FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

AN UPDATE FROM CORNWALL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY’S AREA REPRESENTATIVES

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Issue 33

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VOLUNTEERING AT CHYSAUSTER

Adrian Rodda has news of some exciting opportunities for anyone wishing to get involved at one of Cornwall’s most famous archaeological sites:

English Heritage is recruiting volunteers to act as interpreters at their sites. Details can be found on https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/support-us/volunteer/chysauster-ancient-village-visitor-volunteer2/

The manager at Chysauster, Lucy Osborne, has been enrolling interested people to offer time there. Many CAS members will have visited the site near Penzance and been impressed by the size and condition of the large Romano-British courtyard houses. Lucy has a collection of replica handling materials to show how people spun and weaved wool, ground grain to flour on a rotary or saddle quern and used the replica dishes made of gabbroic clay. Metalwork is featured with ingots of tin, copper and bronze beside malachite and cassiterite ore samples. These activities often provoke wider discussion about the lifestyle of our ancestors and visitors realise how different our modern urban communities are, but also how similar family life and values have persisted over multiple
generations. The experience helps to put modern life into perspective and it is a privilege to talk with relaxed tourists from places in Britain and abroad that you might never visit yourself.

If you like meeting people and talking about archaeology this is an ideal site at which to volunteer. It is never too busy; the visitors are already committed to have found the site along the narrow lanes. There is a wide vista from Mount’s Bay to Multra Quoit which changes in different lights. Do visit to see the new presentation if you have not been for some time. If you live close enough, volunteer to share your interest and local knowledge. It is both an inspiring and relaxing place to spend a day a week.

House 6 from the newly installed viewing platform. Photo: Adrian Rodda

Entrance to House 6 Photo: Adrian Rodda

Text and photographs by Adrian Rodda
RESTORATION PROJECTS IN EAST CORNWALL

Brian Oldham has sent in details of two very important restoration projects in the Liskeard area.

The Tollgate House, Station Road, Liskeard, designed by prolific local architect Henry Rice in 1843, is not listed as many of the original features have been altered over the years. The new owners have made welcome improvements as the before and after photos show.

Jope’s Mill, Trebrownbridge, Morval is a work in progress converting the Grade II listed corn mill into a holiday cottage while retaining the many original features. The internal photos are in the order of
Ground, First then Second floors. The waterwheel is by William Brenton Ltd who traded in Polbathic for over 100 years until 1979.
A SACRED LANDSCAPE IN MID-CORNWALL

Picture this, if you will, a ceremonial landscape in southern Britain, with a henge, flanked by Bronze Age barrows, at the intersection of important routeways, compromised by the proximity of major modern roads. Did Stonehenge come to mind? This landscape is much more modest, without a visitor centre or somewhere to buy a coffee or even a souvenir key-ring. It is Innis Downs, at the northern perimeter of Luxulyan parish:

This area was only enclosed in the 19th century and despite modern road schemes, such as the A30 and A391 that have destroyed some archaeological features, the noise of traffic, and unsympathetic use of the slip road near the henge as an informal car park and car-sales location, it retains the feel of an area that is set apart from the mainstream.

Looking towards Rough Tor and Brown Willy from Innis Downs

Cornwall Council’s excellent Historic Environment Record shows, in the form of the red dots, the rich prehistoric legacy of this area.

Source: [https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/mapping/](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/mapping/)

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The henge itself (often referred to as Castilly Henge) dates from Neolithic times but may have been used later as a medieval plen-an-gwarry, and Civil War encampment. Earlier this year, Anna Lawson-Jones of Cornwall Archaeological Unit organised scrub clearance here, assisted by a team of volunteers. This was very successful, particularly in tackling the well-established, woody vegetation that had established itself over many years.

February 2019: the bank and internal ditch had been cleared.

Photo: Anna Lawson-Jones

August 2019: Bracken has filled the ditches.

