

The Newsletter of the Network of

Loyal Hunters

Issue 1 • Samhain 2011



The Newsletter of the Network of Ley Hunters

Issue 1, Samhain (1st November), 2011.

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The Network of Ley Hunters is an informal movement for all who are interested in leys and patterns within the landscape. This newsletter is available on annual subscription (four quarterly issues) of £5 (or £10 if from abroad). Bank notes best!

If your subscription is due, an 'X' will follow this sentence. Please subscribe soon so that we print enough copies of the next issue!

Contributions are welcome for the next issue, to appear at Imbolc (1st February), 2012. The deadline for contributions (to L. Main) is 1st December, 2011. For articles and book reviews, please send 16pt typed 'camera ready' copy, single side A4 if possible. For descriptions of walks and leys, please conform to the format of the "Essential Information" on page 4, as listed for Jon Lord's Ley. Please provide a map marking relevant points along the ley. Provide a scale and the direction of north. Give the angle that the ley runs along. Pictures would be welcome.

Forthcoming Moots in 2012

March 23-25 (Fri-Sun) AVEBURY (Wiltshire) with guided tour by MICHAEL DAMES (more in next issue).

June 20-22 (Wed-Fri) CARN INGLI (Pembrokeshire) Summer solstice.

September 18-25 (Tues-Tues) ORKNEY at the autumn equinox.

PLUS weekends exploring THE GLASTONBURY ZODIAC (Somerset). Contact L. Main.



WELCOME!

This Newsletter exists as a forum for all who are interested in leys and patterns within the landscape. We recognise that there are many opinions and ideas and hope to promote positive, harmonious co-operation to extend our knowledge on this important subject. We also hope to attract newcomers and to direct them to sources of knowledge which are too good to be forgotten. Going through old address files for this venture, I came across John Michell, followed by Hamish Miller. How poignant! For those of us who knew them and read their books. Talking to people interested enough in leys to join our Pilgrimage (see page 8), I discovered they hadn't heard of these two giants in our field, let alone read their books. Similarly when I walked in the Glastonbury area with like-minded souls, I realised that they had never heard of the Glastonbury Zodiac or of Mary Caine, the author of the book about it (rightly subtitled Key to the Mysteries of Britain). Somebody has to keep such knowledge alive and to add to it. Let it be us! Personally, I believe our message is vital because it opens people's eyes to the living nature of the landscape and hence to honouring the goddess. This spiritual dimension is reflected in the informality of the Network of Ley Hunters. This first issue of our Newsletter has been funded by generous donations. We are all volunteers, and if any profit is ever made, it will be used to spread the the message to all who can receive it. All donations received by October, 2011, have been used for this Samhain (November) issue. Everybody is now asked to send their subscription (only £5 per annum, £10 if from abroad) in good time so that we know how many copies of Issue 2 (Imbolc, 1st February, 2012) to print. PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY.

Laurence Main

The Cover Story

Our cover picture is from an original painting by Graham Griffiths, author of Behold Jerusalem! (see page 18). It is of the Hag Stone at Avebury, where our Moot is to be held next spring (see page 2). In Graham's own words:

I found her well away from the stones which attract the tourists – I wanted to be alone! So from dawn to dusk we held communion, silent exchanges, not deep mystical stuff but of frivolous down to earth things, which can, in their own right, be even more magical. We mused the foolery of crows; how pleasant the sound of white washing slapping in the wind; giggled at the absurdities of hats and the question as to whether androids really would count sheep as they were shutting themselves down for the night. The hours passed in soft November drizzle shot through with sudden beams of ochre light, and my hands seemingly did the rest without effort. I named her The Hag Stone – what with her great one-eyed head hung below hunched shoulders and those flat breasts dripping the residue of the drizzle down her sagging belly. When the first star appeared, I just had time to record her firework display of an aura and she was done.

Jon Lord's Pembrokeshire Ley

Jon Lord offers an intriguing ley for this edition. I thought I knew a bit about Pembrokeshire, but this one is new to me and fascinating.

Essential information:

County: Pembrokeshire. Ordnance Survey Explorer OL35. Grid references: SM985360 to SN008369. Distance: 1½ miles. Angle of ley: 63 degrees. Public transport information: Bus 343 from Fishguard Square to Llanychaer (Bridgend Inn) on Fridays only. Telephone 01239-820751 for times (Or 0871-200-2233 Traveline).

Now read about it in Jon Lord's own words...

Much is written about Wales, the myths and legends, the language, its people and of course, the many castles. Sometimes in corners of dusty second hand book shops under the headings of history, archaeological or esoteric may be found the occasional pearls. Wild Wales by George Borrow, The History of Wales in English by John Davies, the Mabinogion as well as Saints and Stones by Damian W Davies and Anne Eastham – all essential reading to provide the intrepid visitor some small insight into a culture so rich and varied that for the more adventurous there is also much more to find if you let your instincts lead you off the usual tracks.

The Gwaun valley & the Trecwn gorge.

