

ISLES OF SCILLY: fogou, clear-ups & dowsing ●
LOCATING ROSEMERGY CIRCLE ● CASPN & LAN
DOWSING: KING ARTHUR'S HALL ● ALIGNMENTS
ALL PHOTOS NOW IN FULL COLOUR

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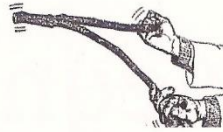
STONES OF OUR MOTHERLAND

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

We have all too often to report in the pages of MM and in the editorial some new threat to Cornwall's ancient landscape in the form of wind farm or phone mast applications, or grants and funds being cut from historic landscape protection. So it is wonderful this time to be able to report that the Penwith Landscape Partnership (of which CASPN and Save Penwith Moors are both partner groups) has been successful in obtaining a grant application for 2.7 million pounds to help guard and protect the landscape heritage. MM editor Cheryl Traffon is also Chair of CASPN, which has been a member of the Partnership Committee since it was first set up in 2014 to prepare a bid. The board defined 13 interconnected projects, one of which is Ancient Penwith (historic sites, monuments and landscape), and CASPN is the Lead Partner in that project (with the Historic Environment Service in an advisory role). It is expected that an Ancient Penwith Landscape Officer will eventually be appointed to oversee and co-ordinate all the specific aspirations and projects that have arisen, and although the full implementation of all of this may take more than 5 years, this is still the best thing that has happened to our sacred landscape in the 15 years since CASPN started. More details of this can be found on page 5 of this MM.

Meanwhile, another organisation "of the people" was under threat this year. The Golowan volunteer Group, who have seen many changes in personnel over the 20 years since the midsummer festival was first revived in Penzance, finally ran out of money to run it. Penzance Town Council were all set to hand it over to a private company to run in future, when a groundswell of public opinion forced them to think again. Feelings ran rather high, as this Festival has always been one run, not by an official Council, but one that rose up from volunteers with a keen sense of its past, while also bringing it into the 20th & 21st centuries. It has also, from the beginning, had its opponents, most notably those to whom it has seemed too anarchic, wild and "pagan". Some of these people are as vociferous today as they were 20 years ago when it began! A letter to 'The Cornishman' by Douglas Colvin of Ludgvan said: "There is too much pagan and un-Christian attitudes and behaviour connected with this festival: the parading of a horse's skull, called Penglaz, I believe, down Chapel Street, for example is quite satanic in nature and has no place in a Christian country. This is merely one example of how heathen influences have taken over the whole affair and many are disturbed by the whole thing"! There were some marvellous replies in the following week's paper, one saying that she was "tired of right-wing intolerant Christians who say that any belief system which does not fit their narrow definition of faith is 'of the devil'", and one from 'Lord Summer Isle' who simply wondered if there would be a wicker man at next year's Event!

DOWSING NEWS



The summer of 2015 continued in July with a visit to sites on the Lizard peninsula with **West Cornwall Dowzers**. Firstly, they visited *Polcoverack settlement*, recently uncovered by Natural England and subsequently cleared by LAN. Two round houses were dowsed, which gave earlier dates for the hearths in the centre (approx. 3600 BCE) than the surrounding walls (1900-1800 BCE), showing that the hearths had been preserved as the sacred centre of the dwelling, even though the huts themselves may have been remodelled. Traces of a foundation cremation burial were found under one of the hearths. In the afternoon the group moved on to *The Three Brothers of Grugwith*, where recent LAN clearance has revealed more stones. A line of fallen stones to the south of the site going in a E-W direction proved to be a double stone avenue of at least 11 visible stones, marking the equinox sunrise and sunset. This site continues to reveal more of its hidden secrets.

In August **West Cornwall Dowzers** returned to *Kus-Skewes Farm*, home of two of its members David & Mandy Bolitho. This time they investigated a fallen gatepost, that dowsed as a standing stone, and then dowsed where it had originally stood in a wooded copse. They then went on to dowsed the node where the Michael and Mary lines now meet, and discovered a 9 petal-shaped 'pictogram' there. They followed the lines around the outside bank of the iron-age 'Round' where they looped in, crossed, then came out again. The Mary line was close in to the hedge and very quiet, while the Michael line was out in the field and very lively. They finished with a cream tea to round off a good day's dowsing.



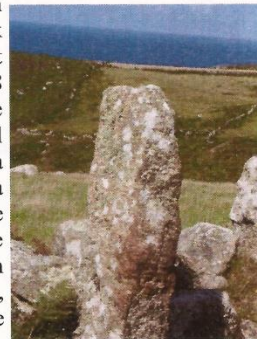
September brought a **Trencrom Dowzers** "Advanced Dowsing for Health" workshop that was well-attended, on "Awakening the Ancient Mysteries of the Shaman within: traditional paths to well-being for today's healers" with David Leesley (healer, dowser, shaman, anthropologist, tutor & author). A week later the Group were out 'in the field' again visiting *Chûn Castle & Quoit*, where they were joined by someone who had come from Bath especially for the session! At the Castle they concentrated on trying to find out if there was the energetic signature of a megalithic structure within the castle enclosure. They found one on the south side of the centre (at 0 degs 8m 55.10N and 5 deg 38m 01.26W), about 30 ft across, which had all the necessary components. There is a plan afoot for a survey and excavation of the Castle, led by archaeologist Barry Cunliffe, so it will be interesting to see if that confirms what the dowzers found. At the Quoit they dowsed and flagged out the boundary of the earth mound that formerly covered the quoit (at least up to the capstone) and investigated the energy radials at the site.

LOCATING ROSEMERGY STONE CIRCLE

MM87, in its feature on Morvah parish, included a brief mention of a lost stone circle at Rosemergy, just north of the B3306 St. Just to St. Ives road. Evidence came from a field name on the 1841 tithe map, and a reference by Borlase (although there was some confusion about which stone circle he was referring to). However, James Haliwell in 1847 [in *Rambles in Western Cornwall*] wrote that it stood a little to the north-east of Rosemergy. MM dowsed a field there and found that there was originally a circle there of 19 stones, the classic number for Penwith circles. At the bottom of the field there was a standing stone, which MM suggested may originally have been an outlier to the circle.

Shortly after its publication, MM received a phone call from Nick Thomas, brother of Cornwall's most renowned archaeologist Professor Charles Thomas. He told us that that he had formerly owned the field, and he suggested that we take a closer look at the site to see if there were any further stones from the circle still in the hedges. So, having obtained permission from the National Trust and tenant farmer, who now manage the farm, four of us (Cheryl Straffon & Lana Jarvis and John & Jill Moss) visited the field on a lovely day in late August. The field has a dramatic view to Carn Galva (a Neolithic tor enclosure) to the south, and to Bosigran Castle (an Iron Age Cliff Castle) to the north-east.

The group dowsed the field and found several stones in the hedge that dowsed as having come from the circle. They then dowsed for the location of the circle (in fact an ellipse) and marked it out with flags. They measured the diameter of the circle at 25.7 x 23.9m, very similar to all the other circles in West Penwith. At the centre they took a GPS reading, which came in at SW 4178 3647, with the outlying standing stone at the bottom of the field at 41802 36510. The Heritage Gateway [Cornwall Historic Environment Record] and the Magalithic Portal give a NGR of 4170 3634 for the site, but this is simply a 'guestimate' based on the field itself (which is a long one falling down towards the sea). To complete our researches we studied the 1840 Tithe Map and Apportments at the Cornish Centre and found that the field was originally called 'menglas', Cornish for the blue-grey stone field. We are therefore confident that we have found the location of this lost circle.



