One alignment crosses the land in the axis NE/SW, and passes through the quoit. It can be traced from a barrow on Truthwall Common (SW 389326). It clips the side of Chûn Castle hillfort and goes on to the Pennance chambered tomb (SW 448375). [From MM34, with the addition of Chûn Castle.]



*Bosporthennis Quoit below Hannibal's Carn*

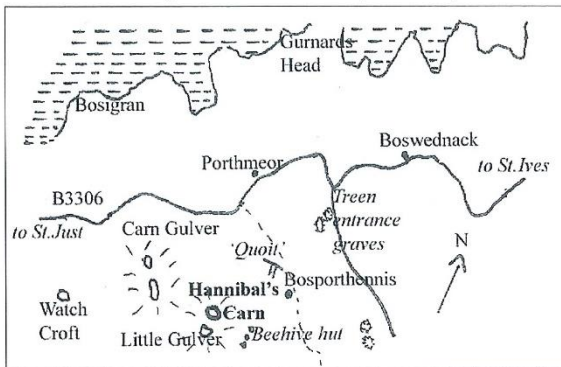
The eye can now move further round to the right or south and see a starkly different landscape, brooding and mysterious should a sudden mist shroud the scene. This is a region of wild moorland with its famous monuments such as the Mên-an-Tol holed stone, the Nine Maidens stone circle (Boskednan) and the inscribed stone Men Scryfa. There are other standing stones and cairns. On the distant horizon is the Ding Dong area with its engine house a prominent landmark from the later time of the tin mining era. Near the centre of the area is the Four Parishes Stone, the place where four of the old parishes meet. There are numerous paths on the moor. This is probably the most visited piece of moorland in West Penwith, mostly for the three monuments mentioned [see p.12-13], but it still retains an atmosphere of remoteness and seems far from civilisation, especially when the past is everywhere around. The moor changes character and appearance with the seasons. It is a riot of colour in late summer when the heather and gorse cover the land. In winter there is a different yet stark beauty when the colours are bleached, the bracken is dull but the grasses are almost white, and the cotton grass sways in a gentle breeze. No less than nine alignments cross this area - perhaps not very surprising given its expanse.

The eye can now go almost full circle to take in the prominence of Carn Galva, such an imposing landmark from the coastal area, but oddly diminutive from many points on the high moor. It is here where some field work uncovered signs of a possible Neolithic 'camp'. If so, then there is the prospect that well over 4000 years ago people were here and perhaps established more permanent sites on this high moorland for their cultural centres.



*Carn Galva seen from Little Galva*

Other traces in the area may be lost for all time. Perhaps even here in this landscape some remains are yet too far back into pre-history to be retained.



*Turn over to p.12-13 for a more in-depth look at Carn Galva area.*



IN-  
SITE

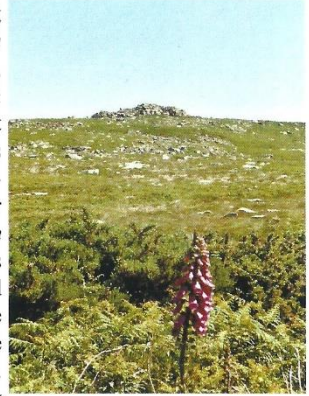
The centre-page feature that focusses on one particular site each time and looks at it in depth.

After the article on p.10-11

this one looks at -

## CARN GULVA & LOCAL SITES

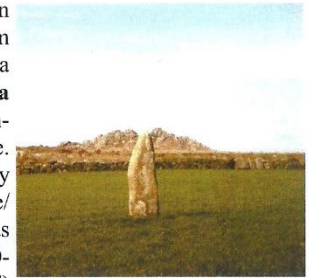
Carn Gulva [SW 426364] is a granite outcrop standing at 210m (682ft) on the northern Penwith moors [*for location see map on p.11*]. It is written 'Carn Galver' on the OS map, but as Craig Weatherhill points out [*Cornish Place Names & Language*] this is incorrect. It should be Carn Gulva, as it comes from the Late Cornish *Carn Golva*, which means "lookout tor". This is a rather appropriate name, as archaeologists have suggested that it was originally a Neolithic tor enclosure [*c.f The Neolithic in Cornwall by R.J.Mercer in Cornish Archaeology 25*]. It is accessible by pathways running from the north coast road ( B3306) to the north, and from Nine Maidens Downs to the south. The views from the top are magnificent, and it is easy to see how it might have been thought of as a sacred hilltop to our Neolithic ancestors. Recently, a 'propped stone' (a natural granite rock deliberately balanced on stones beneath) has been identified here by



current CAS President Tony

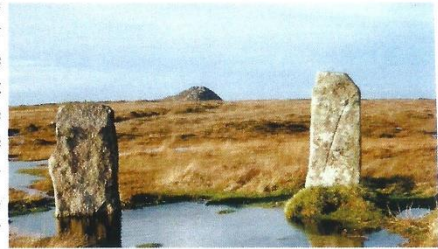
Blackman [*see article & picture in MM49 p.8-11*].

