

The Newsletter of the Network of **Loyal Hunters**

Issue 22 – Imbole 2017

£2.50



St. Meilog's Cross, Llowes, Powys (SO192417) by Frances Nottingham

The Newsletter of the Network of Ley Hunters Issue 22, Imbolc (1st February) 2017

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www.networkofleyhunters.co.uk This is not interactive, no email! Snail mail and telephone calls always welcome.

The Network of Ley Hunters is an informal movement for all who are interested in leys and patterns within the landscape. The importance of this in these critical times may be that many find their eyes opened to the living nature of the landscape and are then led to act accordingly.

This newsletter is available on annual subscription of £15 (or £30 if from abroad). This brings you four quarterly issues. Please send a cheque or postal order payable to the Network of Ley Hunters. Bank notes are also welcome.

If your subscription is due an "X" will follow now.

Please subscribe soon so that we print enough copies of the next issue. Please **PRINT** your name and address clearly. Thank you!

Contributions are welcome for future issues. Please send 14pt typed camera ready copy on a single side of A4 with 1 inch margins. Pictures and diagrams are welcome. Remember, **we** will reduce to A5. Please contact the editor re length and subject, or if you need help with typing. Volunteer typists are also most welcome to contact us. We have early deadlines because we are often away on Vision Quests and Pilgrimages (which you are welcome to join). We are delighted to read about your local leys, but please remember that we are not all familiar with your territory. Please provide six figure grid references and details of relevant Ordnance Survey Explorer maps (1:25,000). Don't forget the letters of your 100km square. The grid reference for Stonehenge, for example, is SU 123422 (O.S. Explorer 130).

A major function of the Network is our Moots and Field Trips. Apart from the interesting places visited and the expert speakers you can hear, these are good ways to meet other ley hunters. We have much to teach each other. By coming together as a group we hire buses and drivers for our trips, and even book carriages on sleeper trains to and from Scotland and Cornwall. Apart from encouraging group spirit, providing transport for all, and being better for the environment, buses allow us to be dropped off and picked up on narrow lanes where there is no room to park a car. Early booking helps us to organise buses and drivers. Our Moots are also located with regard to public transport and affordable accommodation, including a campsite where we can be grouped together. We try to provide vegan food at Moots.

IMPORTANT PEMBROKESHIRE MOOT NEWS

All places on our field trips are now fully booked. You can still attend our Saturday Moot with speakers. Tickets cost £45 each. We now have extra speakers.

A BONUS (or two!)

Memorial Hall, Newport.

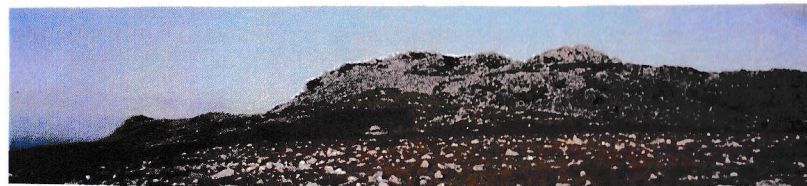
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O.S. Explorer OL35.

Our Moot is being extended on Saturday, 17 June. New timings:

- 9.00 am Doors open for stallholders only to set up
- 9.30 am Doors open to the public
- 10:00 am Eileen Roche speaking on Leyland
- 11.15 am Refreshment interval
- 11.30 am Hugh Newman speaking on Giants of Ancient Britain
- 12.45 pm Lunch interval – see below *
- 2.00 pm Megan Wingfield speaking on Lady Mary's Journey
- 2.45 pm Robin Heath speaking on Temple in the Hills – Discovering the Original Stonehenge
- 4.00 pm Refreshment interval
- 4.15 pm Maria Wheatley speaking on Elongated Skulls of Stonehenge
- 5.30 pm Tea interval
- 6.00 pm Caroline Wise speaking on Finding Elen
- 7.15 pm Refreshment interval
- 7.30 pm Susan Raven speaking on Working with Elementals
- 8.45 pm Finish

*A vegan hot meal will be available in the hall at lunchtime. Booking forms for this have been distributed. If for some reason you need a booking form (and booking in advance is **essential**), please write to Ros McGarry, Cegin Dan-y-Mynydd, Bentinck, Newport, Pembrokeshire, SA42 0PU (**enclosing an sae**). Drinks and snacks, including vegan cake, will be on sale in the hall, with soya milk available for teas. **NO ALCOHOL!**

Whilst in Wales, visit Aberystwyth to see the Holy Grail (see page 35).