Photos - Dowsing the circle, Stone in hedge, Outlying menhir

MORE ON MORVAH - [continued] by Chris Jenkins

Following my article on Morvah in MM 88 p11, it seems appropriate to interpret why Morvah has so much potential Arthurian mythology. Assuming my theory is correct, then there was a sacred marriage between Arthur and Guinevere at Morvah at Lughnasad August 1st. Now this is weird because this is a remote small village miles away from places like Silchester, Cadbury/Camelot, even Tintagel which it so geographically mirrors; but perhaps that is the point. Everything hinges on the chough/crow/raven symbology because crow and raven are birds of carrion and the chough eats small creatures, because Arthur turns either into a chough or crow after death. Morgana is the Morrigna or Irish ravens of death and prophecy while Guinevere is the 'White Phantom' daughter of Ogyrvan or Ogyvran, where 'vran' is a mutation of bran meaning crow or raven. So Arthur is king, but the goddess both marries him and is his twin with raven attributes which takes him into death and that explains this strange marriage of Arthur and Guinevere which in myth can occur at three places at once, all mirroring each other, as there are three Guineveres. This one at Morvah fixes his contract or covenant with the goddess as terminating with the Cornish chough/crow. Irish myth has complex mythology about Crom Dubh and Ainu, who both hold August 1st as sacred, all linked to 'John Barleycorn must die', where the last harvest sheaf is cut and held with the new seed corn of the following year; so death and rebirth is every year, indeed every day and night.

West Penwith: Ancient Sites and Alignments online map

Penwith Ancient Sites and Alignments is an online map showing the ancient-to-medieval sites of West Penwith and the known straight-line alignments running between them, in the tradition of Alfred Watkins and John Michell. It was created during last winter on Google Maps by Palden Jenkins, drawing on a list of alignments put together by Raymond Cox with data from past issues of Meyn Mamvro and from John Michell and other researchers over the years. Google Maps, using satellite



photography, has introduced a new level of mapping accuracy, sparking a review of all known alignments. The hope is that it will inspire further geomantic research, proving useful to people who walk the landscape and know and love the sites. It has raised some interesting questions, which Palden addresses in a series of supplements with this and future issues of MM.

To find the map online, go to www.meynmamvro.co.uk/penwith-ancient-sites.php, or to www.ancientpenwith.org. A list of 170 alignments found on this map is available free sent to your e-mail inbox (e-mail: admin@meynmamvro.co.uk), or on CDr or in printed form. Go to www.meynmamvro.co.uk to order these.

Future projects arising out of this work include research into any astronomical significance of these alignments, so if you are interested in this please contact Palden direct at palden.jenkins@btopenworld.com.



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

Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network



The Penwith Landscape Partnership Bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund has, on its second attempt, been successful, with a grant of 2.7 million pounds coming its way. CASPN is a key player in that bid, and they are the Lead Partner for the Ancient Sites part of the bid, so this is fantastic news. The next thing that will happen is that work will now begin on Stage 2 to develop the partnership and project, which will be submitted in late 2017, with the implementation of the project due to run from 2018 to 2022. This award now means that they have the opportunity to look after and care for the sites in West Penwith for generations to come, and do many of the things they have wanted to do for years. This will make a tremendous difference to the ancient landscape and it reinforces CASPN's key role in that. More news will be available as time goes by..

Meanwhile, the programme has been announced for the annual Pathways to the Past weekend on May 28th-29th 2016. Now in its 10th year, the weekend promises two days of interesting and varied walks and talks. On the Saturday morning, **Cheryl Traffon & Lana Jarvis** will lead a walk entitled *Vounder Gogglas: an ancient traders' track*, which will follow a route from Sancreed Beacon to Caer Bran and Chapel Euny wells. In the afternoon **David Giddings** will visit sites *Round and about the Little Lookout Tor (Little Galver)*, and in the evening **Paul Bonnington** will give a Powerpoint presentation on *The power of place: reconstructing Cornwall's prehistoric environment*. On the Sunday morning **Adam Sharpe** will talk about *Cornwall's Mining History*, and in the afternoon **Adrian Rodda** will lead a walk called *In the Footsteps of Giants* around Chûn Downs, visiting sites and hearing Adrian's new poem about the legendary Tom the Tinker and the giant Denbras. Finally in the evening **Palden Jenkins** will talk about *The geomantic network in West Penwith*. Full details on the website at www.penwithancientsites.com.

CORNISH ANCIENT SITES PROTECTION NETWORK [CASP.N]

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

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

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

FRIENDS OF CORNWALL'S ANCIENT SITES [FOCAS]

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sites Clear-Ups: Tel: 01326-281139. E-mail: bartofarrell@hotmail.com

ANCIENT TRACKS

9: Badgers Lane & Amalveor Downs

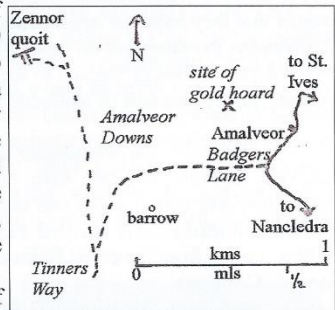
A series that looks at some pathways to ancient sites in West Penwith that may be the tracks where our ancestors walked. Many of the old tracks exist as the old churchway paths connecting settlements to the parish churches, but parts of them, especially those with tall hedges may define old estate boundaries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

Badgers Lane is a short steep uphill stretch of sunken track (running from SW4815 3735 to 4800 3735) that comes off the minor Towednack to Nancledra road. Its significance is that it provides a convenient path up on to Amalveor Downs and Lady Downs, that large track of moorland that is part of the West Penwith Moors. It also delineates the eastern end of the Tinnors Way, the track that runs across the Moors all the way to St. Just. Climbing Badgers Lane, you get a real feeling of a 'sacred way' leading to the ancient landscape of the moors.

Just to the north of Badgers Lane on the edge of Amalveor Downs in a field hedge, a major discovery was made in 1931 of a Middle Bronze Age hoard of gold pieces. Known as the Towednack Gold Hoard, these consisted of two torcs, four bracelets and three unfinished pieces. It has been suggested that these were deposited by a travelling Irish goldsmith for safe keeping, who never returned to collect them. The originals are in the British Museum, with replicas in the Royal Cornwall Museum in Truro.

Up on Amalveor Downs itself, the Tinnors Track curves southwards, heading for the Bishops Head and Foot [featured in *Ancient Tracks no.4 in MM84*]. Before it gets there, it passes a ring barrow about 90m (100 yds) to the east at SW4748 3707, the highest point on these Downs. An alignment runs to this barrow from Chûn Castle (listed below). From this section of the track, Zennor Quoit can be seen in the distance [at SW4688 3801], and a path leads northwards from the Track which goes to the Quoit. This whole area is a very ancient landscape, and Badgers Lane provides an evocative entrance to this remote area.

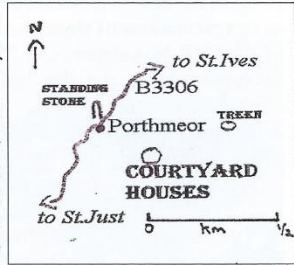
Alignment: Chûn Castle hillfort (NW edge) 405 339 - Bosullow Trehylls courtyard house settlement 409 343 - Mên-an-Tol 4264 3493 - Boundary stone 4475 3586, and three others to a length of parish boundary - Round field 4642 3659 - Ring Barrow 4748 3707.