The village of Llanychaer sits beside the fast flowing river Aer in Cwmgwaun which runs down to Fishguard (Abergwaun). In 1582 Pope Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian calendar. This was to be achieved by lopping 11 days from the existing format and so when 2nd of September was then followed by the 14th there was much unrest. However, not everyone followed this edict. In the Cwmgwaun the 11 days were not lost, as the people of the Gwaun valley decided they would stay with the Julian calendar and even today still celebrate New Year on the 13th January!

Llanllawer Holy Well & the church of St David, (OS SM 987 360) are above the valley floor about ½ a mile from the village bridge and the Bridge Inn - Pont inn of Llanychaer. Also opposite the well and ½ mile west along and up the lane leading to Myndd Dinas are the aligning stones of Parc y Meirw (OS SM 998 359) - *the field of the dead* - the longest aligning stone row in Wales. In 'Sun, Moon & Stonehenge,' Robin Heath wrote that "these align to the minor lunar standstill as the full Moon set by slipping down the side of Mount Leinster, nearly 80 miles away in Ireland, an event only observable once in every 18.6 years and seen by Robin in January 1997" – this Lunar event is called the metonic cycle.

When Laurence Main, Karen Mcgeachan and I visited the well, set in a small paddock of wild flowers and grasses on the Summer solstice of 2011, we found that it was dry as was the spring that usually runs across the road by the junction of the lane leading to Parc y Meirw. However, the many 'cluties' tied to the round vaulted construction and wooden entrance gate bore testament to the many who have stopped by to leave their devotions and wishes.

Beside the well is the now disused church of St David – originally a mediaeval structure set in a stone-walled oval churchyard on rising ground. The building, dating from around the 9th century, was poorly re-built in the 19th and now stands fore-lorn with holes in the roof and a rusting entry gate enclosing waist-high weeds and brambles that cover the graves. On the stone gate posts are carved two wheel crosses probably of the 9th or 10th century in origin.

Behind the church is a small hillock that is quite steep, the high point being 130m OD, at the base of which is a flattish upright stone aligned almost east-west. Its dimensions above ground are approximately 3ft 8inch wide by 2ft 10inch tall by 8-10 inches thick. On the face of the south side can be found the shape of The Hag*. On the top, facing east and looking towards the sky is a face of youth and expectancy. Looking west and up the hill, is the face of a mother – the trio of life in one stone – virgin, mother, hag. Although no test has been carried out by me I believe the stone to be of Dolerite – bluestone which there is much of in the area of Llanwnda above Goodwick.

Standing behind the stone looking east and over a small field, can be seen 3 large pine trees set in a row to the side of the lane and behind them on top of the Myndd Dinas is the stone breast of Carn fawr.** On closer inspection of the 'hillock' it can be seen to have been artificially created and standing on its top, magnificent views of the gorge are seen to the south as well as the iron-aged enclosure that is behind the Pont inn. Some years ago on the northern slope in

the adjoining field to this hillock facing towards the caravan and camping site above the gwaun valley was found a beautiful ceremonial polished stone axe. This is now in Scolton museum near Havorfordwest. On the hillock itself can be found a number of small stones - none of which are in-situ elements but appear to have been taken to the site for some ritual or ceremonial purpose. Conversely, they could have been brought up in a picnic hamper to weigh down the picnic rug! In my possession from this site is an oval flattish stone approximately the size of a man's hand - it is of conglomerate including quartz and has a copper glow to one side when wet - a picnicker with taste perhaps! There are a number of depressions around the top of the hillock and when I first visited in June 2004 I experienced a number of sensations including 'hearing the sound' of many happy young children. This was rather strange as I was at this site with just one other adult person and to all intents and purposes there was no-one else anywhere near. I have since returned here on regular occasions and experienced similar sensations.

In June this year as we approached this site I recounted my experiences to Laurence and expressed my belief that it was a site linked with fertility and had been used for generations for that purpose - hence the stone and the alignment. Laurence took out his compass and on checking the alignment found it to be on the line of Beltaine.

I guess it must have been pretty busy up here on 'Mayday' from the sounds of those many laughing children that I heard and the 'virgin-mother-hag' stone perhaps stands as a testament to its purpose.

Getting there:- Using your own transport: - From Fishguard take the A487 to Cardigan road. After the sharp left hand bend and before the 'Lady Stone' at Dinas Cross take the minor lane on the right signposted Llanychaer. There is a small lay-bye where you can park opposite the metal bar gate that leads to the church. Buses also run from the cannon in Fishguard Square that go to Llanychaer taking the B4313 road. Opposite the Pont inn is an enclosed recreational area where you can picnic if you so wished. There are no public toilet facilities except in the inn.

"The Pont inn is usually open all day and serves food. Whenever I have been here the fire has always been going - even on a hot day! Beside the inn is a waterwheel in a now distressed state but do take time to look at the flowers and excess of ornament outside the old village post office next to the inn."