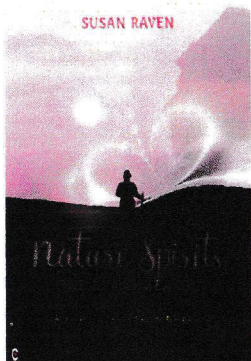


The Sleeping Goddess of Carn Ingli, Newport, Pembrokeshire (L. Main)

Communicating and Co-creating with the Intelligence in Nature

by Susan Raven

"Every single atom is in communication with every other atom connected through wormhole structures in the vacuum. Everything is highly organised, this is why Life can emerge... there is an agency making beings everywhere in the great co-ordinated dance." Nassim Haramein



An increasing number of talented and brave scientists are beginning to use the term 'beings' in their discourse, and this marks a major step towards mending a very significant link in the chain between the worlds of spirit and matter. Whether one uses a current term like 'vacuum' or 'zero-point', or one uses a more traditional word like 'ether', this vast, malleable, highly conductive and conscious realm is now being discussed openly. Our cultural history in the West shows us that from the 17th century onwards knowledge of the ether was made to disappear, along with the elementals and nature spirits who inhabit it.

So, let us look with a clear and unsentimental gaze at what an elemental is. An elemental can be described as a nexus of subtly primed consciousness and vitality working at the junction between spirit and matter. And a nature spirit? A nature spirit can be described as an organizing intelligence within and behind physical nature that oversees the order and measure of material form, and the setting of limits to matter. These hard-working beings are programmed and created by a sublime hierarchy of advanced consciousness, and their task is to carry out the instructions emanating from a realm of archetypes and formative forces. There are many steps down from the realm of the archetypes, and the great philosopher, scientist and seer, Rudolf Steiner, described the elementals as the last reverberation of the Cosmic Creative Word which underlies all existence. He described how the living cooperation of the elementals of earth, water, air and fire is the very substance of the etheric, or life body, of the Earth. And this body in turn holds the shape and character of our landscape.

In the world of theoretical physics we have terms like 'etheron' and 'graviton' which attempt to define a unit of quanta, and while these terms do sail close to the definition of an elemental, to say that they are the same thing is to limit our view of creation. The elemental kingdom and its inhabitants are just beyond the ability of our modern sensors to detect, but they are not beyond our human

capacities to detect. In his many lectures on the subject, Dr. Steiner described how we can develop the capacity to enter this supersensible, quantum realm if we learn how to awaken our dormant organs of perception. However, the major hindrance to entering the supersensible dimensions today is our insistence on mind-controlled reductionism. We think and explain and philosophise our way to something, but we cannot get to the essence - the intelligent being of the thing - this way. A higher qualitative understanding is needed.

We can no longer rely on a competitive display of factual data, we need to gain new capacities born out of a devotion to the Wonder of Creation. We have to learn to:

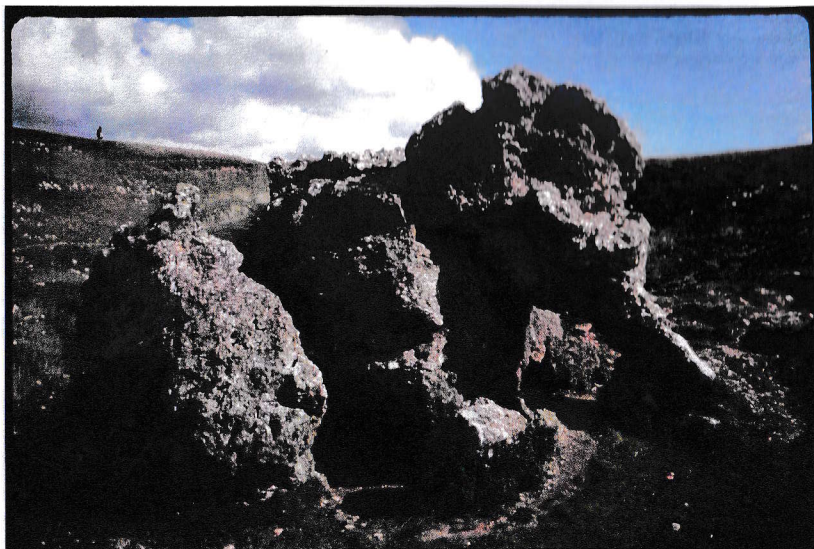
1. Move from words and concepts to an unbiased, reverential form of observation.
2. Cultivate a mood of deep respect and gratitude and then petition the being behind the form to reveal its wisdom.
3. Spin a thread of pure attentiveness to the nature being, then nurture and develop this thread into a substantial and repeatable line of communication.
4. Learn to diagnose and interpret the fine nuances of sensing, feeling and symbology received from this world.

A human being has the ability to become a highly tuned instrument of diagnosis, yet if we choose to enter into dialogue with the Living Book of Nature, we have to be prepared to meet a constellation of beings who know more about us than we do. They can read the minutiae of our soul and can bring us to our knees with their insight. This work is not for the faint-hearted, the fragile or the fanciful. Many of the nature spirits on earth at this crucial time in human history wish to be of great assistance to us, but we have to reach out to them. In their shimmering domain of ceaseless movement and endless becoming they are poised for a dynamic and co-creative relationship with an awakened humanity.

While there are of course some master-seers who work alone, this is not a solo journey. It is about the power of the group to compare, collate, collaborate and to find the next key question. Above all it is about the wielding of the power of Love. Love is the new science, Love is the new magic, Love has always been the purest carrier wave to truth and wisdom in our world... and beyond.

Susan Raven is a long-time student of Anthroposophy and author of *Nature Spirits: The Remembrance; A Guide to the Elemental Kingdom* (Clairview Books). Susan is also a singer/songwriter. Her songs are inspired by the nature kingdoms of the Welsh uplands. She has produced two CDs, *Glittering Cities* and *Ravensong*. Songs from both CDs are played on BBC local radio and many other independent stations. www.susanraven.com

Susan will be speaking at the Newport Moot on Saturday 17th June 2017.



The elephant-shaped Bambury Stone, Bredon Hill, Worcs (L.Main).

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WHAT WERE THE ANCIENTS UP TO ?

A Pilgrimage over a Bredon Hill Ley in search of Thin Places
 by Jonathan Clewley

Pershore Abbey in Worcestershire was founded in the Saxon era and a core of it survived the Dissolution of the Monasteries, which is in use today as a parish church. Winchcombe Abbey in Gloucestershire, also of Saxon origin and some 12 miles from Pershore, was not so fortunate: what remains of it is on private land and inaccessible. Both Abbeys belonged to the Benedictine order and so it is probable that there would have been much traffic between them from the 9th to the 16th centuries; Winchcombe, as capital of Mercia, being the more important of the two.

Any travellers making the journey would have to navigate Bredon Hill, the summit of which lies about four miles from Pershore, and just over eight from Winchcombe. Bredon Hill was once an important strategic location and inhabited in Saxon times. It is thrice named, "bre" being Celtic and "don" Old English for "hill"; so Hillhill Hill.

Several leys have been described around the hill, the most notable being the equinox alignment from the British Camp on the Malvern Hills to Banbury town, passing through the summits of both Bredon and Brailes Hills. Also, Hoggard has identified a perfectly straight line between the Bambury (Elephant) Stone at the summit, Great Comberton Church and Pershore Abbey. He speculates that this ley is the basis for a legend of a tunnel from Pershore Abbey to the hill, via Great Comberton Church, but which would have had to go underneath the River Avon, thus making it an unlikely construct.