Carn Gulva is a very distinctive hilltop site, when viewed from a number of megalithic sites nearby, which seem to have been deliberately positioned to focus on Carn Gulva itself. One of the most distinctive of these is the **Mên Scryfa** standing stone [SW4268 3529], which points directly northwards to a notch in Carn Gulva when viewed from the stone. This 1.8m (6ft) tall standing stone probably dates originally from the Bronze Age, but was re-used in the late Iron Age/ Celtic period (5th or 6th century CE) when an inscription was carved along the northern face of the stone. This read RIALOBRANI CVNOVALI FILI, (the FILI is now below ground)



which is a Latinised form of Cornish, and means 'Royal Raven, son of the famous leader'. It was thus a memorial stone to the son of a tribal leader of an Iron Age clan or tribe, whose name was taken from Bran, a mythic Celtic God or Chieftan written about in the early Welsh saga *The Mabinogi*. The story of Rialvran is also recorded in fragmentary form, and tells of how a great battle was fought at this spot, as Rialvran tried to recover his father's lands from an interloper who had seized them. Rialvran was defeated but this memorial was erected to him here. We thus have a continuity of use from the Bronze Age when the stone may have been put up here to reference the holy hilltop of the ancestors, and then on into the Iron Age.

Another site that seems to focus on Carn Gulva is **Nine Maidens (Boskednan) stone circle** [SW4343 3512]. This Bronze Age ruined site, much disturbed by mine workings nearby, now has only 11 stones standing or leaning out of a probable original 19. Two stones were recently (2005) re-erected, and now the two portal stones frame the view to the rocky outcrop of Carn Gulva on the horizon [*photo right*]. There may originally have been a processional way from the circle to this 'holy hilltop', perhaps thought of as the dwelling place of the spirits of the ancestors, or the Gods/Goddesses. There was also formerly a standing stone as outlier to the circle, 43 paces to the NW, which marked the direction of the midsummer sun set, but now only a stump remains.



A dug-out barrow encroaches on to the southern side of the circle, containing the remains of a central cist in which an urn and sherds of pottery were found. There is also a barrow with kerb stones further S at SW4350 3496. The remains of three more barrows lie to the north of the circle, one of which stands prominently on the summit of a ridge at SW4327 3531, beside the path that leads to the stone circle from the Mên-an-Tol and Mên Scryfa stones. The best preserved of these barrows [*photo right*] shows how it too focussed deliberately on Carn Gulva in the near distance.



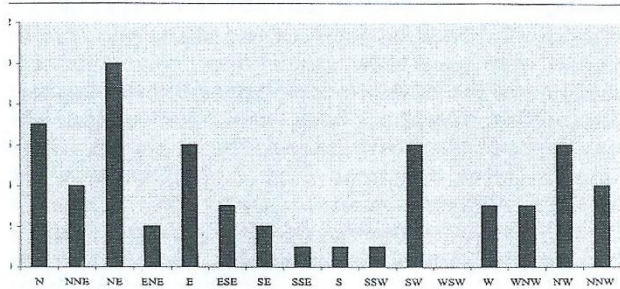
This site was cleared of vegetation in 2005, and one of stones inside the barrow was discovered to have a seam of blue-grey crystal in a distinctive ^ shaped notch. This stone was presumably deliberately chosen because of its special appearance, and may even have been intended as an 'arrow marker' to point the way for the spirits of the dead to travel to the ancestral home of Carn Gulva.