Despite the vigorous bracken growth this summer, progress is being made. It is a Scheduled Monument and is being monitored by Historic England and the very keen, helpful landowner. Although it is on private land, it is very easily seen from the road bridge over the A30. Charles Thomas’s highly readable report of CAS’s 1962 excavation in *Cornish Archaeology* 3 ([https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/volume-3-1964/](https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/volume-3-1964/)) is well worth looking at. *Cornish Archaeology* 15 (1976) includes Sandra Hooper’s report of a Bronze Age ring-cairn excavated ahead of road workings to the south of the henge ([https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/journals/No.15_1976.pdf](https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/journals/No.15_1976.pdf)).
Nearby, and also on private land, is a barrow which is quite impressive in spite of the vegetation cloaking it. The photograph below is looking approximately south towards the china clay waste dumps that cover Goonbarrow, Hensbarrow and Cocksbarrow – names that preserve the pre-industrial heritage of the china clay district. Besides these, and the barrows on Innis Downs, those on Belowda Beacon and Rosenannon Downs would also have been easily visible from here. Quite possibly, the prominence of these features had some use in marking different territories. Just north of the henge itself, the Black Burrow (now disappeared) was a noted feature on the boundary between Luxulyan and Lanivet parishes.

Innis Downs is a very busy place, with heavy traffic on the A30 (possibly following the east-west line of a very old route way) and also on the A391 to and from St Austell. It may have been busy for millennia. A transpeninsular route between Ponts Mill (effectively a south coast landing place until the 18th century) and the River Camel at Nanstallon may have intersected with an east-west route here (a great theory which only lacks one thing: evidence!). It is a rich area archaeologically, even though a stone row and various barrows have disappeared. Until relatively recent times it remained unenclosed and wild, used mostly for grazing, tin-streaming and by travellers desperate to find somewhere less bleak and exposed. Now it is a place to pass through as quickly as possible but once it was a special, perhaps, ceremonial, landscape. It may not have much recognition now, let alone a gift shop or café, but it is easily found and the road schemes that have had such an impact on it have at least led to a large number of detailed, richly illustrated reports that are available free on the Event Record section at https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/community-and-living/mapping/.
SPEAK UP FOR HERITAGE IN HAYLE AND LAUNCESTON

Consultation on major development plans for Hayle and Launceston are underway. These may have significant impacts on heritage and the historic environment, matters which many people hold dear. Below are details on how to find out more and submit opinions to the planning authority.

LAUNCESTON SOUTHERN GROWTH AREA MASTERPLAN

Launceston Town Council, Cornwall Council and local landowners have been working with local architects, Lavigne Lonsdale to create a planning master plan for an allocated site, south of Launceston, Cornwall.

A public consultation period of six weeks is now open and both Launceston Town Council and Cornwall Council seek your views on the Launceston Southern Growth Area Masterplan: Consultation document from 2 September to 14 October 2018.

An exhibition in the town will allow those interested in the masterplan to drop in and ask any question they might have.

Documents
The consultation documents are available at www.cornwall.gov.uk/launcestonplan or at the following locations

- Launceston Town Hall, Western Road, Launceston PL15 7AR
- Launceston Library, Bounsalls Lane, Launceston PL15 9AB

Details of how to comment can be found on the web page www.cornwall.gov.uk/launcestonplan

Exhibition
To be held at Launceston Town Hall, Western Road, Launceston PL15 7AR on
Friday 27 September 2019 from 10am – 3.30pm
Saturday 28 September 2019 from 10am – 1pm

If you have a query and wish to contact the team, call 0300 1234 151 and ask for the Planning Delivery Team.

HAYLE GROWTH AREA MASTERPLAN

Hayle Town Council, Cornwall Council and local landowners have been working with local architects, Lavigne Lonsdale to create a planning master plan for an allocated site, south of Hayle, Cornwall.

A public consultation period of six weeks is now open and both Hayle Town Council and Cornwall Council seek your views on the Hayle Growth Area Masterplan: Consultation document from 2 September to 14 October 2018.

An exhibition in the town will allow those interested in the masterplan to drop in and ask any question they might have.

Documents
The consultation documents are available at www.cornwall.gov.uk/hayleplan or at the following locations
Details of how to comment can be found on the web page [www.cornwall.gov.uk/hayleplan](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/hayleplan)

**Exhibition**
To be held in the Passmore Edwards Institute, 13-15 Hayle Terrace, Hayle TR27 4BU on
Friday **13 September** 2019 from 10am – 4pm
Saturday **14 September** 2019 from 10am – 1pm

If you have a query and wish to contact the team, call 0300 1234 151 and ask for the Planning Delivery Team.

In this, the bicentenary of John Ruskin’s birth, perhaps pressure by those concerned about Cornwall’s heritage and distinctiveness, will mean that any development in these locations matches his wish that:

“*When we build, let us think that we build forever. Let it not be for present delight nor for present use alone. Let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for; and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come when those stones will be held sacred because our hands have touched them, and that men will say, as they look upon the labour and wrought substance of them, “See! This our father did for us.”*”

John Ruskin: *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (1849).