If the ley is extended in the opposite direction from the summit it takes in several churches (Beckford, Alderton, Gretton, Little Washbourne) and Langley Hill until it reaches Winchcombe, which is surrounded by hills and may have been settled since about 3,000 BC, as suggested by Belas Knap, a Neolithic burial mound and long barrow 2.6 miles south of the town.

Pershore, too, may well have been settled many thousands of years ago as it is situated on the River Avon, which flows down to the Bristol Channel, and thus would have been an important thoroughfare into the centre of England, especially to the strategic Bredon Hill. An ancient magical connection, an old straight track, a ley between Winchcombe and Pershore, taking in Bredon Hill, therefore seems a reasonable speculation.

St Kenelm's Well, Sudeley (SP 043 278)

But what is it that really makes an old straight track, a ley, a magical connection? That is what we set out to discover for ourselves on our walks. Not a discovery in the sense that the ley connects sites of historical, archeological, or geographical significance on a map, but rather by the sense of feeling when walking it as a pilgrimage. We also wondered if we could sense any liminal or "thin" places, (*caol ait* in Gaelic) along the way. St Kenelm's Well ignited interest, so the pilgrimage, in the first direction from Winchcombe to Pershore, started from its present day site, about a mile outside the town.

The site of Winchcombe Abbey; St Peter's Church (SP 023 282)

The Winchcombe Way footpath runs from St Kenelm's Well into Winchcombe itself, past the site of the Abbey and to St Peter's Church, which has many fine gargoyles and carvings. One of the gargoyles is said to have been the inspiration for the Mad Hatter in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. The church has an energy reflecting the various conflicts that have happened there.

Langley Hill (SP 008 290); Christ Church, Gretton (SP 006 305); St Margaret's, Alderton (SP 006 304); St Mary's, Little Washbourne (SO 989 334)

The ley then goes to the top of Langley Hill, with a fine view of its continuation across the valley to Bredon Hill. From the top of the hill it drops down through a wood to Gretton, on to Alderton, and then to Little Washbourne, which has an atmospheric redundant, but still consecrated and open, church. A thin place, perhaps.

St John the Baptist, Beckford (SO 976 358)

Leaving Gloucestershire, the ley passes into Worcestershire, coming to St John the Baptist Church at Beckford, which has been in existence since early Saxon times. This church has several interesting carvings: in one doorway of animals adoring the Holy Trinity, and in another of Satan being subdued.

Conderton Hill spring (SO 970 381) and fort (SO 971 383); Bredon Hill (SO 956 402)

From Beckford the ley heads straight up Conderton Hill, a foothill of Bredon Hill itself, to another thin place, a spring surrounded by ash trees at the base of the earthwork remains of a fort. It then heads to the summit of Bredon Hill,

where is found the Elephant Stone which may be kissed for good luck by pagans, and which is a pilgrimage site for Christians on Good Friday.

St Katherine's Well (SO 953 402)

The holy well dedicated to St Katherine, although in the escarpment directly beneath the Elephant Stone, is difficult to find as is it not on a public right-of-way, and is now derelict. For us it was signalled by a solitary sheep under an old ash tree, where the well stones are almost overgrown by clumps of nettles. The sheep, the tree and the well all signified this as a thin place. There was once a cave nearby (for a hermit?), but it has long since disappeared, perhaps in a landslide in the 18th Century.

St Michael's, Great Comberton (SO 954 420)

The ley leads directly down the escarpment to Great Comberton, and then along the Wychavon Way by the banks of the River Avon, before crossing it and coming to Pershore Abbey.