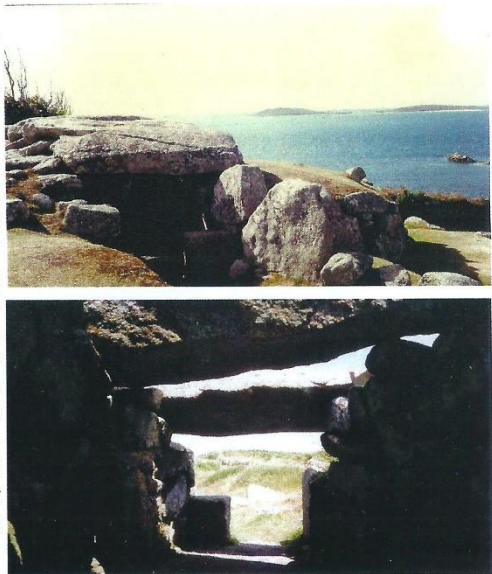
# HONOURING THE ANCESTORS ON THE SCILLIES

by Cheryl Straffon

A new book *The Prehistoric Island Landscape of Scilly* by Gary Robinson [BAR, 2007 - reviewed in MM67 p.23] explores some interesting ideas about the meaning and significance of the ancient monuments on the islands as places to connect with and honour the ancestors. 74 extant entrance graves on the islands of St.Mary's, St.Martin's, Bryher, Tresco, Samson, Gugh, Tean and the Esatern Isles are listed, together with the orientations of 59 of them. The range of chamber orientations is extensive, as this chart shows:



Robinson comments that, whilst chambers have a slight preference towards the north and north-east (the direction of the midsummer solstice sunrise), overall the orientation was arbitrary with no single direction dominating. He observes that when we look out from the chambers, the view is primarily directed over the islands' interior; conversely, when we look into and beyond the chambers of monuments, the view is invariably directed towards the open sea. An example of this can be found at Bants Carn on St.Mary's (SV9095 1230) where the outward-looking entrance is oriented NE (inland) towards the midsummer sunrise, but looking at the entrance gives us a view over the sea beyond.



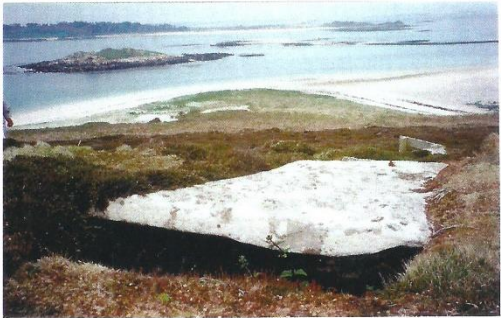


Sometimes, there is a complex interplay between orientation and land/seascape. For example, on Normandy Downs on St.Mary's, the chambers of three monuments, arranged in a linear group along a headland, are all oriented west, directly away from the sea but towards the equinoxial setting sun.

But on South Hill on Samson, four entrance graves that follow a sinuous rocky crest on the hill's summit, all orientate to the north, with a view of North Hill and the sea. North Hill itself contains eight more entrance graves, which are themselves oriented either northwards towards the sea (some of which face NE, the midsummer solstice sunrise), with three facing east and inland, with a view to the equinoxial sunrise. Unlike Normandy Downs, none of them look west towards the equinoxial sunset.



*View from entrance grave on South Hill, Samson  
towards North Hill & the sea*

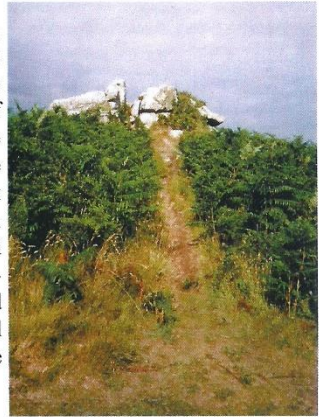


*View from entrance grave on North Hill, Samson  
northwards towards the sea*

So what does this all mean? Robinson believes that these orientations can be interpreted as a wish on behalf of their builders to exclude the sea from the interior of the monuments. He adds "Such exclusion may relate to taboos relating to the sea as a potentially powerful and destructive force within the lives of the islanders and inappropriate to be associated within ancestral remains". However, the sea forms an imposing backdrop to the experience of these monuments, suggesting that its presence has greater significance for the living, who would come to visit the remains/spirit of their ancestors within.

He also observes that the chambers of the monuments have a particularly boat-shaped appearance, and suggests that this was a deliberate attempt to make the entrance to them being by their 'bows', whilst their 'sterns' face the open sea. "This orientation might suggest that rather than these vessels being orientated to send the dead off on a voyage to an after world beyond the islands, they were constructed in order to allow the ancestors to navigate their way across the sea to return to the archipelago, perhaps to give council to the living".