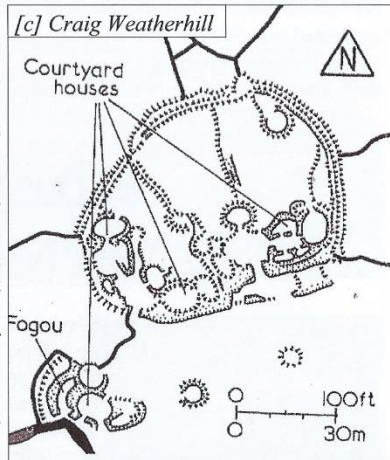
The Towednack gold hoard

HOME SWEET ANCIENT HOME WHERE OUR ANCESTORS LIVED: 10 - Porthmeor

Porthmeor Courtyard House settlement [SW434 371] lies on the north coast of the West Penwith peninsula, to the east of Bosigran courtyard houses and to the west of Treen courtyard houses, both to be featured in future issues. It is quite a sizeable site, with two or three courtyard houses built within an oval fortification, which also enclosed four terraces and a number of hut circles. It began as an open hut circle settlement, but during the 2nd century CE, the courtyard houses and surrounding enclosure were constructed, and it continued in occupation until the 5th or 6th centuries.



There were two entrances into the enclosure: the main one on the south side led into a paved court, on the east side of which is the entrance to a courtyard house, with a round room, two oval chambers and a long room. Four huts also open into the entrance court, so this was quite a sophisticated building. Another entrance, on the SW side of the enclosure also led into a paved court, on the east side of which is another probable courtyard house and a hut circle in which was found a tin-smelting furnace. To the north of the paved area is another courtyard house, again with a round room, two small chambers and a long room. Although all courtyard house settlements have features in common, this one is quite unique in its layout.



As might be expected, there is a fogou associated with the site, which lies to the south west of the enclosure at 4340 3703. It is close to the remains of another courtyard house, and its NE end was at some time blocked by the construction of a hut. It is an above ground structure, but was originally roofed with lintels and corbelling. It consists of a passage 13m (43ft) long. No creep was found, but there may originally have been one, now lost. A most intriguing site.



The fogou passage

Are Boscawen-ûn axes really feet?

In 1986 Ian Cooke first recorded the presence of a pair of carvings on the north-east side of the centre stone at Boscawen-ûn stone circle, which he interpreted as representations of stone axes. Now, in the latest issue of the CAS Newsletter (Oct 2015) Thomas Goskar has suggested that in fact they may have been intended to represent a pair of feet with soles outward. He undertook a photogrammetry [3D] survey of the stone which confirmed the carvings and suggested the presence of a row of what might be 'toes' on the right hand foot. These are not dissimilar to a relief found on a lost (but recorded) stone from the Dolmen du Petit-Mont at Morbihan in Brittany, though the Breton ones are much more clearly delineated. Goskar has also suggested that 500mm above the axe/feet carvings are a pair of circular features in low relief that are similar to those found in Brittany, which have been interpreted as breasts. More about this in the next issue of MM.



(Above) centre stone showing axe (or feet) carvings and (below) location of the carvings on the stone.



WELLS CORNER

A regular feature on Cornwall's holy wells

St. Wenna's well, Morval [SX2599 5662]

St.Wenna's well at Tregonetha, near St.Wenna (west of Bodmin) [SW955 642] was listed by Meyrick in his *Pilgrim's Guide to the Holy Wells* as being in marshy ground with no trace of any building remaining. St Wenna was one of the children of Brychan, who travelled from Wales to Cornwall in the 6th century - a different one to St.Morwenna, featured in the previous issue of MM. However,



Meyrick does not mention a second well dedicated to Wenna, which is in much better condition, and was recently discovered by John Litton. It lies in the garden of Morval House, next to the village of Morval (north of Looe), whose name means 'marshy valley'. Morval's church is dedicated to St.Morval, and the Parish Guide says that from 504 AD and possibly earlier, a church of mud and wattle probably stood there before the present church was built around the 13th century (the earliest vicar's name Eustachius being recorded in 1281). It is great to be able to record a 'lost' holy well, especially one so well preserved at this one.

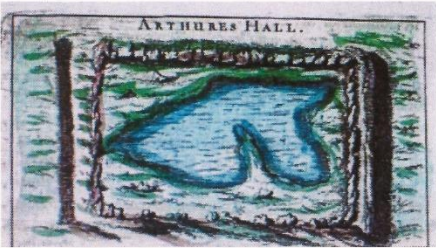
[www.facebook.com/groups/holywells of Cornwall](http://www.facebook.com/groups/holywells%20of%20Cornwall)

KING ARTHUR'S HALL: THE DOWSERS PERSPECTIVE

by Roy Goulté

After many previous visits to King Arthur's Hall on King Arthur's Down to the North-West of Bodmin Moor [see article in *MM88* p.12-16], I thought a further visit, this time with a Cornish group of dowsers, would be of interest to readers. A very well-known group are the West Cornwall Dowsers led by Bart O'Farrell, a well respected and experienced Cornish dowser, so I knew if they accepted my invitation to make a site visit, a thorough and enlightening investigation would take

place. I asked Bart if he would be prepared, along with a few of his members, to visit the Hall with myself and another well-known figure from Tintagel, Susan Hockey, as members of the TimeSeekers archaeological group to observe. Susan owns and runs the Cornish Heritage Safaris tour service and sometimes carries out tours to King Arthur's Hall and other places on Bodmin Moor, and of course all interesting areas of Cornwall down to the far west. Having a passing interest in the art of dowsing herself, Susan was keen to gain more knowledge that she could maybe pass on to her tour customers. A pair of dowsing rods are always on hand during her tours, and in certain special locations even the most sceptical participant has been known to see and feel results.



Norden's 1584 map of King Arthur's Hall

And so, on the 2nd November 2014 we all met up and made our way to the Hall. Bart brought with him fellow members Andy Norfolk, Alan Gilbert, Bob Bailey and Peter Hartwell. All are experienced dowsers and I had one or two questions already lined up to ask them once they were underway. We gathered initially on the southern bank of the hall as it gives a good vantage point over the whole enclosure. The dowsers then stepped into the enclosure itself and moved around independently of each other. Without prompting, I was asked what I would like to know? As my previous article on King Arthur's Hall suggests, I am convinced the enclosure is a special place and not as simple as just a medieval animal pound as suggested by others. The large upright stones and raised bank surrounding them are more complicated a structure than would be required for animals. The internal area is always wet. Could this tendency to flooding have happened after an animal pound had been built? It is much more than that, but what exactly, as no major excavations or dating has taken place here? So, I began by asking if the enclosure was a mortuary enclosure that contained buried human remains, either in skeletal form or cremations? Without exception the answer was a definite NO by all of them, it was not a mortuary enclosure or graveyard.

Susan commented that four participants were fascinated by King Arthur's Hall. "They want to know why more is not known about it and will an archaeological excavation ever take place. But, I like the air of mystery. When I bring people here they always ask what it is. But I always ask people what they think, before suggesting possibilities and I don't tell them immediately about the Arthurian name. Suggestions such as a swimming pool, sports arena, meeting place, place of judgement have come up." Susan asked the dowzers if the two large stones in the middle of the West bank represented a 'king' and 'queen'? They replied not, but that those stones were attracting energy, passing between them. When she asked the dowzers about the corners and the gaps between stones, they explained that they felt the north east corner was an important entry point, with a flow of people arriving from the Rough Tor direction. Bart explained about an energy flow that went around the site with the north-south sides of the stones set in a regular pattern.