* The Hag stone depicted in this way can also be found at other locations in the Preselis

** This 'breast stone' can be seen from a large number of sites in and around Llanwnda above Goodwick and is significant to those locations.

Jon Lord

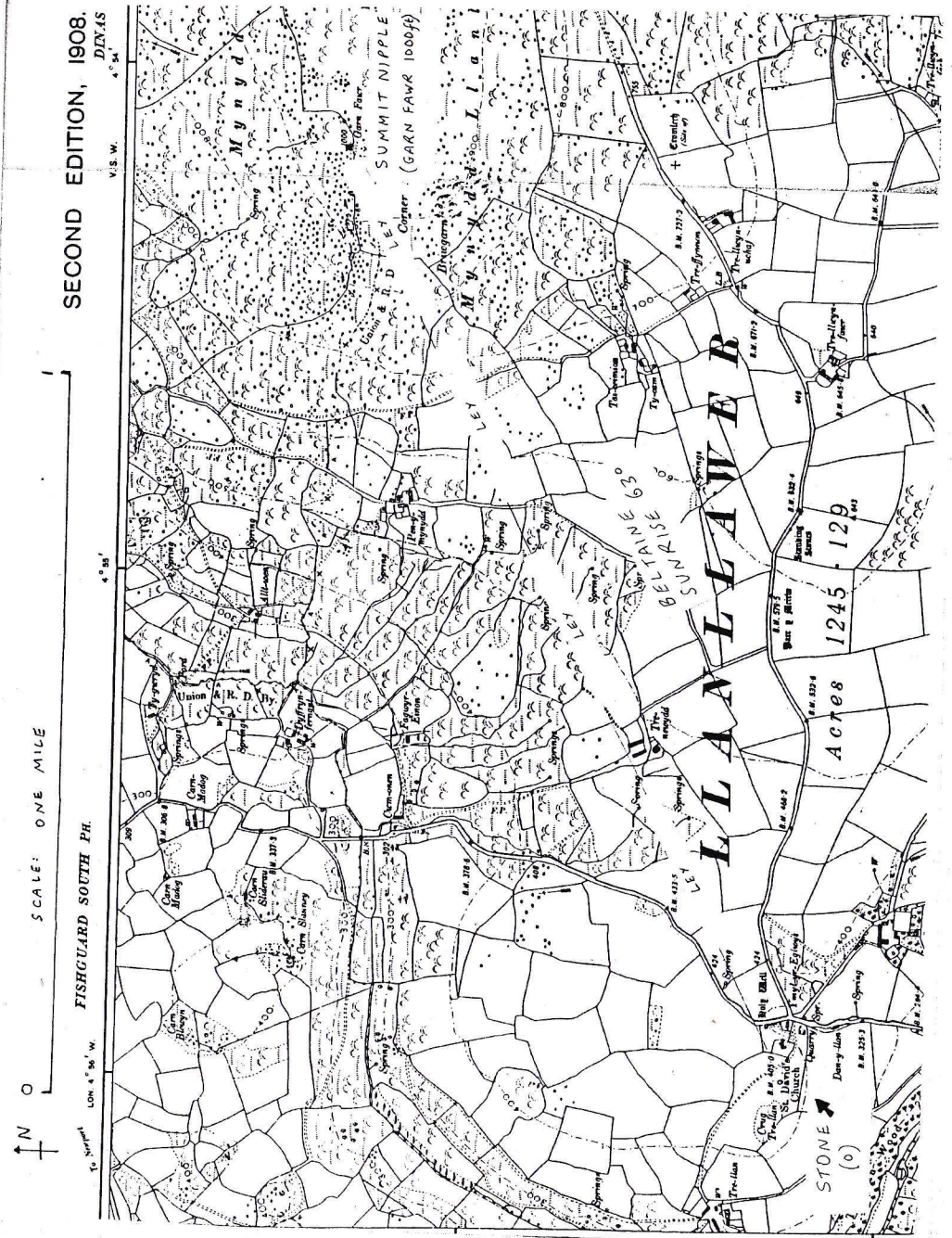
Acknowledgements:

Robin Heath, *Sun, Moon & Stonehenge*. Bluestone Press.

Dillwyn Miles. *Portrait of Pembrokeshire*. Robert Hale, London

Damian Walford Davies, Anne Eastham, *Saints and Stones*. Gomer Press

Jon Lord was educated at Sevenoaks in Kent and following a four-year design course in Maidstone, worked as a graphic designer for over thirty years in advertising and marketing. He has lived in Kent all his life and now resides in the village of Wrotham (pronounced RootEm) near to the Medway valley megaliths. He has spent many years studying the landscape of Pembrokeshire and in particular the area around Strumble Head and the Preselis. He joined the Society of Leyhunters in 2003 and is the current Treasurer.



Pilgrimage

The Ley, The Druid, and the Little Old Lady

By Judith Adams

333 miles so far! We have walked every step of the way, following the ley from Portland in Dorset to Blaenau Ffestiniog in Gwynedd. We are headed for Ynys Mon, Iona, Benbecula, and beyond.