The other fascinating finding that Robinson makes is a significant relationship between the entrance graves and natural granite tors. He points out that the graves are consistently located in close proximity to tors, perhaps the best example being at Upper Innisidgen entrance grave on St.Mary's (SV9218 1264). This has already been noted by the CEMG on their visit to Scilly in 2001 [MM47 p.14-15], who noted that a nearby tor carn, with a natural cut through the rock, was visible in a SE (midwinter solstice sunrise) direction directly from the entrance grave. This means that any person (or spirit of the dead) emerging from the grave at the winter solstice sunrise, the shortest day and the deepest dead time of the year, would have moved through the land from the dark of the tomb into the first light of the winter solstice sun and then up to the rocky outcrop highpoint. This would have been both a literal and a metaphorical sacred journey from the underworld of the tomb to the upper world of the rock and through to the sky beyond, and walking it would have been a powerful ritual experience of death and rebirth at the lowest point of the year's cycle.



*Upper Innisidgen entrance grave & alignment path*

Another aspect of the close relationship of entrance graves and cists to natural features is the incorporation of earthfast boulders within the structures. Robinson gives many examples of these, including the 'Borlase altar' incorporated in a kerbed cairn on Castle Down, Tresco; a large weathered grounder embedded within the fabric of an entrance grave on Porth Hellick Down on St.Mary's; a large grounder encompassed within a cairn on Wingletang Down, St.Agnes; and at Knackboy Cairn entrance grave on St.Martin's the back end of the chamber is formed by a large grounder around which the monument was constructed. Some monuments incorporate a whole area of land; for example, the entrance grave at Works Carn on Bryher (SV8782 1413) has been placed on top of the hill slope tor of Samson Hill, much of which has been incorporated within the structure of the monument itself [photo right].



Robinson suggests that this incorporation of natural features and earthfast boulders within the monuments was a deliberate act, designed to be a "cultural reworking" of the landscape. It may also have been intended to act as a reverential way of incorporating the spirits of the 'living land' within the monuments to the dead, so that the ancestors' spirits and the spirits of the ancestral landscape became as one within the tombs. An examination of the entrance graves themselves also produces some interesting ideas. Evidence from four monuments (Buzza Hill ent.gr. on St.Mary's, Lower Innisidgen ent.gr. on St.Mary's, Knackboy Cairn ent.gr. on St.Martin's, & Innisidgen Carn on St.Mary's) suggests that some chambered walls were plastered with clay. The orange plaster used within chambers derives from clayey deposits within the rab (which sets hard when exposed). The recognition of plastered walls radically changes how we perceive these monuments and suggests the possibility that chambers may have been decorated with paintings or engravings, presumably to watch over the dead.

Some of the finds from entrance graves are also interesting. At Porth Hellick Down on St.Mary's a perforated piece of pumice was recovered, which Robinson suggests had been used as a pendant or talisman worn around the neck. He adds: "Pumice (which was not native to Scilly) may have held special significance to the islanders because of its rarity and because of its unique quality of being a stone that floats on water". Faience beads, which are also rare, were found within the late Neolithic entrance grave of Knackboy Cairn on St.Martin's (SV9235 1586), including a star-shaped one, which must have held great significance for them. A similar faience star-shaped bead has recently been discovered in a cairn on Stannon Down on Bodmin Moor [MM67 p.22], and 12 bright blue faience beads were found at Carn Creis barrow in West Penwith [MM65 p.10]. These faience beads were clearly deposited to honour the dead person buried within, and may have been intended to ameliorate the passage of the person to the world of the dead.

Moving to the later Iron Age period, two amber disk beads were found within a Porth Cressa cist at Lawrence Brow, St.Martin's (SV9226 1576). Porth Cressa cists comprise oval and sub-rectangular burial chambers constructed within pits in the subsoil, sealed by capstones set at right angles to the longitudinal axis of the cist. Thirty-three Porth Cressa cists have been identified on Scilly, the most dramatic being the burial at Hillside Farm on Bruher, uncovered in 1999 [see MM40 p.13, MM43 p.3, MM48 p.5]. Here what was clearly an important person was buried with complex funerary rites, which included placing him/her on an animal skin and depositing wreaths of flowers in the grave. With the body was placed an Iron Age sword in a bronze scabbard, and a beautifully decorated bronze mirror [illustrated right], perhaps a ritual object associated with the afterlife. In the top left of the mirror there was a circular decoration with spokes that could have represented the sun. There was also the remains of a brooch, a ring from the sword belt, a shield and a spiral ring and tin object. This was clearly a high-status burial and an honouring of the dead person by the living.



Although this article, and Robinson's book, has focussed mainly on the burial monuments, their location, orientation, relationship to the land and seascape and directions, and the finds within, there is another class of monument represented on Scilly, though in much less numbers than on the mainland in Cornwall - and that is the standing stone. There are some nine standing stones identified, of which five are still standing, and Robinson has found one that was recorded by Borlase in 1756 as standing on Cruthers Hill, St.Martins and which is now lying in gorse nearby (SV9296 1518). Robinson believes that these standing stones are linked to the burial monuments in some way, but this so far remains unproven.