I asked if it was a ceremonial or ritual site. The response to this question was rather mixed, so they settled on it being for a more spiritual use. The other big puzzle here of course is the water that is always lying in the central area of the 'pond' whether it be winter or the height of summer. We have often wondered if the monument was purposely built over a rising spring and if so, was that the reason for its being? The reply was unanimous this time...it was! "Its reason for being was the spring which is still active." replied Bart. "We



noticed the behaviour of the two Labrador dogs (Susan's Magic and Mystery)...they loved it, chasing each other over the energetic spring. It is toward the northern end...south is where the moss is and they didn't go there." In some ways this supports what I was saying earlier, that you get your own ideas in your head and can easily overlook the obvious.

The boys walked over every inch of the site and it was fascinating to see how they went about their business. My knowledge of dowsing is very limited and I always assumed you had to walk over the area you were seeking things out to get a 'reading'. This is not always the case as I noticed they often stood on a spot and 'asked' what lay ahead of them, not what was directly underfoot. Again, I always thought the rods reacted to 'something' underground as you passed over it, but it seemed to me that the rods reacted when a question was 'asked' in their heads, not audibly! And boy oh boy didn't the rods react as well. There didn't seem to be any slow movements where the rods casually crossed over while you held your breath, they sort of snapped into place in an instant. Like a typical sceptic (which I'm not) I was watching their hands intently to see if the rods were given any 'assistance', but they weren't. It was fascinating to watch and being inside the enclosure with the banks protecting us from any wind that was about, the possibility of wind moving the rods was kept to a minimum.

Finally, this is what the dowsers were able to reveal based on their findings:-

“This is a large rectangular enclosure at the top of a hill on a north-south alignment, with 56 flat slab stones on the inside of the banks still visible. The rectangular centre, due to a spring, is mostly wet with reeds and to the south it has rising sphagnum moss. The view to the north-west is highlighted by Rough Tor and Brown Willy with the large Fernacre Stone circle beneath them. It was not an animal pound, neither would it ‘work’ as one. Sheep would suffer with foot rot and cattle would destroy the base, as would ponies after a short while. It was not ‘a place for the dead’, i.e. a Neolithic graveyard. Neither was it ‘roofed’, or a ‘swimming pool’ or a ‘let’s eat and get drunk’ meeting hall. Its reason for being was the spring which is still active! We noticed the behaviour of the two Labrador dogs.

It was a happy, communal site. It was for families, not just the elders. ‘Meditation’, and ‘sanctuary’ came to mind. You would be ‘still’ and ‘safe’ here. Erected between 3,100-3,500 (earliest) BCE. (This depends on different dowsers and from which area they were doing the dating from). Nobody actually got 3,500 but 3,100-3200 BCE came up most. In active use for about 900 years, so, Neolithic to early Bronze Age.

Order of building. Scoop out the earth from the centre to form the banks would of course come first. Paving laid on southern end and you may have the bedrock floor on the north (there is a difference in the flora). The flat slab upright banking stones last. These stones were interesting in themselves, different heights, and where they were positioned. All were as dead as a gatepost, unlike stones in circles. Standing Menhirs all have ‘intention’ in them and energetically transmit at 7 levels. These didn’t, they are just flat brought-in moor stones. Possibly back-rests for sitting people? Well, it’s a thought. Why go beyond that? Largest for the elders, smallest for the children? Why not a simple explanation? If you were sitting there for a time, wouldn’t you like a back-rest?

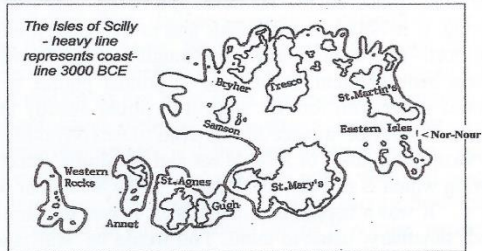
The clockwise energy of the site comes from the banking. People naturally walk around stone circles in an observable clockwise direction, i.e. following the sun. So do cattle feeding in a field. This was enhanced by the Megalithic builders, by using the stone’s magnetic north/south memory, and placing them N/S, N/S, N/S alongside each other - much like a car “alternator”. You can tell when a restored circle has a stone wrongly placed back to front, because it breaks the rythm (e.g. Nine Maidens Circle on Penwith Moors, N/S, S/N, N/S.....it’s a break in the magnet field). North side, the outside banking contained a number of later cremations (Iron Age?) only a few on the outer south side. The settlements the site serviced were to the north, and we have the NE corner as originally the main entrance.

We think that the area of low level water was never high, only ankle deep. Could have to do with sun and moon reflection? All of us got a strong September/October usage of the site. The Autumn Equinox sunset acutely visible from there. The north/south alignment meant the Summer Solstice could be observed, sunrise, sunset from saddle ‘notches’ in the distant hills, plus the midday sun passing over the water, and we today now think they celebrated midday as well.....and what of the winter Solstice Moon, over that water? The question was raised, was the site ceremonial/ritual/religious, and/or spiritual? Those words had different meanings to each us, so we settled for more spiritual. Water was its reason for being, and it is a solstice/equinox observation site. Rather magical in its day.”

A version of this article was first published at www.heritageaction.wordpress.com.

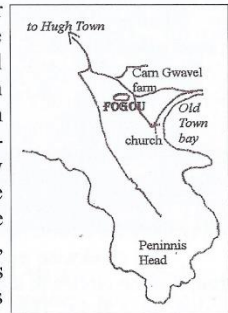
ISLES OF SCILLY SPECIAL FEATURE

This issue of MM has a special feature of archaeological news, community events, dowsing discoveries and book reviews about ancient sites on the beautiful Isles of Scilly, which lie 28 miles off the coast at Land's End. We begin with news that confirms the finding of a fogou on St. Marys.



FIRST SCILLY FOGOU FOUND ON ST. MARYS

An Iron Age to Romano-British fogou, the first ever positively identified on the Isles of Scilly, has been found on the main island of St. Marys. It lies 170 metres south of Carn Gwavel Farm at SV90971 10183, and was only discovered in 2000 when part of the roof of the main passage collapsed. The fogou has an underground chamber-like corbelled passage which has a 'S-shaped' curve throughout its length, which is 4.97 metres long by 1.18 metres wide and 1.18 metres high. Some roof slabs have collapsed near the north-east end of the passage and lie beneath the present floor surface. At the foot of the NE end wall is a creep, which formed the original entrance to the passage. The creep is 0.57 metres wide by 0.27 metres high and extends for 1.36 metres before becoming blocked by fallen debris. This means that the fogou is quite small for this type of monument, but it is an exciting find to add to the list of known and possible fogous in the west Cornwall area. No trace of a related settlement has been found, but that settlement may have later become what is now Carn Gwavel Farm. Although Carn Gwavel Farm is the location of a 'glamping' (luxury camping) site, the fogou is on private land, and has so far remained unexcavated.



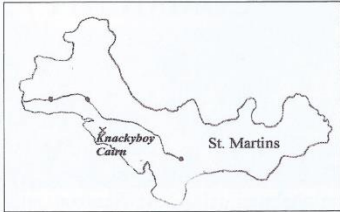
There is some suggestion that there was formerly a Romano-Celtic temple in nearby Hughtown, dating from the same period, evidenced by finds of an altar stone and column fragments. South of Carn Gwavel Farm is Peninnis Head, which was the location in the earlier Bronze Age for funerary cairns on high ground at both ends of the headland. The nearest is only 185 metres NW of the fogou. There was also formerly a standing stone on the headland [see MM84 p.21].