We began the pilgrimage in November with a splendid introductory walk around Portland's holy wells, stones, leys, and sacred sites with Gary Biltcliffe and Caroline Hoare. Laurence Main decided to walk the "alignment of islands" illustrated on page 134 of Gary Biltcliffe's book Spirit of Portland. Laurence is an experienced long distance walker, Druid, and ley hunter. I am the little old lady, and this is my first pilgrimage. We have been joined along the way by many companions, with whom we have walked, dowsed, dreamed, laughed, told stories, and (very occasionally) endured the hail storms and the uphill climbs (highest so far – 2197 feet). You are invited to come with us and share the adventure.

We spent several months getting to know and understand the ley, which is named for the Children of Llyr (Shakespeare's King Lear). The ley is Manawydan and is seen as a clear deep blue. The male current is his brother the king Bran and is a royal purple. The female current is their sister Branwen and is a sparkling gold. You can read their stories in the Mabinogion.

The ley Manawydan is a straight line from Church Ope Cove on Portland to Iona. The male and female currents coil around the ley, approaching and wandering off, merging to meet and kiss at sacred spots. Gary plotted the ley for us using Google Earth, which follows the curvature of the earth rather than the flat plane of a paper map. Laurence drew the line (at an angle of 340 degrees) on the Ordnance Survey maps. Our task is to find and walk the ley and the currents in the landscape.

Maps are tools and guides. The only way to really know the ley is to walk the land, experiencing the subtle shifts of energy through your body and soul. As we walk the earth, we awaken the spirit of the land. As we pay attention to the earth, it stirs, opens, smiles, radiates its joy (and sometimes sorrow). Just like a person, it blooms when we give it our attention and love. And it returns the love to us many times over.

This pilgrimage is dedicated to the Archangel Gabriel, who is the overseer of the karmic law of purity. The ley is Gabriel's Line of Hope. It is a beacon of light and peace and joy across the land. As we walk and focus our attention on the ley, we are making our small contribution to returning purity to the earth. And we in turn are healed by the peace and light we see.

It is not always possible to walk exactly on the ley, as we can walk only on footpaths, roads, lanes, rights of way, and open access land. Laurence plots the route as close to the ley as possible, on it or parallel to it or crossing it, as we walk in the direction it goes.

When our route meets the ley, we feel tingling in our hands and third eye and see the colours of the ley or of the currents. Manawydan, for example, looks like a laser beam of pure blue light. This can be tested with the dowsing rods. But as we become ever more familiar with the look and feel of the ley, we tend to leave the rods in the rucksack and rely on feeling. It is a wonderful sensation of recognition as we return to the ley after wandering off it along the route.

Our two longest days were fifteen miles each. We walked from Yeovil to Somerton with Alan Bowers through mud and showers and were welcomed at the end of the walk by Annie Jessop in her car. Another long walk was in brilliant sunshine from Glastonbury to Axbridge. As evening drew on we tuned in to The Archers for our daily fix, and just as we were crossing Cradle Bridge we heard the news of the birth of Emma and Ed's daughter.

We have walked in some places of great sadness. We have seen the earth hurting under processions of pylons and along the routes of gas pipelines. We have seen mountains ripped apart by mining and quarrying. We have come across places of human misery. We leave our blessings as we pass.

We have walked in some places of great joy. We basked in pure golden light at the ancient monastery of Woodspring. We followed a fairy path downhill toward Llangors Lake. Sian Meredudd dowsed with us at the ancient church of Llangasty-Talyllyn on the southern shore of Llangors. Sian dowsed a Beltaine sunrise ley here. Interestingly this church was orientated at an angle of 63 degrees. Then we enjoyed some of the most pleasant walking of the whole trip, following the River Wye. Alerted to its presence by Sian, we found a dolphin stone smiling in a pasture near Boughrood.

On August bank holiday we walked down the narrow valley of Cwm Pennant in furious rain and came upon the jolly gathering of a Spirit Horse camp. As we climbed the steep 1000 feet out of the valley on the postman's path, we looked down on a rainbow. North of Coed-y-Brenin, as we were eating our Beanfeast and tomato sandwiches, we saw two unicorns cavorting in the mist.

We have dreamed on sacred sites where the ley and currents meet. We have had dreams of dedication and testing and initiation. On Dundon Beacon we dreamed of the children of Llyr and saw Bran on his throne on the sacred mound which is also the third eye of Jesus. We camped at Twmbarlwm in Gwent with Liza Lewelyn and Martin Braniff. All four of us dreamed of Bran brandishing his sword, but Liza and Martin also saw Bran chopping me up into pieces (which prophecy was followed by several months in which I was severely challenged).