However, one of the most interesting stones on Scilly is the statue-menhir on Chapel Down on St.Martin's (SV9438 1574). It consists of the face and upper torso of an anthropomorphic figure that Charles Thomas (*Explorations of a Drowned Landscape*) originally thought was a pagan godlet idol dating from the Iron Age. However, a reappraisal by Thomas & Paul Ashbee has now placed it back into the Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age, and Robinson believes it represents an ancestral being, perhaps placed at that dramatic location to bring protection to seafarers setting out to sea and welcoming their safe return. If this is the case, this is an extraordinary early example, and one unique to Britain, of the representation of an ancestor carved out of stone, watching over the land of the living and the sea passages. It would make it akin to the Easter Island statues in design, though they date from a much later period of history. This statue menhir is a wonderful final instance of the importance of the ancestors to the world of the living in prehistoric times in these special and magical islands of Scilly.



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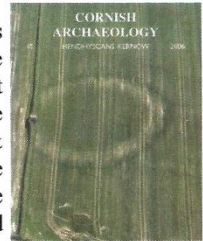
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## BOOK REVIEWS

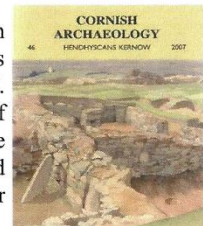
**Cornish Archaeology 45 (2006) & 46 (2007)** [Cornwall Archaeology Society, 2008]

Hot on the heels of *Cornish Archaeology 43-44*, published earlier in 2008 (and reviewed in MM67 p.22) comes the next 2 volumes, in a double-quick catch-up process, which aims to get once again up-to-date by 2009. It's a good job that the volumes are now coming out so thick and fast, as there has been a great outpouring of research and evaluation by the HES over the last decade, most of it at new sites revealed by 'rescue' archaeology and watching briefs. These are mainly quite small and hitherto unrecorded sites, but, taken together, they build up an exciting picture of prehistoric ritual use of these ancient places by a new generation of Cornish archaeologists.

CA45 is particularly interesting in that respect, with the focus of its 4 main articles being on the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age periods. It starts with a look at an Early Neolithic pit group at Portscatho. One might be forgiven for thinking that this is going to be fairly pedestrian and dull, but in fact it is fascinating. Andy Jones & Stephen Reed show that these pits were probably used for the ritualised deposition of artefacts and other materials at a liminal place in the landscape, near to the end of the land and above the sea, and 'between the worlds'. The authors suggest that this may have been intended to mediate spirits, control the sea and weather, or ensure procurement of fish; and the sacred space may have had strong mythical associations "perhaps based on stories of lands, spirits and peoples that lay beyond the horizon, and possibly with myths linked to beliefs about ancestral origins of the group themselves or with the dead". This is followed by an article on Cornish Beaker (deposits) with particular reference to the Lower Boscaswell mound & pit discovered in 2006 [see MM61 p.15 & MM65 p.6]. It is suggested that this site is related to the Irish 'fulacht fiadh' sites and is the first example discovered of a 'burnt mound' site in Cornwall, again with possible associated ritual activity. The third article looks at an Early Bronze Age pit at Trenoweth near Portreath [SW6463 4422] and here the suggestion is that the pit held a timber pole to mark the midwinter solstice sunrise over Carn Brea. Finally, an article looks at the re-erection of the Eathorne menhir [see MM59 p.4] and its radiocarboned date of 70-240CE (AD) [see MM62 p.7] and discusses the implications of this: was it a re-erected Bronze Age menhir, or was it put up anew in Romano-Celtic Iron Age period? A fascinating article in a very rich volume.



CA46 is a retrospective volume, wholly given over to an account of the pioneering excavations under Professor Charles Thomas at Gwihian and Godrevy in the 1950s [see MM56 p.14-19]. It consists of an overview of the whole project, and a re-appraisal of its significance in the light of current archaeological knowledge. The material recovered from the excavations has been looked at anew, and the result is this definitive volume on the excavations and their significance, an indispensable addition to all archaeological libraries.