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**CONSERVATION AT CARN EUNY AND PERRANPORTH**

*Adrian Rodda reports on work at two important sites:*

Floor repairs at Carn Euny Courtyard Settlement and Walls at St Piran.

Volunteers joined Win Scutt, curator of English Heritage sites in the South West, to lay fine gravel over the floors of two of the smallest houses. The houses were covered with gravel after the excavations in the 1960s to protect their floors. Some still have remnants of this layer, (Figure 1).
The floors of others needed a new cover. The colour has been criticised as too garish, resembling a sand pit, but a winter will see the colour fade. It is necessary to make the new layer easily recognisable in case the houses are re-excavated - see Figures 2 and 3.

The site is managed by English Heritage and Cornwall Heritage Trust. Admission is free. If you have never seen the fogou entered through House 1, you will be amazed by its construction.

The site is sign-posted off the A30 west of Penzance, but the best way to approach it is to drive almost to Land’s End, turn right at Crows-an-Wra, signposted towards Land’s End airport, and park at Chapel Carn Brea, just at the brow of the hill. Cross the road to a footpath and follow it for about 20 minutes. After a gateway the path forks. Take the right hand fork towards trees and you will find the charming Chapel Carn Euny Holy Well. Then walk back to follow the parallel drier path towards a junction with a wider lane. Turn right and sharp left to the site.
Work has begun on the walls of the iconic St Piran’s Oratory on the sand dunes near the Haven Holiday Camp at Perranporth. Vandals had dislodged stones from its top and the rain was getting into the spaces between stones. Now specialist repairers have begun to fill gaps with lime cement and replace the stones. They will top the walls with turf to absorb rain water and seal the stones. The St Piran Trust would welcome donations towards this work.

Visitors are encouraged. Drive past the Haven entrance and turn sharp left up a lane with plenty of roadside parking. Each lay-by has a gateway onto the dunes. White stones mark a path to St Piran’s Cross and the ruins of the medieval church. Then walk downhill towards the sea and the Oratory comes into view after you have crossed a wooden bridge over a stream, which is currently dry, but not for long if we have a wet Autumn!

Text and photographs by Adrian Rodda
ARCHAEOLOGY OF NONCONFORMISM

In August Ros Hayward and Malcolm Gould of Luxulyan and District Old Cornwall Society organised a visit to Innis Chapel in Luxulyan parish. This simple structure was founded as a Bible Christian Chapel in what had formerly been a Quaker burial ground. Still in use, the chapel and burial ground are lovingly cared for and for those of different beliefs, or none at all, it is a site of great tranquility.

Several tombstones are also Listed, including one to Thomasine Bryant, the mother William Bryant (later O’Bryan) of the founder of the Bible Christians:

As the party left the graveyard an inscription on one of the granite gateposts was spotted. With a little effort (and some spilt blood from scratches) the vegetation was cleared and all of the lettering revealed. Never one to allow a mystery to remain unsolved, Rosy Hanns returned later to take photographs:

The stone has a pinkish tinge, suggesting it might be Luxullianite, but the question arose: who was W.H. Rawe? Andy why did he carve his initials and the date? Ros Hayward took up the quest, poring through online records.

This is Ros Hayward’s report:
William Henry was born at Burlawn in the Parish of St Breock. His father William was living with his family who farmed Gredo Farm, Lanlivery, in 1841 prior to his marriage to William Henry’s mother, Mary Anne Arthur of Egloshayle. I have been unable to find the family in the 1851 Census, either in St Breock or anywhere else! However, William senior’s parents, Walter and Anne, moved from Gredo to St Breock (Burlawn Tregoose) where Walter farmed 70 acres and employed three lads. Walter remained there until he died there and I believe (from the 1911 census attached) that this is where WH was born.

It is therefore unclear where he spent his early years but, in the 1861 census, he is a farmer’s son at Barguse and in 1871 still with his parents at Barguse but his occupation given as a Stonemason’s Labourer. In the 1881 census he is the head of the household, as his father William died in 1878, his occupation is given as farmer and stonemason. On 3 April 1884 William married Ann Williams of Bokiddick. They remained farming Barguse and had two sons, William and Thomas Lawrence. In the 1911 census WH is listed as a farmer and tin dresser. He died on 18 May 1923, still living at Barguse where his son Thomas took over as farmer and spent his life there, dying young in October 1937 at the age of 49 when his widow, Elsie Bertha, nee Brown, took over the farm.