Pershore Abbey, the Church of the Holy Cross (SO 948 457) and beyond

We realised that the ley we walked connects St Kenelm's Well, the Conderton hillfort spring and St Katherine's Well, and that it might point to a long lost sacred well or spring in the vicinity of Pershore Abbey. Nearby the Abbey is 'Three Springs Road'. The monks of the Abbey would have needed a well or a spring, perhaps one dedicated to St Edburga, known for her gentleness and humility, whose relics were brought to the Abbey in the 10th century. These monks founded a church dedicated to St Edburga at Leigh, some 11 miles from Pershore. Perhaps that is where the ley leads to next? Or perhaps it heads to the nearby village of Wick, along a funeral path, identified as a ley by Wayne Perkins, and then along a corpse way between the villages of Charlton and Crophorne, to the River Avon, where legend has it that St Kenelm's body was argued over by monks from Worcester and Winchcombe.

Acknowledgements: To Caroline Sherwood for the walk from Winchcombe to Pershore, and Rosalind Hopkinson from Pershore to Winchcombe.

Maps and footpaths: Explorer 190 and OL45; the Winchcombe and Wychavon Ways.

Further reading

- Brian Hoggard: 'Bredon Hill: A Guide to its Archaeology, History, Folklore & Villages', Logaston Press, 2013
- Website referring the ley: www.cotswolds.info/strange-things/ley-dragon-lines.shtml

AXIS OF HEAVEN

Part 3

GREENWICH AS A NATIONAL OMPHALOS

Paul Broadhurst

In part 1 and 2 of this article it has been shown that, contrary to popular belief, what we today call the Greenwich Meridian was originally an ancient Axis Mundi set out by astronomer priests thousands of years before the Royal Observatory was built by Christopher Wren in the 17th century. The implication is that Wren knew exactly what he was doing in re-establishing this old cosmological connection between the earthly realm and the centre of heaven, transforming it from a powerfully symbolic concept imbued with mythical and religious meaning to one more fitting for the coming new age of scientific exploration.

The tradition of Greenwich as a mystical centre radiating its spiritual power across the land was rooted in deep antiquity, and Victorian excavators found that a Romano-British temple was situated in the park at the centre of a geomantically-laid out pattern linking it to other sacred centres. It was the custom in early times to determine such an omphalos or nexus point by astronomical observation, so creating a cross where north, south, east and west converge. At this central spot was dug a deep well or *mundus* so that the heavens were connected to the underworld in a physical as well as symbolic sense.

Such wells thus had an astronomical function and were used to establish a north/south line or meridian in order to observe transiting stars, map the heavens and calculate the rotation and dimensions of the Earth. Science and magic meet at places such as this, and the Greek scholar Eratosthenes, in the 4th century BC, famously used this knowledge to calculate the size of the planet to a remarkable degree of accuracy.

With all this in mind, it is telling that a 120-foot deep well exists cut into the solid rock just yards from the Royal Observatory. No-one knows exactly how old this is, but the first Astronomer Royal John Flamsteed used the shaft for measuring the parallax of the Earth and observing the transit of stars across the meridian. Who first created it? Not Wren or Flamsteed who were obliged to build the Observatory on the thinnest of thin shoestrings. A more likely candidate is Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, the brother of King Henry V, who was granted Greenwich in the 15th century and enclosed the park, leaving it much as it is today. As well as a magnificent palace, he also built a tower, a precursor of the Observatory, to pursue his passion for astronomy/astrology, which were regarded in his day as one and the same.

Duke Humphrey was to come to a sticky end, probably as a result of his arch-enemy John de la Pole (*'of the Pole'*) whose name makes us suspect that the Polar Axis of the land held great symbolic and magical power for those who understood its subtle influence. It is not surprising then, that when the Tudor dynasty dawned it made Greenwich the centre of their world, just as it symbolically represented the centre of heaven.

Henry VII was, like his precursors, very well-educated and immersed in the mystical traditions of the land. He named his first son Arthur after the circumpolar myths of the constellations of Arcturus the Bear-keeper and the Great Bear which circle the centre of heaven, and believed his reign would initiate an era that reflected the cosmic harmony of the heavens, bringing about a new Arthurian age that restored the land and fulfilled the ancient prophecy of King Arthur's return.