# PATHWAYS TO THE PAST

## From the Tamar to Lands End: 1

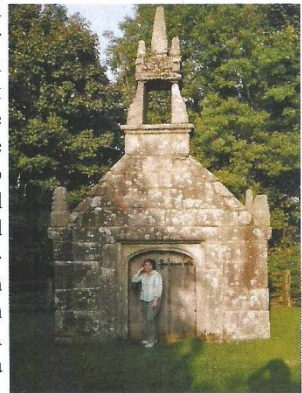
by Cheryl Traffon

*In September 2007 I celebrated my 60th Birthday with a walk through Cornwall from the banks of the River Tamar where I grew up, to Pendeen on the Lands End peninsula where I now live. The 100 mile walk was along green lanes, footpaths and farm tracks, through a Cornwall far removed from the hustle and bustle of 21st century busyness, and including wherever possible ancient and sacred sites. The walk took some 2½ weeks and I was sometimes accompanied by my friends or my partner and sometimes had the days to myself. This first part starts at Calstock and finishes at Cardinham.*

After a night in a B & B on the banks of the River Tamar, the border between Cornwall and England where I spent the first 19 years of my life, Lana & I awoke to the mist gently clearing from the low-lying fields at **Calstock** [SX4360 6860]. I first went up to the churchyard to pay respects to my parents, and although I did not know it at the time, across the road, archaeologists were digging at the site of a hitherto-undiscovered Roman fort, where silver may have originally been mined [see *MM66* p.5]. I grew up amongst the 19th century mining stacks of the Tamar Valley, so it was fascinating to learn that mining may have gone back into much earlier times.



From Calstock we walked alongside the river and then up the Danescombe Valley woods to some minor roads that led to Norris Green and Metherell. After lunch in the pub, we walked on to Harrowbarrow, where we took a delightful green lane that led down to an old Packhorse Bridge in the woods by a stream. At the other side we walked along the road and then cut across some fields to the farm at **Dupath Well** [SX3750 6920]. Here we had arranged to spend the first evening and night in a lovely old farmhouse that actually had the well standing in its farmyard. The holy well house is reputedly the largest in Cornwall, a 16th century granite chapel with turrets, which encloses the water which is fed through a stone trough. A legend is associated here about a duel fought between a poor knight Colan and a rich man Gottlieb for the hand of a maiden, which has echoes of a mythic tale about it. Our needs were more peaceful: we simply asked for blessings and good fortune for the journey ahead.



*Dupath Well*

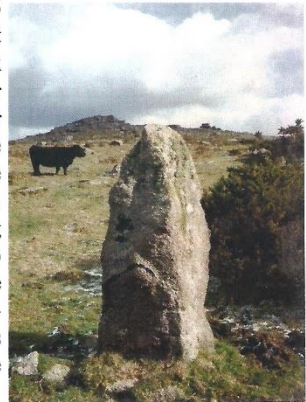
The next day we walked into Callington (where I had gone to school) which is dominated by **Kit Hill** [SX3750 7137], that was occupied by late Neolithic/Bronze Age peoples who built several tumuli there and possibly venerated an earth-fast standing stone [at SX3728 7203]. Interestingly, a ley line runs from it to a tumulus on Kit Hill [SX3737 7067] and on to Dupath Well that we had just left. From Callington we took minor roads and paths to Bearland Bridge and Trevigro, and then through the (private) Bicton Woods, from where we had to scramble over a stream and up some steep fields that led to a minor road that took us into Pensilva, where we spent the night with a friend.

We left Pensilva on Day 3 (which was the actual date of my birthday) and climbed the flanks of Caradon Hill, which was quite tiring, as it was a beautiful day of warm sunshine. **Caradon Hill** was another ancient hilltop, crowned along its ridge with a row of Bronze Age barrows [SX2700 7030], with stunning views back to Kit Hill and on to Bodmin Moor. We walked down the flank of the hill to Minions village, where we had lunch and then made our way to **The Hurlers** stone circles [SX2582 7139]. These three circles (possibly originally four), with their processional pathway to Stowe's Hill and the Cheesewring, and their view to Caradon Hill, with sunrise alignments over the barrows, were extensively featured in MM66 p.8-13. For today, we were content to rest against the centre stone and have a little post-luncheon snooze in the warm sun!