Peninnis Head

KNACKYBOY CAIRN REVEALED

An entrance grave on St. Martins that was completely obliterated by chest-high gorse and bracken has recently been cleared, investigated and recorded. A Project entitled 'Islands in a Common Sea' was initiated by Cardiff University in conjunction with Cornwall's Historic Environment Service, and a subsequent report produced by archaeologist Jacqui Mulville. In this report, Jacqui says that Knackyboy Cairn entrance grave [SV92364 15870] is "one of the



largest, and possibly the most intriguing, of the tombs on the islands". It was first recorded in 1891, and excavated by A & J Gibson in 1912. Subsequently the capstone was removed and used to manufacture gateposts, and the contents of the remaining cist partially destroyed, leaving only a small section intact. It was investigated again in 1947 & 1948, but the results never fully published. We do know however that the excavator, O'Neil identified a complex series of depositions at the site, beginning with a foundation offering of a flaked flint axe placed on the ancient land surface prior to the construction of the Cairn. The entrance grave had a chamber 3.7m long, and O'Neil found 22 complete pots, bronze metalwork and glass beads (which were turquoise, blue or green in colour), and a six rayed faience bead. He also estimated that up to 100 individuals may have been cremated there, which would make it one of the largest groups in any prehistoric tomb in Britain.

When the site had been cleared by the Cardiff team, they found a large ovoid mound, incorporating an earthfast boulder, 19m x 16m, rising to 0.9m to a flattened upper platform. The incorporation of natural boulders into entrance graves has been noted at some other sites, including Carn Creis on the mainland between St. Just and Sennen [see *MM65 p.9*], in a similar location to Knackyboy Cairn. Interestingly, the Carn Creis monument also yielded 12 bright blue faience beads.



Upon being cleared, the spectacular setting of the Knackyboy monument became apparent, with unobstructed views across Crow Sound to the other islands. The site was fully investigated, and many decorated sherds of pottery were found, together with cremated bone. They also found that the monument itself had been covered over the centuries with a great depth of blown sand, so much of it was now buried under that sand. Subsequently, some human bone samples from the site were submitted by Katherine Sawyer for radiocarbon dating, that gave dates in a range from 1747-1260 BCE, the middle Bronze Age. This was an important burial and ritual site in the Bronze Age, and it is good to see it once again revealed, though it lies on private land and is not readily accessible.

ISLES OF SCILLY COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

by **Charlie Johns & Katharine Sawyer**

The Isles of Scilly Community Archaeology Group (the CAG) was formed at an inaugural meeting at the Isles of Scilly Museum on St Mary's in March 2014. We hold monthly meetings; the majority are site clear ups of Scheduled Monuments, rather like CASPN or LAN, but we have had other activities as well such as guided walks on the uninhabited island of Samson and around the historic defences of Tresco; a talk on Scillonian prehistoric pottery; and also opportunities to volunteer on the Neolithic Stepping Stones project's excavations at Old Quay, St Martin's in September 2013 and 2014.

We work closely with the Isles of Scilly Wildlife Trust — many of the 238 Scheduled Monuments on Scilly are on the Trust's land. The Trust provide tools and logistical back up for the clear ups which are overseen by one of their Rangers with additional help usually provided by several of their volunteers.

Our Festival of Archaeology event in July 2014 was a clear up of the ruined farmhouse and early medieval chapel site on the inhabited island of Teän *[photo right]*. It was a sunny day and the event was very well attended! Another memorable event, in August 2014 was the clear up of post-medieval kelp pits and a prehistoric field boundary at Toll's Island, St Mary's.



Clear-up on Teän

Clear ups in 2015 have been:

March - Early Bronze Age entrance graves at Porth Hellick Down, St Mary's.

"Well at least it wasn't cold for our site clearance session on Porth Hellick Down, but it was very windy and sometimes wet. Five of us (Cath, Darren, Rhiannon, Lucy and me) cleared lots of heather from two of the overgrown entrance graves. The one to the left of the main path as you walk south from the 'Great Tomb' has been transformed and you can now tell that it's a burial chamber." [KS]



Porth Hellick Down entrance grave

April - Carn Valla, an entrance grave on Gugh which was covered in dense gorse and scrub and can now be seen for the first time for many years. Kerbstones and a capstone have been recorded, but no sign remains of a chamber.



A cleared Carn Valla entrance grave

June - The prehistoric settlement and Romano-British shrine on Nornour.

“A full boatload came for this clear-up and after a summary of the site history, some of the houses in this unique settlement and shrine were cleared.”

July - “Our Festival of Archaeology event clearing entrance graves and cairns on Little Arthur and Middle Arthur — another beautiful and memorable day. Many thanks to everyone who came and helped to clear the five Bronze Age burial chambers there.”



Clearing a house on Nor-Nour

Sept - North Hill Samson.

“Many thanks to everyone who worked on Samson - we cleared four of the Bronze Age sites on the top of North Hill. Special thanks to those who tackled the big clump of gorse in front of one of the entrance graves - and removed it all!”



Middle Arthur entrance grave

Oct - Works Carn on Samson Hill, Bryher, clearing an overgrown entrance grave.

“Great site clearance session at Works Carn. Many thanks to all those who came to help reveal a fantastic site (and to the Wildlife Trust for clearing so much gorse).”



North Hill, Samson

From December 2015 to February 2016 we will work at sites on St Mary's and then from March 2016 onwards we hope to tackle Northwethel, White Island and Tean. Also please join our Facebook group: Isles of Scilly Community Archaeology Group.

All photos [c] Katharine Sawyer

DOWSING ON THE ISLES OF SCILLY

by **Jonnie Taylor**

Last year we took a short holiday on Scilly – a wonderful treasure trove of ancient, and relatively unspoilt sites. Before we left I was able to do some preliminary research thanks to Cheryl Straffon's excellent Ancient Sites on Scilly publication and Bart O'Farrell kindly lent me his copy of Scillies Archaeological Heritage guide. Having arrived on the islands at lunchtime we decided to stay on St Marys for our first day, so we set off up the west coast towards the Long Rock Menhir on the north side of the island. Despite it being featured in a full page photograph in the official Isles of Scillies Tourist Guide it was not signposted and was remarkably difficult to find. When we did eventually find it, I found 4 energy lines feeding into it and a vortex spiral on their junction at the stone. I also found the stone to have 5 energy rings up its height but when I touched the stone at these points did not experience any electrical tingling or physical repulsion (c.f Tom Graves' book *Needles of Stone* and many other experiences). When I have dowsed previous barrows and menhirs I have found the water lines bisecting the angle between the energy lines so I was surprised to find that here they were co-incident with the energy lines. I did not have a compass so was unable to plot the energy lines' directions or ascertain whether there was a link with Bant's Carn entrance grave to the southwest.