Thomas and Elsie don’t appear to have had any children but Thomas’s brother, William, married Dorothy Jane Ellis who was living at Rock Mill in Luxulyan Valley in 1901 where her father Edgar Ellis was miller. The family had moved to Coldvreathe by 1911 and he was a china clay labourer. William and Dorothy lived in Lockengate, where she was the local midwife, and they had at least one son and two daughters. The family is still believed to be living in the area.

My theory is that William Henry supplied the gateposts to the chapel in 1921. He may have worshipped there or may even have been a local preacher. As a stone mason, he would have had access to such stone. I haven’t been able to find where WH is buried online, perhaps he is at Innis?

Text by Ros Hayward

So, thanks to the tenacity of Rosy and Ros, we have the (nearly) full story behind an inscribed stone. Their next inscribed stone challenge ought to be the one marking Drustanus and Cunomorus – watch this space!
UPDATE ON CHAPEL MILL

In Issue 32 (July 2019), mention was made of the parlous state of Chapel Mill, St Stephen-in-Brannel.


The survey team was fortunate to have available for study such a compact industrial site in a remarkable state of preservation, displaying all the essential features common to the china-stone milling process. Because of its unique qualities in this respect, it is strongly felt that further decay of the structure should be arrested as soon as possible. In the long term, it would be desirable for Chapel Mill to be developed as a small open-air museum of the china-stone industry. A scheme on these lines was considered some years ago, but since then nothing has been done.

Both authors were dismayed to see the photographs in the last issue and Adam sent this comment:

I found the report on Chapel Mill particularly saddening, as John Smith and I (when newly part of CCRA, the precursor to CAU) produced a detailed plane table survey of the site and its components as part of the report on the site that eventually led to it being Listed Grade II* ... The roof wasn't in good condition 25 or so years ago, and access to the site was, to say the least, difficult even then, but the site's currently deteriorated condition should be a matter of particular concern given that it is now the only china stone mill in Britain which still retains most of its equipment and detail - most others (the majority at Tregargus) now being neglected, roofless, empty shells. I hope that by highlighting Chapel Mill's sad state the article may help to promote awareness of its special status and lead to improvements in its management.
Exciting and positive efforts are being undertaken at present, led by Cornwall Council, to allow us to identify features that show Cornwall’s distinctiveness (see below). China-stone milling was a very special activity, much overshadowed by china-clay, so should not be allowed to drop from collective memory. To repeat Adam’s words:

*it is now the only china stone mill in Britain which still retains most of its equipment and detail*

Val and Brian Jacob, and their colleagues in local Old Cornwall Societies have been drawing attention to the state of the building for years. Is it beyond the realm of reasonable hope for something to be done to preserve it?

**UP ON THE DOWNS**

Cornwall Council is developing a Heritage Strategy to celebrate and protect Cornwall’s distinctiveness in an age of rapid change. Information can be found at [https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/strategic-historic-environment-service/heritage-kernow-ertach-kernow/cornish-distinctiveness/](https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/strategic-historic-environment-service/heritage-kernow-ertach-kernow/cornish-distinctiveness/), including an inspirational little booklet:

Although it often seems as Cornwall is under siege from visitors, traffic and predatory developers, there is still much to appreciate. Away from the tourist honeypots there are places where it is easy to value ‘what makes Cornwall Cornish’. Rosenannon Downs in St Wenn parish is a case in point. The Bronze Age barrows on its summit are visible from many places in mid-Cornwall, including from the A30 (view recommended to passengers, not drivers!). From the summit many of the distinctive features noted in the booklet are evident:
‘A beautiful, rugged and exciting natural topography’: view of the Camel estuary from a Rosenannon barrow

‘Rounded downlands rising on the granite to tor-topped nearly mountains’: Bodmin Moor from Rosenannon Downs

Barrow on Rosenannon Downs, with wind turbines beyond – an ancient and changing landscape, showing ‘sustainability and resilience’
‘A uniquely diverse rural, industrial, urban and marine economy, much of it characterised by a particularly Cornish resourcefulness and innovation, adapting to conditions and taking opportunities’: looking south towards the china-clay district over an ancient landscape, much of which is named in the Cornish language.

Roger Smith, 11th September 2019