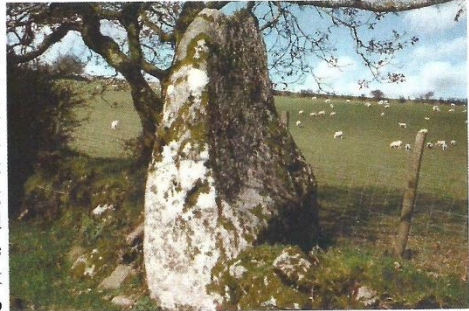
*The Hurlers with birthday girl!*

About mid-afternoon we set off across the moors to Tregarrick Tor. Bodmin Moor is covered with ancient monuments: we walked past the remains of **Craddock Moor stone circle** [SX2486 7183] with its midwinter sunset alignment over Tregarrick Tor and midsummer sunrise over Stowe's Hill; and to the north of us on the flanks of Tregarrick Tor there was a standing stone [SX2390 7113] and a possible stone row of 5 small stones. Our destination though was Siblyback Reservoir, gleaming below us in the afternoon sunshine, where we managed to arrive at the lakeside café in time for melted chocolate fudge cake & ice cream! Truly a special birthday indulgence! We found our accommodation nearby at Cryllis Farm, and were rewarded by the sight of the setting of the first sliver of the new moon over the hills of the Moor before bedtime. It spoke to us of the close and intimate relationship ancient peoples had with the sun and moon.



*Tregarrick Tor standing stone*

On Day 4 we started out on the path we had come off the previous evening from Cryllis Farm and made our way to Common Moor. Here, we went wrong a couple of times but eventually found our way to Draynes Bridge and down to Golitha Falls. This would have been an ideal way to come through the woods and then link up with the Two Valleys Route into St.Neot, but unfortunately we found that there was no way through the woods, forcing us to retrace our steps to Draynes Bridge. We then tried to follow paths across fields to Wortha Farm and **Mutton Downs**, with its hut circle and 9ft standing stone [at SX1997 6953] but found ourselves at one point walking back towards Caradon Hill that we had left the day before! However, with the aid of my GPS, we did eventually pick up the trail and made our way into St.Neot to spend the night there at the welcoming London Inn.



*Mutton Downs standing stone*

The next morning I went to pay my respects to the holy well at **St.Neot** [SX1832 6806], with its waters once famed for the cure of sickly children, particularly in early May, linking back to the Celtic Beltane festival. It is in a delightful setting, by a stream running through a meadow, though the restoration of the well-house in 1852 was somewhat heavy handed. Today I was joined by my friend Pat and together we set off across Goonzion Downs to Pantersbridge and then by a steep and enclosed green lane to **Warleggan Church** [SX1561



*St.Neot holy well*

6910]. Here we rested awhile and talked about the Rev. Densham, and both agreed that the church had a sombre and rather depressing atmosphere. In the Visitors Book I noticed that some of his descendants had been to visit earlier in the month from Somerset and had commented that “family papers showed that his intentions had been much misunderstood”. It seemed all too likely in such an isolated - and isolating - place in the 1930s, and we could easily see how the isolation and rejection by his small congregation had made him eccentric if not a little mad. There was a photograph of him in the church at a funeral, and even there he looked rather strange and forbidding. We were glad to get back out into the sunshine, and took a quiet road to Treslea Downs and then a footpath and minor road to Cardinham, where I stayed the night in a little bothy at the Old School House.

*The next leg of the walk from Cardinham to Wheal Rose will be in MM69.*



# Penwith Pagan Moot



by Eve Benney

Lammas was held at Sancreed field in order to be out among the crops, but unfortunately there was such a downpour that the crops were barely visible! The planned ritual would have been impossible in the rain, so instead we had a brief ritual, huddling under the trees, in which we named our blessings and gave thanks for our personal harvests, and then shared a wonderful Lammas loaf. It was a surprisingly cheerful ritual for the 27 people who attended, with a kind of perverse British “Dunkirk spirit” in carrying on despite the circumstances. The only one who was not amused was Nike the dog, who blamed us all for the rain and sulked for a very long time.

The weather was still playing tricks on us for our Autumn Equinox ritual. After a simple but powerful cleansing ritual using water from Sancreed Well, and a meditation on the dark and light elements in our lives, we processed from Sancreed Hall up to the Beacon where we attached our dark and light wishes, encapsulated within black and white ribbons, onto an enormous kite. On any other evening up at the Beacon the fear would have been too great a wind, but instead we were blessed with a perfectly still calm evening. Several moot members displayed long-lost childhood skills in getting the kite airborne, with much running, jumping and throwing. To cheering and clapping the kite eventually rose gracefully for a brief flight to release our wishes into the aether. Then we watched in meditative silence as the sun emerged from the cloud bank to set in scarlet and gold. We returned to the Hall to turn the Wheel of the Year by singing and circling the altar.

