

FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS: JANUARY 2017

The routine role of Area Representatives is to produce reports about the condition of archaeological features as part of the CAS Monument Watch programme. This is very important because cuts in public funding have made it impossible for the heritage professionals to monitor the county's rich historic environment as often as they would like. Sometimes though, discoveries are made, which is what happened to Iain Rowe when he was recently on Stowes Hill on Bodmin Moor. Looking across towards Gold Diggings quarry, he noticed cultivation ridges running downhill across the contours. If you look at the photograph below, you can see the ridges to the right of the finger dumps:



Thanks to Iain's discovery, this previously unrecorded feature is now on the county's Historic Environment Record (<https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/her>), which is managed by Emma Trevarthen. The significance of the HER is huge. The Cornwall Local Plan 2010 -2030 recognises the importance of the county's 'outstanding and distinctive historic environment'. Planning decisions must take into account 'the potential impact of any proposal on that heritage significance' and in order to do that 'The Key resource is the Cornwall Historic Environment Record'. In other words, if something isn't on the HER, it won't be considered as part of the planning process, so it is essential that everything of archaeological significance is recorded. (The Local Plan is very readable and available online at: <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/media/22936789/adopted-local-plan-strategic-policies-2016.pdf> .)

Brian Oldham felt that Killboy Cross (Scheduled Monument CO247, HER number 6626), near Braddock Church in east Cornwall, was looking rather neglected and in need of a clean-up. Having obtained expert advice from Andrew Langdon, and with the landowner's permission, he managed to transform this lovely cross – as these photographs show:



It is fortunate that some sites are managed so their archaeological features are not only visible but also protected. One such site is the Iron Age fort at Roundwood in Feock parish (see photograph below). Sheila James has reported that: 'This multi-vallate fort is owned by the National Trust, which has an active management plan to keep the ditches, ramparts and central area clear of undergrowth, to provide the best view of the site for the visiting public. At the same time they are permitting the native heather, pines and beech saplings to grow around the edges of the site to preserve the natural beauty of the whole area. The site receives many visitors due to its proximity to Trelissick Gardens, as does the adjacent area of Roundwood Quay. Unfortunately the quay has become very popular as a picnic site, leading to an increase in litter and unauthorised camp fires.'



Kit Hill Country Park is in the hands of Cornwall Council and is also carefully managed. Ann Preston-Jones (Heritage at Risk Protection Officer, Historic England) reports that: 'Archaeological conservation work has recently been taking place on Kit Hill [see photographs below]. Two of the ruined buildings associated with South Kit Hill mine have recently been repointed and on the summit of the hill erosion of the enclosure is being repaired. This impressive enclosure, once thought to be a civil war defence, was shown by Peter Herring to be a late 18th century folly, a "Saxon Castle" built by Sir John Call of Whiteford near Stoke Climsland (see CA 28, 1989, 252-8). Kit Hill's summit stack stands on one of its four circular bastions'.



Richard Heard has been involved, along with other CAS volunteers, in a rescue excavation by Cornwall Archaeological Unit, for the National Trust, of a Romano-British and Early Medieval industrial site at Duckpool, Morwenstow (NGR 20088 11644). [There is a report on previous excavations on the site in *Cornish Archaeology* No, 34, 1995.] He was particularly pleased that this was taking place in some of the best January weather he could remember for some time!

One rather worrying piece of news received recently concerned the theft of lead from church roofs in the Midlands. The police believe that the thieves may be leaving markers at churches where existing roof alarm systems have been attacked, so accomplices can return at a later date to remove lead or copper. The markers are stones resting on sticks. Although I am unaware of this happening in Cornwall, it is important to be aware of the potential threat.



We are still deep in winter, with the dispiriting prospect of much more cold and wet weather to follow, so here is an uplifting photograph from Diana Sutherland to help remind us of summer. It shows the sun setting behind the propped stone on Leskernick Hill, near Altarnun on Bodmin Moor, on Midsummer's Day in 2014.



If you have any concerns, or new information, about any archaeological feature, please contact the Area Representative for the parish. If you do not know who that is, please contact our secretary at: secretary@cornisharchaeology.org.uk .

Roger Smith, 25th January 2017