Long Rock menhir ©MM

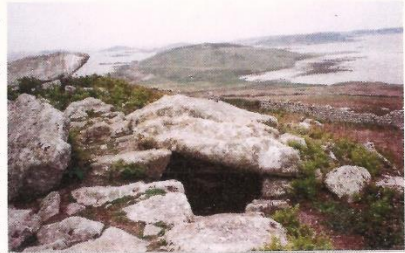
I was intrigued by Cheryl's description of the Maypole junction in her Ancient Sites on The Isles of Scilly guide ("*Crossroad sites like this are often indicative of very ancient, pre-Christian sacred areas*") so we went there next. Today it's a 3-way junction with a small green at the junction itself overgrown with a mixture of exotic plants and brambles. There I found four energy lines feeding in to the centre of the junction bisected by four separate water lines. I was unable to dowse the centre of the small green in the centre of the crossroads because of the overgrowth.

The next day we took the ferry over to Tresco. I had tried map dowsing this area beforehand as a friend had said that she thought one of the Mary or St Michael lines might go there. I did get a response for a NE/SW energy line running through the islands running from St Martins to the NE, passing just north of Nounour, then across Tresco going through the stone circle site mentioned in Cheryl's guide [at SV8885 1463], and then passing across Bryher passing over Samson Hill. En-route to Tresco I dowsed for an energy line whilst we were running up the western side to the ferry landing at New Grimsby, and I got a response as we passed abeam the stone circle site. Later while walking down the eastern side of Tresco I got a response more or less coincident to where I had map dowsed it.

On questioning further, I got a response for The Mary Energy line but in retrospect, having talked to more learned dowsers than myself, it probably had a similar frequency to the Mary line. As we then spent most of the rest of the day in the Abbey Gardens I did not have enough time to go up to the Stone Circle site. I did dowse the old St Nicholas Priory Church in the gardens and found the old energy lines in the church as expected.

The next day was spent on Samson as part of an organised Scilly archaeological walk. It was an interesting walk but, as we were part of an organised group, I was unable to give each site on the island the time I wanted. We only visited one entrance grave on South Hill and there I only found one energy line running obliquely across the grave site. On North Hill we visited the excavated cist grave on the summit and I found there to be 4 energy lines - one of which was aligned with the entrance. There are numerous other grave sites on the summit and, as I was now getting my eye in, I dowse a number of them quickly and found each one had four energy lines. As the rest of the walkers were by now disappearing over the brow of the hill on their way back to the beach I did not have time to ascertain whether there was any linkage between them.

(Above) South Hill (Below) North Hill ©MM



The next day we went to St Agnes and Gugh. On Gugh we looked at Obadiah's Barrow where I found 4 energy lines (one aligned with the entrance although not exactly) bisected by water lines. The Old Man menhir had a very similar energy pattern to the one I found at The Long Rock menhir on St Mary's but with the water lines bisecting rather than co-incident with the energy lines. Judging by the position of the sun, the lines were roughly on the North/South and East/West Axes.

On St Agnes time was starting to run short (constrained again by return ferry times!) so I gave the Periglis menhir a miss as I was keen to get to the Troy Town Maze and St Warna's Well. At the Troy Town maze I found 4 energy lines running through the maze and although they wavered around a bit (not helped by a brisk breeze!) they did not follow the maze line. Immediately to the west of the maze there did appear to be an old grave site that give an energy response.



The Old Man of Gugh ©MM

St Warna's Well, although restored, was rather sad and spartan and did not have the spirituality of other more well-known holy wells on the mainland such as Sancreed and Madron. The water in the well itself was shallow and muddy but, despite this, I did get a response for holy water.



St. Warna's well, Gugh ©MM

On our last day we went to Bryher. Again, on the ground, I got response for what I took to be the Mary Line as we walked down the eastern shoreline and, on reaching the summit of Samson Hill, found it to pass through the carn to the north of Bonfire Carn. After refreshments I walked up to the summit of Shipman Down which I found totally fascinating with a real sense of its prehistoric past – thanks in a large part to the work of The Isles of Scillies Wildlife Trust who manage the landscape to prevent scrub overgrowth. There were graves and cairns all over the top each with its own energy line pattern.

The whole visit left me with a strong desire to go back, rent a boat and wander backwards and forwards between these magical islands as the spirit takes me rather than at times dictated by the ferry timetable. It also filled me with a strong desire to learn a lot more about earth energy dowsing.

RETURN TO THE ISLANDS

In October, we went back to Scilly for a much-needed holiday with the intention of having a closer look at the sites that I had dowsed briefly the previous year. Regrettably our holiday was curtailed but all the same I was able to dowse some of the sites on St Mary's in greater detail than on my previous visit. I also took the opportunity to have a look at three additional sites on the eastern half of St Mary's that I hadn't visited last year.

Following on from Vivien and Robert Seaney's excellent article in the summer 2014 issue of Meyn Mamvro (no 84) about the Salakee Down stone circle, I made that my first port of call. The circle is located on a low, but significant hillock overlooking the beach at Porth Hellick and beyond towards Porth Hellick Down. Since the Seaneys visited the circle site, the gorse and bracken has been cleared making the site a lot easier to explore and visualise. I started off by dowsing for the line of the circle and was surprised to find it to be very ovoid, almost doughnut shaped (perhaps because it might, as the Seaneys postulated, have been constructed from existing earth-fast rocks). I then dowsed around the periphery looking for energy lines. I found 19 of these crossing the outer periphery towards the centre. However when I tried to follow these lines individually they quickly terminated in spirals before reaching the centre. The water lines behaved similarly. On dowsing, it appeared that the circle lay on top of a blind spring: an underground dome of pressurised water that manifests a harmonic spiral pattern called a geospiral which draws towards it major earth energies. This would perhaps explain why our ancestors built the circle here.

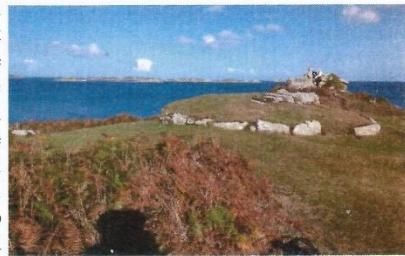
After leaving Salakee, I went over to The Giant's Grave cairn on Porth Hellick Down. It is a beautiful and intact cairn resembling a low circular building covered in short grass with breathtaking views out to sea and along the coast. The entrance to the cairn points NW, and the Cairn itself had four energy lines feeding into a central spiral. Surprisingly none of them is aligned with the entrance but one is pointing directly at the Salakee Stone Circle - the small hillock of which readily caught the eye. I did not visit the fallen stone at Peninnis Head (also described in the Seaways article) but it is interesting that the same energy line that pointed towards the Salakee Stone Circle, if continued on, would pass through Peninnis Head. This energy ley link was later confirmed by map dowsing.



Giants Grave, Porth Hellick Down ©MM

My next stop was the Maypole road junction. Since my visit there last time the centre of the cross had been considerably tidied up and it was now a beautiful mini-garden. The "garden" is triangular in shape with the three points pointing down each of the three roads that make up the junction. The four energy lines that I dowsed around the periphery were roughly coincident with the cardinal points of the compass and each of these lines was bisected by water lines feeding into a central spiral.

There are three sites close to the northern coast of St Mary's that I thought might be linked in some way. A link between Bant's Cairn and the Long Rock menhir was postulated by the CEMG in issue 47 of Meyn Mamvro. From east to west they are: Innisidgen Cairn, the Long Rock menhir and Bant's Cairn. I went to Innisidgen Upper Cairn first. This is very similar to the Giant's Grave cairn and is in an equally beautiful place with stunning views out to St Martin's and the Eastern Isles. The entrance to this cairn is facing more or less due east with a bit of south (100°) and the main energy line is aligned with this. Again there were four energy lines feeding into a central spiral on the cairn bisected by four water lines. Interestingly there is a significant rock outcrop some 20m to the east with a deep cleft aligned due east in line with the entrance.