Unfortunately it was not to be, and when Prince Arthur died prematurely, his brother, soon to become Henry VIII, not only married his wife Katherine of Aragon but inherited the family destiny to restore England and eradicate foreign influence. It is interesting in this respect that all of Henry VII's and Henry VIII's children were born precisely at the centre of England's Axis Mundi, in the Royal Palace at Greenwich. During Elizabeth's reign her court astrologer, advisor and confidant Doctor Dee was to become one of the world's leading authorities on meridians and the esoteric traditions of King Arthur, and the Queen herself, like her father, was known to have studied the stars.

After the religious wars that characterised the Tudor reign, James VI of Scotland, the 'King of the Freemasons', reinforced the national Axis Mundi by building a Royal Lodge at Royston alongside the old British (later Roman) road known as Ermine Street, the ancient precursor of the Greenwich Meridian (see illustration in part one of this article). It is certain that he used the enigmatic cave with its array of mystical carvings for Masonic initiations, for he spent a great deal of time in this small market town, a centre of the Knights Templar, and also converted a nearby bishop's palace at Somerton (longitude 0° 00') for his own use. He seemed obsessed by the spiritual power inherent in the idea of meridians, perhaps not too surprising since the concept is central to Masonic initiation rituals. As the Scottish as well as English king, he was also familiar with the Scottish Rose Line that linked Holyrood Palace in Edinburgh, at the foot of King Arthur's Seat, with the extravagantly-carved Templar chapel at Rosslyn.

His son Charles I was to adopt Greenwich and begin a new building, the Queen's House, right at its heart for his wife Henrietta Maria, designed by Inigo Jones, a Grand Master Freemason. The geometric layout of Greenwich Park created a series of avenues aligned towards other significant legendary locations such as St Paul's Cathedral and the Tower of London.

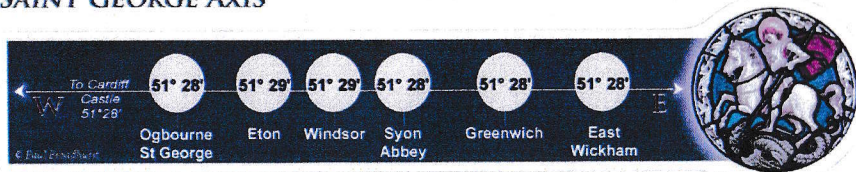
Charles II commissioned Sir Christopher Wren, the foremost astronomer of his day, to build the Royal Observatory on the hill in the park and establish a new, improved version of the old Axis Mundi in order to enable accurate measurement of the Earth for astronomical and navigational purposes. It was this that gave England the edge in maritime trading and exploration, and two centuries later the Meridian was to be adopted as the global centre of time and space.

The history of Greenwich thus clearly shows its central importance through the ages: a prehistoric settlement, Roman Temple complex, abbey, manor, royal palace and finally, a focus of scientific and astronomical excellence. This is the evolution of our national omphalos which eventually culminates in the place becoming, in a literal sense, the centre of the known world, home to the Prime Meridian.

The man responsible for this more than any other was Christopher Wren. As a Grand Master Freemason he was no doubt well aware of the great antiquity of Greenwich and its Axis, for he was steeped in the esoteric tradition. As a young man he had written a history of the Knights of the Garter, for, extraordinarily, Wren's father was Dean of St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle, their spiritual home. Wren made his first telescope when just a child and was to become the country's leading astronomer long before he transferred his talents to architecture. Every day he would have passed the great mound at Windsor (known as *King Arthur's Round Table*) on which the castle stood, and met many luminaries of his age, including the future King Charles II. If he directed his gaze due east towards the rising Sun at the spring or autumn equinox was he aware that it rose in the far distance directly over the hill at Greenwich, where in later years he would build the Royal Observatory?