Samhain, as always, was very well attended, with over 60 people meeting at Sancreed House. We began by honouring our personal dead, and then meditating on the death of the Old Year, and all that we wished to cast out. As we meditated, Soul midwives took people into the Realm of the Dead, first meeting with the Crone, and giving up to her their deepest fears. People journeyed alone through the dark before joining together at the firepit to greet the King of the Old Year, a handsome (and as it turned out, extremely combustible!), Wicker Man. The Hag cast our fears onto the fire, to burn them away as we then burnt the King. We then journeyed back to the apparent world, being invited by the Crone of Rebirth to cleanse ourselves in her Cauldron. This was a solemn and powerful ritual, but having made our personal journeys into the dark, we returned to welcome the New Year with sparklers and merriment.

Our rituals are open to everyone, as are our moots which are held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Stellar Maris Centre, just behind the Healing Star in Penzance. For more information, please contact Eve on 793905, or at meadowsweet1-@tiscali.co.uk.

## ***THE PIPERS TUNE***

More information has emerged about the enigmatic birds pits found at Jacqui Wood's experimental archaeology site at Saveock [see *The Pipers Tune in MM66 p.24*]. The 2008 excavations have revealed more pits, only these are animal pits. One was lined with the skin of a black cat and contained 22 eggs, all with chicks close to hatching, in addition to cat claws, teeth and whiskers. Another held a dog skin, dog teeth, and a baked pig jaw. And yet another contained a 7in iron disk with a swan skin on one side and animal fur on the other. The most surprising thing of all were the radiocarbon dates: the cat pit dated to the 18th century, while the dog pit actually dated to the 1950s. The original bird pits uncovered had dated to 1640, so it would appear that the site has been in continual use for hundreds of years.

Jacqui believes that the pits could have been dug and the deposits made by a family of local heredity witches. It appears that there was a family called Burnett living in the area up until the 1980s, who were reputed locally to be witches. There is one surviving member of the family still alive there, who could perhaps shed some light on these mysterious finds, but until she speaks out, it remains one of Cornwall's most puzzling mysteries.

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Regular site visits throughout the year. More details e-mail: [westcornwalldowsers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:westcornwalldowsers@yahoo.co.uk)

### TAMAR DOWSING GROUP

*Sun Jan 18th* - Talk by Cheryl Traffon 'Sun, Moon & Standing Stones'. North Hill Village Hall (nr. Callington) 2.15pm. Web site: [www.tamar-dowsers.co.uk](http://www.tamar-dowsers.co.uk)

### CELTIC DOWSERS

Regular site visits throughout the year. More details e-mail: [larryjen@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:larryjen@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 01209-212864

### ANCIENT SITES CLEAR-UPS

*Sun Jan 18th* - Sancreed well  
*Sun Feb 15th* - Madron well  
*Sun Mar 15th* - Bodrifty settlement  
*Sun Apr 19th* - Bosulow Trehyllis Courtyard House settlement  
 All at 2pm. For further details contact Dave Munday 01736-787230 [dave@cornishancientsites.com](mailto:dave@cornishancientsites.com)

### FENTON BEBIBELL WELL

Annual Good Friday clear-up & baptism of dolls. *Fri Apr 10th* Meet Mên-an-Tol layby at 11am. All welcome (bring doll if wished)

### PF DEVON & CORNWALL SPRING CONFERENCE

*Sat Mar 7th* at Penstowe Manor, Kilkampton, Bude  
 Details: PO Box 314, Exeter, Devon EX4 6YR or web site: [www.paganfederationdevonandcornwall.com](http://www.paganfederationdevonandcornwall.com)

### PAGAN MOOTS

**Penzance** - 2nd Tues each month  
 7.15pm Stella Maris Healing Centre  
 Tel: Sarah 01736-787872 or Eve 01736-793905

**Earth Moot Penzance** - 3rd Mon  
 7.30pm Healing Room, Archie Browns  
 Tel: Rory 01736-787872

**Redruth/Truro/Falmouth** - 3rd Mon  
 7.30pm Tel: Ann 01872-863970

**Bodmin** - 1st Weds Tel: Wendy 01208-832977

### BELTANE CELEBRATIONS

*Thurs Apr 30th* - 21st Annual Maypole Dance & feast at Carn Bosavern, St. Just 6.30pm Details: 01736-787186

*Fri May 1st* - Obby Oss Day at Padstow. Details: 01841-533449

*Sun May 4th* - 21st Three Wells Walk Meet Sancreed Church 10.15am Details: 01736-787186

*Sun May 4th* - Penzance's Mayhorns Festival (revived tradition). Web site: [www.penzancemayhorns.co.uk](http://www.penzancemayhorns.co.uk)

*Fri May 8th* - Helston Flora Day + Hal-an-Tow. Details: 01326-565431