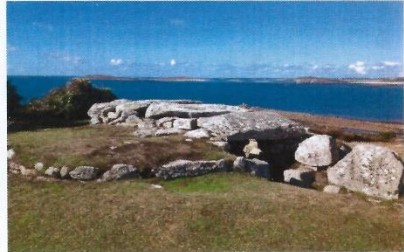


Innisidgen Upper cairn ©JT

There is also a lower cairn here some 200m to the NW that is aligned north-south with the entrance facing south towards the overlooking escarpment. The energy lines here are also aligned close to the compass cardinal points similarly to Maypole junction and the Long Rock menhir.

Regrettably the undergrowth around the Long Rock menhir has not been cleared making it difficult to dowse accurately. My findings this time were the same as my first visit with the energy lines aligned roughly north-south and east-west. The dowsing response I received from this menhir was the strongest I received all day. A powerful menhir.

My last port of call was to Bant's Carn. This is equally well preserved (or restored) as the other two carns with equally beautiful views out to Tresco, Bryher and Samson. The entrance to this carn is aligned to the NE and, rather than the four energy lines I was expecting I found eight! One of these is aligned with the entrance pointing NE. On returning to our holiday cottage, I drew a line on the map between the three sites. The sites are on the same alignment of 240° and, using a map dowsing technique, I found a response for an energy ley line connecting the three. I would like to reiterate that these "findings" come from my own relatively inexpert dowsing and they would need confirming by other more competent and more experienced dowers than myself.



Bant's Carn, looking towards Samson ©JT

ISLES OF SCILLY ALIGNMENTS [from Palden Jenkins' on-line map]

SC01 Mt Flagon - Gt Ganilly
 Mount Flagon menhir SV 9093 1093
 Middle Arthur chambered cairn SV 939 138
 Little Arthur cairn SV 9413 1389
 Great Ganilly cairn SV 946 146

SC02 White Island - Innisidgen
 White Island cairn SV 924 176
 Knackyboy cairn SV 9235 1586
 Innisidgen tumulus SV 922 126

SC03 Castle Down - Chapel Downs
 Castle Down cairn SV 886 158
 Knackyboy cairn SV 9235 1586
 Chapel Downs cairns SV 942 158

SC04 South Hill - Menawathan
 South Hill cairn, Samson SV 878 124
 Great Arthur cairn SV 942 135
 Menawathan cairn SV 9553 1366

SC05 Innisidgen - Chapel Downs
 Innisidgen chambered cairn SV 922 126
 Gun Hill cairn SV 9390 1537
 Chapel Downs cairns SV 942 158

SC06 Innisidgen - Bryher
 Innisidgen SV 922 126
 Tresco Abbey SV 8951 1429
 Bryher cairnfield SV 876 156

SC07 Samson - Bryher
 South Hill cairn, Samson SV 878 124
 Works Carn, Samson Hill, Bryher SV 878141
 Tumulus, Bryher cairnfield SV 876 156
 Shipman Head cliff stronghold SV 876 156
Shipman Head is quite big and long, and the alignment strikes one part of it. South Hill is quite long too, though this line follows its long axis through a few remains on top of it.

SC08 Samson - St Martin's
 North Hill cairn, Samson SV 877 131
 Cruther's Hill N entrance mound, St Martins SV 9289 1522
 Chapel Downs cairns, St Martins SV 942 158

SC09 Gugh - Bryher
 Carn of Works, South Hill, Gugh SV 891 080
 North Hill cairns, Samson SV 877 131
 Gweal Hill E cairn, Bryher SV 8716 1492

SC10 Gugh - Gt Ganilly

Obadiah's Barrow, Gugh SV 887 085
 Buzza Hill cairn, St Mary's SV 9059 1037
 Middle Arthur N entrance mound SV 939 138
 Great Ganilly C cairn SV 946 146

SC11 White Island - Gweal Hill

White Island cairn SV 9224 1762
 Castle Down cairn, Tresco SV 886 158
 Gweal Hill SE entrance mound SV 8716 1492

SC12 Mt Flagon - Knackyboy

Mt Flagon menhir, St Mary's SV 9093 1093
 Long Rock menhir SV 914 124
 Knackyboy cairn SV 9235 1586

SC13 Gt Arthur - Gun Hill

Great Arthur N entrance mound SV 942 135
 Little Arthur cairns SV 9413 1390
 Gun Hill SV 9390 1537

SC14 Innisidjen - Gugh

Innisidjen SE chambered cairn SV 922 126
 Buzza Hill entrance mound SV 9059 1037
 Clapper of Works entrance mound, Gugh SV
 8902 0794

SC15 Ganilly - White Island

Great Ganilly NW cairn SV 946 146
 Gun Hill cairn SV 9390 1537
 White Island chambered cairn SV 924 176

SC16 Gt Ganilly - Bryher

Great Ganilly C cairn SV 946 146
 Tresco Abbey SV 8951 1429
 Bonfire Carn, Samson Hill, Bryher SV 8793
 1423

SC17 Great Arthur - Knackyboy

Great Arthur N cairn SV 942 135
 Middle Arthur S and C cairns SV 939 138
 Cruther's Hill C cairn SV 9291 1517
 Knackyboy cairn SV 9235 1586

SC18 Gweal Hill - Maypole

Gweal Hill cairns, Bryher SV 8716 1492
 Hillside Farm cairn, Bryher SV 878 145
 Halangy Lower cairn, St Mary's SV 911 123
 Maypole cairn SV 920 117

SC19 South Hill - Helvear

South Hill C mound, Samson SV 878 124
 Bant's Carn chambered mound SV 910 123
 Halangy Lower mound SV 911 123
 Helvear Hill cairn SV 922 123

SC20 South Hill - Maypole

South Hill S cairn SV 878 124
 Carn Morval Down entr.mound SV 907 119
 Maypole cairn SV 920 117

SC21 Carn Morval - Gun Hill

Carn Morval NE cairn SV 9084 1196
 Halangy Lower barrow SV 911 123
 Porthloo NE barrow SV 9152 1280
 Gun Hill cairn, St Martin's SV 9390 1537

SC22 Gun Hill - Samson Hill

Gun Hill cairn, St Martin's SV 9390 1537
 Cruther's Hill C cairn SV 9291 1517
 Works Carn, Samson Hill, Bryher SV 8781
 1410

SC23 Wingletang - Cruther's Hill

Wingletang Down cairns St Agnes SV 883075
 Obadiah's Barrow, Gugh SV 887 085
 Halangy Lower cairn, St Mary's SV 911 123
 Cruther's Hill N cairn, St Martin's SV 9289
 1522

SC24 St Agnes - Chapel Downs

Periglis menhir, St Agnes SV 8762 0833
 Carn Morval cairn, St Mary's SV 9084 1196
 Halangy Lower cairn SV 911 123
 Porthloo W cairn, St Mary's SV 9151 1276
 Chapel Downs cairns, St Martin's SV 942 158

SC25 Perigis Stone - Bryher cairnfield

Periglis Stone, St Agnes SV 8762 0833
 North Hill S cairn, Bryher SV 877 131
 Hillside Farm mound SV 878 145
 Bryher cairnfield SV 876 156

SC26 South Hill - Chapel Downs

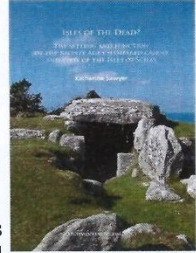
South Hill N cairn, Samson SV 878 124
 Cruther's Hill S cairn St.Martins SV 9295 1513
 Higher Town Bay stone row SV 933 153

BOOK REVIEWS

Isles of the Dead?: The setting and function of the Bronze Age chambered cairns and cists on the Isles of Scilly

by **Katherine Sawyer** [2015]

[Published by Archaeopress pbk £33.00]



This is a major new book on the archaeology of a certain class of monument for which Scilly is renowned: namely, the chambered cairns, and also the cists. The book is an adaptation of Katherine's PhD thesis on the subject, and is the first in-depth treatment of them (although some interesting research was done by Gary Robinson in his 2007 book *The Prehistoric Island Landscape of Scilly* - see MM68 p.14-18 for details). After an Introduction, and overview of recent approaches and previous research on the subject, the author gets down to a systematic study, focussing on the structures, contents, settings, functions and dates of the monuments.