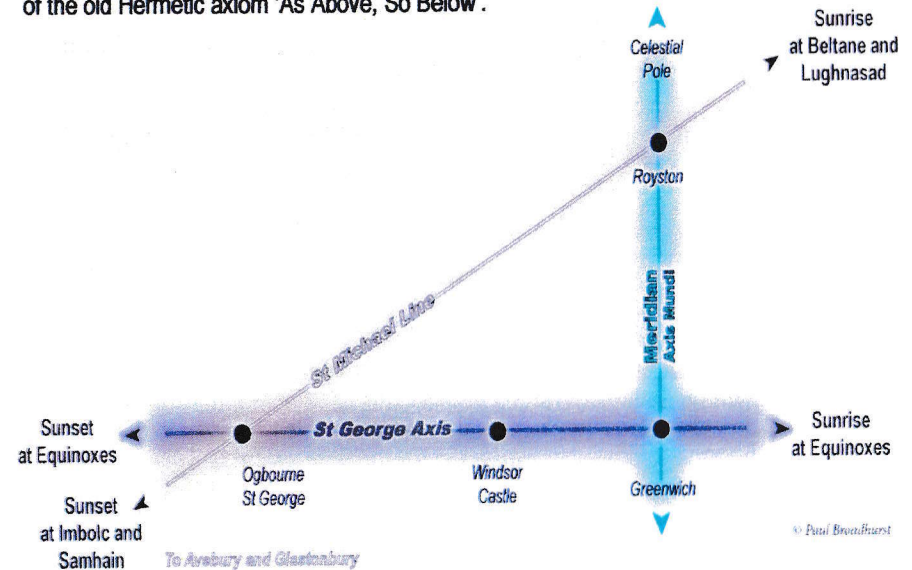
It is highly likely that he did, and that he also knew that Windsor, along with many other ancient sites linked to St George, lay on a countrywide east/west alignment that included Syon Abbey, one of the greatest in England, and Sol's Hill, an ancient mound at Eton which those attending the college would climb at the old festivals to honour the Sun. Another site on this 'St George Axis' is the small hamlet of Ogbourne St George near Avebury, which is a key point on the well-known St Michael Line that leads from Glastonbury and Avebury along parts of the prehistoric Ridgeway and the Icknield Way to Royston.

SAINT GEORGE AXIS



The east/west St George Axis running through Greenwich. © Mythos

What is truly remarkable about the location of Greenwich and its Axis Mundi is that it forms just part of a vast geometric pattern laid out across southern England. This includes the St George Axis and the St Michael Line, with each alignment reflecting the rising and setting of the Sun at significant moments in the annual cycle. With the Meridian as the Polar Axis around which the heavens revolve these cosmic alignments mirror the movements of the Sun and stars in a way that is to the modern mind both tantalizing and insightful, giving a profound glimpse into the great vision of the ancient astronomer/priests who laid all this out in the English landscape as a timeless reminder of the old Hermetic axiom 'As Above, So Below'.



The St Michael/St George/Greenwich Meridian triangle, reflecting the Polar Axis together with the sunrises and sunsets at the equinoxes and the four ancient festivals of Beltane, Lughnasad, Imbolc and Samhain. © Mythos

The finely-produced collector's hardback edition of *Axis of Heaven – The Greenwich Meridian – Britain's Secret Axis of Power* by Paul Broadhurst and Gabriele Trso, signed and numbered, with 432 pages beautifully illustrated in full colour, is available at www.axisofheaven.com or for readers of The Journal of the Network of Ley Hunters, send a cheque made out to Mythos for £25 to claim the post-free discount to Mythos, Box 888, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7YH.