We have met people along the way. We talked to bankers from Sri Lanka above Llyn Clywedog. We explored Llanidloes with Sue Lowe and bade farewell to her in the Hafren Forest. Anne Bowen-Jones and 'Buj' accompanied us over the rolling hills of old Montgomeryshire, crowned by ancient Scots Pine trees. Puzzling over some Welsh language posters in Blaenau Ffestiniog, we met a Welsh speaker who took us on a tour of an abandoned slate mine. We have been photographed. We have been both admired and disapproved of. We have kept going.

There have been times when I thought my legs would fall off and times I thought it would not be possible to get any wetter. There have been many times when I felt like giving up. And there have been many times when I felt the purest, most radiant, spectacular joy.

The pilgrimage continues. The next bit, over the mountains of Snowdonia, may be the hardest walking. Then comes the gentle sacred island of Ynys Mon. And then we are off to more islands in a chain. And no, we do not expect to walk on water. We will be taking ferries and stopping at each island to follow the ley. Do come with us.



From 'The Spirit of Portland' by Gary Biltcliffe



An alignment of sacred isles.

Brick Lane – Work in Progress. (date of article: 5th Sept 2011)

By Sue Pine, Earth Energies Dowser.

Once the most dangerous and crime infested part of the city, London's old East End has been undergoing a renaissance. Spitalfields market now rivals Covent Garden as the most exciting place for a Sunday shopping stroll. Where dark and dusty shops once sold second hand clothing to the poorest, snazzy boutiques now display the latest retro styles. The old London pie and eel shops have been replaced, in Brick Lane, by the most dazzling array of exotic food to be found anywhere in London – and it's very reasonably priced as well.

Ambling along Brick Lane about lunchtime on Saturday 3rd September. I was instantly aware that something might be about to 'go down'. There was a massive police presence on the street. The English Defence League, having been banned from marching in the aftermath of the recent riots, was planning instead to hold a static demonstration just round the corner in Whitechapel. The police were determined that nothing was going to get out of hand. An unusual number of Asian youths were congregating down a side street out of sight of the police, not starting trouble but ready if trouble should begin.

At this point, my dowser's senses went on the alert. I was walking through energy lines and I did not like what was happening to them. I can dowse without equipment (Just as well – I'd probably have been arrested if I'd been waving bits of wire about!) and I noticed a very angry 'feel' to those lines. I got the impression of a dark red background colour, with peaks of yellowish energy rising out of the earth, like static flames, less than a metre apart. **I have no doubt whatsoever that I was witnessing an interaction between the earth energy and the collective consciousness of humanity.**

Very early next morning, I was back with my rods to explore that location in greater detail. I found three energy lines converging on the health centre for the homeless, which was closed at that time of the morning. I suspect there is a node or an energy drain where they meet, which could turn out to be of considerable significance for London's energy system. It was possible to pick up a hint of this in the alley beside the health centre. The architecture of the building features pyramids and sharp corners and is affecting the energy. On the other side of this alley is the Sheraz restaurant, formerly the Frying Pan pub, where Mary Nichols, one of the victims of Jack the Ripper, spent some of her last hours on 31st August, 1888. One can only speculate as to whether the Ripper himself once lurked down that alley, awaiting a victim; and whether, at that point, the earth energies turned toxic and spurred him on to evil deeds.

There is so much we need to learn about how earth energies operate. I shall be watching this particular place with interest!

Book Review

Astro-Theology & Sidereal Mythology

By Michael Tsarion

Publisher: Taroscopes, 2007, 2008 (2nd. Ed), 238pp, paperback, b&w illus, ISBN: B00467C3EO

This book is dedicated to Gerald Massey, author of *Ancient Egypt, Light of the World* and who was said, in the *Book of Druidry* by Ross Nichols to have been one of the great Chiefs of the Druid Order. This book started out as an appendix to Michael's larger work, *Irish Origins of Civilisation*, but it was an appendix that quickly got so large that it turned into a book in its own right. The book makes reference throughout to Massey's strong arguments that our modern Christian culture and religion was descended from ancient Egyptians. Michael, however, adds in the extra dimension that since - as he argues in his *Irish Origins* - the ancient Egyptian culture and religion was strongly connected to Irish Druidism, that our modern religion is necessarily descended and derived from both the Druids of old and the Egyptians. This is of course a controversial point and Massey himself was not believed nor accepted by mainstream academia. To such as would reject the ideas of Massey, Michael is quick to point out that those in power have an agenda in keeping hidden the true ancient Druidic/Egyptian roots of modern day state-run orthodox Christianity. The agenda, Michael argues is essentially this: those who have the knowledge have the power over those who do not. Like Gerald Massey before him, Michael Tsarion has an axe to grind with those who deny these ancient roots of modern culture, and he attacks their claims by piling on evidence upon evidence to support his theory, which turns out to be both fascinating and elegantly expressed in this book. The book contains many useful illustrations throughout.