STRUCTURES. Entrance graves, or chambered cairns, are unique to Scilly and West Cornwall, though the author points out that there are some structural differences between the Scilly and West Cornwall ones. She identifies about 77 definite and probable entrance graves, 13 possible ones, 27 definite and probable cists, 34 possible ones, and 46 'others' that could be entrance graves or cists - a total of 197, of which 167 are extant, and the others destroyed or unknown. This makes for a very high density of such monuments, relative to the area of the islands, but after considering all the possibilities, she does not believe that bodies from the mainland were brought over for burial, but that they were the work of, and provided for, the dead of the islands. She looks at the construction of the monuments, with their chambers, walling, capstones, passages and mounds, and concludes that there was much variation in their form and construction. They have been dated to the second millennium BCE, continuing in use for about 700 years.

CONTENTS. Finds have been recorded at some 40 sites, mainly pottery and flints, though some bronze objects were found at Cruther's Neck, Knackyboy Cairn, and Obiadhah's Barrow; a pumice pendant at Porth Hellick Down A; and faience and glass beads at Knackyboy Cairn [see p.13]. Limpet shells have also occasionally been found and Barry Cunliffe has suggested that such deposits are 'a tantalising hint' that the Mesolithic tradition of burying the dead in coastal shell middens was "being symbolically acknowledged".

SETTINGS. The majority of the entrance graves have an entrance facing between north and east (midsummer solstice to autumn equinox sunrises); however, a significant minority face between south-west and north-north-west (summer to winter sunsets). Sites often occur in pairs or in clusters on hill tops (for example on Samson, Gugh, the Arthurs, etc.), and often in a coastal location, though that may simply be due to the inland ones having been destroyed. Many entrances face inland away from the sea, but by no means all.

At some sites, there is a large intervisibility with other entrance graves and cists: a notable example is Bant's Carn on the north-western side of St.Marys, which has intervisibility with nine other sites or groups of sites. However, by contrast Porth Hellick A on the eastern side of St.Marys has very limited intervisibility. Katherine Sawyer suggests that this was due to the northern part of Scilly (unlike the east) being steadily inundated by the sea, so having visual links in this area was a way that they thought would protect the land.

FUNCTIONS. Sawyer examines some theories, most notably Paul Ashbee's suggestion that the entrance graves were intimately associated with ancient field systems, and therefore functioned as cult structures, each containing a foundation deposit (or *fana*), whereas cists were primarily used for burial. She shows the flaws in this argument, and believes rather that they were constructed on 'safe ground' as a means of "standing sentinel over the sea and protecting the land from further inundation".

The book concludes with a comparison with chambered cairns and cists elsewhere in Britain and Brittany, and there is a very useful appendix giving a catalogue of sites. Despite the title 'Isles of the Dead?' she concludes by saying: "There is no reason to think that Scilly was a necropolis in the Early and Middle Bronze Age".

To be published in early 2016

The Lyonesse Project: a study of the historic coastal and marine environment of the Isles of Scilly

by Dan J. Charman, Charles Johns, Kevin Camidge, Peter Marshall, Steve Mills, Jacqui Mulville, Helen M. Roberts and Todd Stevens.

[Published by Cornwall Council and Historic England]

A notable aspect of Scilly's historic environment is the presence of stone walls and other remains below high water, the result of low-lying land being submerged by the gradual rise in sea-level. The timing and nature of changing land areas and the separation of the individual islands has, in the past, been the subject of much conjecture and debate. The Lyonesse Project is a study of the evolution of the historic coastal and marine environment of the Isles of Scilly, commissioned by Historic England and carried out by the Cornwall Archaeological Unit with a team of specialists from Aberystwyth, Cardiff, Exeter, Plymouth, Oxford and Glasgow Universities, Historic England's Scientific Dating Team, and volunteers and local experts from the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Maritime Archaeological Society and the Islands Maritime Archaeology Group.

Peat samples for scientific dating and palaeoenvironmental analysis and were recovered from seven intertidal sites and two submerged sites. A total of 78 new radiocarbon dates and 15 new Optically Stimulated Luminescence (OSL) ages were obtained for the Project providing a much more robust chronology than previously existed, while the pollen data represent almost the entire last 13,500 years of vegetation history on Scilly, giving a unique insight into the development of the landscape through the Holocene, set against the backdrop of changing sea levels.

15 YEARS AGO

Delving into the pages of MM from the past

In 2001 the old CEMG (Cornish Earth Mysteries Group) organised a weekend's visit to the Isles of Scilly, and the results were subsequently written up in MM46 & MM47. On the Friday afternoon they visited the Isles of Scilly Museum on St.Marys to see the pipe-clay Goddess figurine, who may have been a representation of *Sillina. While they were there, they noticed a photograph of the 'Betrothal Stone' in a garden at Rocky Hill on St.Marys, and managed to get permission to visit it the following morning. It dowed as dating to the Bronze Age or older. The Group then made their way round St.Marys, visiting a number of entrance graves and standing stones, and making some interesting findings.

On the Sunday, the Group hired a boat to take them to the uninhabited island of Nor-Nour, that in the Romano-Celtic period had housed a settlement that included a shrine to the maritime Goddess *Sillina. The Group took this unique opportunity to explore the settlement and find a room where some of them could perform a ceremony to once again honour the Goddess and chant Her name at her special place. They poured some honey into a hollowed stone in honour of Her, and sang and read a poem to Her. It was a powerful and deeply spiritual experience.



A younger MM editor at the Betrothal Stone!

Finally, on the Monday, four of the the Group who were still there spent the day exploring the sites on Gugh. Firstly they went to Obadiah's Barrow, and then they went up on Kittern Hill, to the north of the island, where they started to piece together the complex of entrance graves, cists, barrows and stone settings. Their most startling discovery was that the lines of stones, that have been traditionally interpreted as boundary walls, looked far more like stone rows, and ran from one site to another. Sunrise and sunset alignments were found at a number of the sites, and from one of the cairns there was a striking visual alignment to the Old Man of Gugh menhir and on to a distinctive natural rock Drognose Point. Near Drognose Point itself, a Propped Stone was found, which was added to the corpus of those identified on Bodmin Moor and in West Penwith. All in all it was a most interesting weekend, that provided much material for MM.



Propped Stone on Gugh

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Paganism

Michael Howard, editor of 'The Cauldron' magazine and author of a number of books on witchcraft and magic, sadly died recently. 'The Cauldron' was the first magazine that MM exchanged with, nearly 30 years ago, and it has been a consistent source of serious articles about witchcraft for all that time.

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