The main difference between this book and the *Irish Origins of Civilisation* is that this book focuses less on history of the Druids and, as the title itself suggests, places its study more on the *connections* between what was observed by mankind in the heavens (stars, planets, zodiac, positions of the Sun and Moon, etc) and what was written symbolically into the scriptural fabric of theology. The thesis throughout, very well argued, is that the ancients did this deliberately and purposefully as they understood Man to be a reflection of the heavenly divinity; the controversial aspect of the book is that Michael claims (as did Jordan Maxwell and others before him) that Christianity followed suit and similarly based its teachings on the movements of bodies in the heavens. Michael points out in the book that he has no problem of this in itself and in fact argues that all high religions have always done this, his problem with this is that, firstly, most people are entirely ignorant of this as regards their own religion of Christianity and, secondly, that apparently the religious leaders wish the masses to remain ignorant of this.

Among many other points, the book discusses how modern religion, and culture, has greatly played down the role of the feminine in life, and how this started with the suppression of the worship (which we see in the ancient so-called "pagan" religions of the Egyptians and Druids) of the Goddess alongside God. Michael points out how this loss of the Divine Feminine resulted in a disparaging of women, of nature, and also of the necessary female traits (the Yin aspects) of nurturing, introspection and silence and meditation, in favour of a culture based on strength, war, domination and power as an end in itself. The concept of Astro-theology is essentially a concept of recognising the divinity of the physical universe around us, of nature and of the earth, as the earth is one such body in the womb of the Goddess, we now call "space".

The sub-title "sidereal mythology" refers simply to a mythos based on the stars; this does not imply that what is associated with that mythos, namely the teachings of religion are false or deceptive, but simply that that myth of any sort should be seen as an allegory and not necessarily an actual fact; and the book does not deny that behind the sidereal myth is often concealed a great spiritual teaching and wisdom. On a positive note, Michael argues that Christianity can continue in the future as a system of faith and beauty, but it must first awaken the masses to its true meaning and origins.

The book is currently only available via Michael's website, see: www.astrotheology.com.



Of Legend and Landscape

By Laurence Main

Most people come to Mawddwy for its magnificent walking. This south-eastern corner of Snowdonia National Park is rich in outstanding scenery and inviting footpaths but without the crowds and commercialisation of Yr Wyddfa (Snowdon). Walking in unspoilt countryside can bring you in touch with the living spirit of the land. Open yourself and you can gain a much richer experience. Look at the landscape through new eyes and appreciate the ancient stories to realize a challenging truth. Mawddwy is the womb of a goddess. Because of this fact it is also where King Arthur fought his last battle. Evidence abounds for both statements. In an age of spiritual ignorance and prejudice it is first necessary to escape the confinements of current convention. A good walk in the countryside can help.

Check Ordnance Survey Explorer OL 23, with grid reference SH 859139 being where buses from Machynlleth and Dolgellau stop right at the entrance to Celyn-brithion campsite (01650-531344). Here, too, is Pont Minllyn, a packhorse bridge dating from the 1630s. The river is the Afon Dyfi (do pronounce 'f' like 'v') diving like a dove or divine messenger from the Arans to the sea. I have several favourite routes up the 2974ft summit of Aran Fawddwy, but only yesterday I thought I had found a stunning new one. Then I remembered I had seen the view some thirty years before in the company of Tom Jones.

Tom was a local farmer and part-time Snowdonia National Park warden in the crucial days when there was no public access to the Arans. We sorted that out in the end. Tom taught me

much before he died in 1996. He was a repository of the old local knowledge so lovingly cherished in remote places like Llanymawddwy before the advent of television. Tom told me about the 'cannwyll corff' or corpse candle and of a phantom funeral or 'toili,' witnessed by his relative Margaret Lewis of Llwyngwilym (died 1958). He also took me to the grave of Llywelyn, a giant strongman who toured the fairs of the 1700s to win competitions and amass a huge fortune. He lies near the ancient yew in Llanymawddwy churchyard. By ancient I mean at least 3000 years. St Tydecho founded the church in 518.

Stories of giants abound in the Arans. Not least of Rhita, whom the young Arthur slew (Rhita's grave is at SH 912244 according to Richie Davies, another former local part-time SNP warden and a friend of Tom). The young Arthur (whose homeland was Gwent) was brought up just over the Arans with his foster-brother Cai at Caer Gai (as acknowledged by Spencer in his Faery Queen). Also living immediately north of the Arans near the lake that bears her husband's name, that's Llyn Tegid (Bala Lake), around 500, was Ceridwen. Most of the tourists who walk in Mawddwy have never heard of her. If you wish to really appreciate this land, however, it is important to know of Ceridwen.

Ceridwen was a goddess who took on human incarnation and gave birth to an ugly son. To compensate him for this, she determined to bestow upon him inspiration, imagination, and knowledge. It took a year to collect the rare herbs for her potent brew since each one had to be picked at full moon. She set her servant little Gwion, the son of a blacksmith, to stir the cauldron. But he neglected this task and the essence of the

concoction spat out as three drops, which Gwion licked. He'd taken what was intended for Ceridwen's ugly son. Now knowing all things, Gwion knew that Ceridwen (being a goddess) knew what had happened, and a chase with much shape-shifting ensued. Finally he became a grain of wheat, which Ceridwen, in the shape of a black hen, swallowed. Nine months later, Ceridwen gave birth – Gwion was born again out of the goddess! Not having the heart to kill the babe, she dumped him on her southern neighbour by putting him in a bag in the Dyfi. The source of this river is Creiglyn Dyfi, just below the peak of Aran Fawddwy and the watershed which divides Mawddwy from the land of Ceridwen and her husband Tegid. So Gwion bobbed through Mawddwy down to Ynyslas, where Elphin was fishing at Beltaine (May Day). Because of his radiant brow, Elphin named this baby Taliesin. Elphin and Taliesin are historical characters, linked with Maelgwn Gwynedd (reigned 517-547).

The relevant thing to take from this story is that the baby floated down the Dyfi, with the river acting as a birth canal. The valley at Dinas Mawddwy is shaped like a womb. In my guidebooks of the early 1990s, I was referring to Mawddwy as being like a womb, and in my talks I was connecting this to the Taliesin legend. So when, in 2004, I came across the book Behold Jerusalem! By Graham Griffiths it was easy for me to endorse the artistic author's identification of Dinas Mawddwy as being the womb of the goddess Ceridwen, being the Virgo figure in a terrestrial zodiac covering most of Britain. By living landscape I mean an intelligent goddess who tries to teach us things.

Graham Griffiths' Ceridwen has her head in Anglesey,

complete with a sacred ureaus formed by Holy Island. Go on, have a look at the map! Her arm points to Bardsey (the seed of hope – but that is another story). This landscape goddess' birth canal is the valley of the Dyfi. The Taliesin tale is a clear vindication of the Ceridwen in the landscape and places her womb at Mawddwy. Our ancestors had no problem accepting such supernatural things. We are handicapped by notions of the earth being merely a collection of chemicals. The same could be said about your body. I put it to you that the evidence for the supernatural is there in the landscape and the legends of the land.

Ceridwen and Tegid's ugly son Morfran is recorded in Culhwch and Olwen in The Mabinogion as being a survivor of Camlan, King Arthur's last battle. The other named survivors are also local to Mawddwy. Placename evidence and local tradition also indicates that that the battle was fought here. Bryn Cleifion (hillside of the wounded) overlooks Maes y Camlan (the battlefield at SH 857132). Arthurian place names and legends can be found in many places, but surviving nuggets of information such as the names of the combatants are specific to this place and not elsewhere. Many Arthurian authors recognise this. Their theories differ, but when it comes to the location of Camlan, this is favourite. If you are interested in Arthur, I've written fully in my book King Arthur's Camlan, pointing out that 'this is one piece of the jigsaw that can be surely placed.' Of chief interest to the walker in Mawddwy is that Camlan was really a fight between the patriarchal Roman Catholic party of Illtyd, sent by the pope to influence Arthur, and goddess druidical spirituality as championed by Maelgwn Gwynedd. Where more appropriate for such a battle than at the entrance to the womb of the landscape goddess? Another ancient yew (this

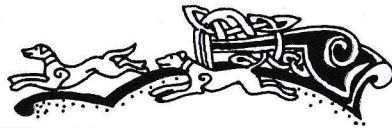
time only 1700 years old) stands in the churchyard of Mallwyd, whose porch is adorned with mysterious bones thought to be evidence of ancient goddess worship. The church dates from 520 and, like Llanydawddwy, was built by St Tydecho, the nephew of King Arthur. Arthur died in the church in the early hours of 24 June 537. At the entrance to the womb of the landscape goddess.

Read more in King Arthur's Camlan available for £4.95 post free from Laurence Main – see page 2 (cheque payable to Laurence Main).


Behold Jerusalem! is available at the special offer price of £10 post free from Graham Griffiths, The Bower, East Budleigh, Devon, EX9 7DQ (cheque payable to Graham Griffiths).

* * *

Laurence Main will lead a walk of five miles, including dowsing at Camlan, on Saturday, 7 January, 2012. Start from the entrance gates to the Meirion Mill, Dinas Mawddwy, (SH 859 139) at 12 noon. A further walk will be held on Wednesday, 15 February, 2012, starting at 12:35pm (when the 36 bus arrives from Machynlleth).



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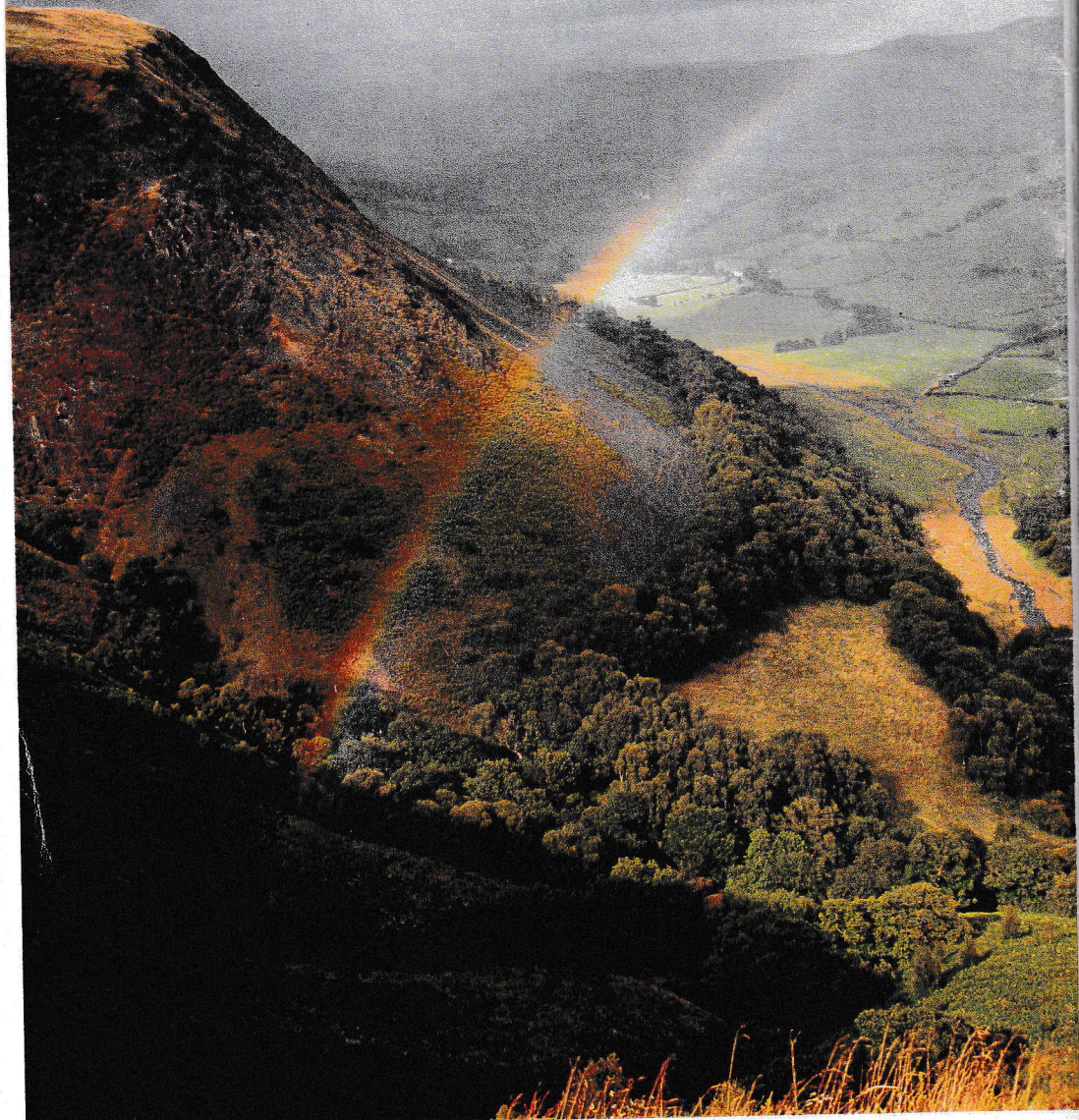
TOUCHSTONE, J. Goddard, 1 St Paul's Terrace, Easton, Wells, Somerset, BA5 1DX (£4 p.a. payable to J. Goddard)

A SUSSEX LEY

From Dave Swann, 27 Hunter Close, Gosport, Hants, PO13 9XY, Telephone 012392 527690

For leyhunters in or around the Sussex area, a line runs from Chichester Cathedral SU860049 eastwards through Tangmere church SU901062 and Slindon church SU960083, through the site of an ancient settlement SU998097 and past tumuli at Kithurst Hill TQ080126. The line runs at 70degE (grid). The same line runs westwards from Chichester, through Cobnor House SU790024 to South Hayling church SZ721000. I have only just noticed this line on an OS map so I have no further information but will be visiting the sites during the next few weeks.

The line above runs almost, but not quite, parallel to another line about 4 miles to the north of it. On this second line the churches of West Dean SU861126, Singleton SU879130, Sutton SU979155, Coldwaltham TQ025166 and West Chilington TQ090184 all lie directly on the line and the church at Stoughton SU800115 sits less than half a mile north of it. This line runs at 76degE (grid) and it can be dowsed at all of the churches (including Stoughton!) The line appears to be a section of the dowsable line running from St Michaels Mount (approximately) in Cornwall to Deal Castle in Kent. I shall be doing some research into this line where it runs through Dorset, Hampshire and West Sussex during this winter and I shall be very interested to hear, through the newsletter, of any information that any readers may have relating to any part of this line. I'm sure that many leyhunters have already done work on this line, there may even be a book about it, but I don't know if it even has a name! Any help most welcome.



Cwm Pennant near Dylife, Powys (see Pilgrimage pp 8-11)