“Baffling Phenomena Seen by Thousands”

by Eileen Roche

One of our readers, Mr. Lionel Beer, gave feedback following my article on Ancient Egypt on page 29 of the NOL Newsletter Issue 19. I had described the miracle of the picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary appearing on a pillar struck by a lightening flash during Christmas Midnight Mass in the Coptic Christian Hanging Church of St. Mary the Virgin in the ancient Coptic area of Cairo, Egypt. Lionel posted the cover from the UFO magazine ‘Spacelink’ Volume 6 No. 4 dated April 1971. Page 2 carried the above headline about an apparition of the Virgin with hands lifted in prayer blessing thousands of people who had gathered to see her above a Cairo church. Newspapers were still reporting more apparitions in early 1970, with crowds of more than 100,000. The appearance of the Lady was accompanied by flashes of light and gliding bird-like creatures. Photographs are included in the article, showing vague human-shaped fuzzy forms emanating light in the dark night. The name of the Cairo Church is not reported, but I hope it was the one I described for you at Beltaine. The Coptic Christian Pope Abraham had seen such an apparition of the Virgin in the 970s in the Hanging Church, so apparently these miracles have been occurring over Cairo for more than a thousand years.

Obituary

Kath (Kathy) Shaw Urlich 1954 – 2016

by Eileen Roche and Beth Shaw

Readers will be saddened to learn of the death by cancer of Kathy on 24th October in a New Zealand Hospital. Kathy was based around Bonnington Square in London from 1977-2007 and became a stalwart of the London Earth Mysteries Circle, frequently joining in activities of the Middlesex Travel and Earth Mysteries and the Surrey Earth Mysteries Societies’ adventures such as Ley-hunting during the 1990s. She combined her esoteric interests with a practical job as a creative and renowned stained glass artist, having studied at the City Literary Institute, London and the Swansea Institute, obtaining many important commissions for her art and holding frequent exhibitions. She was born in Hertfordshire, one of five children, to a father of Irish extraction born in Cheshire and a part-Maori mother, a concert pianist from New Zealand and in 2007 settled in New Zealand, marrying an Anglican vicar, Robert Urlich.

We will remember Kathy with joy, how we celebrated our birthdays with trips to Sacred Sites all over the south of England when she would produce marvellous tasty birthday cakes with marzipan figures of the celebrants. She instigated many trips to sacred yews, stone circles and standing stones, her most ambitious venture being a trip to Wales to enact the stories of the Mabinogian with many of us in the actual places where the action had reputedly taken place. She had a keen and knowledgeable interest in folklore and folksongs. Readers will be pleased to know that Kathy had a Maori funeral. She is best remembered for having instigated a Psychic Quest centred on the stained glass window in the Chapel on St Martha’s Hill, Guildford. RIP, Kathy.

Evocative Sacred Sites 3:

Ness of Brodgar Neolithic Complex, Orkney

by Eileen Roche

This is the third of five articles describing and comparing special liminal places in the earth mysteries landscapes and contemplating how such memorable sites and their histories may affect the sensitive human psyche. Most readers of this Newsletter will have their own favourite evocative sacred sites, some local and others requiring a journey, which often they visit and re-visit. The first article described Lindholm Høje in Denmark with its stone circle and ship-shaped Iron and Viking Ages graves. The previous article was about the atmospheric Neolithic Village of Skara Brae on Mainland Orkney. Now we are talking about another of the sacred sites of the Isles of Orkney, the megalithic monuments clustered round the Ness of Brodgar, all part of the same World Heritage Site as Skara Brae and beginning to be referred to as ‘Lost Temples’. Future articles will report on the Round Towers of Ireland and sites in far-off Iceland relating to the Thing and the *Huldufolk* and Elves.

Megalith monument building began on Orkney over 5000 years ago and it has many marvellous Neolithic Monuments, all interlinked, many intervisible, that it seems the entire Mainland can qualify as an evocative sacred site. There are so many Ley forces interacting on Orkney that one can hardly move without bumping into some. I visited in 2010, when the exciting excavations at the Ness of Brodgar, begun about eight years previously, were in full swing. Because the last article concentrated on one of the Orkney monuments, the Neolithic Village of Skara Brae, this one will focus on the cluster of Neolithic Monuments surrounding the Ness of Brodgar, including the Stones of Stenness, Maes Howe Chambered tomb, Barnhouse Neolithic Village, the Ring of Brodgar and the many adjacent Outlier Stones, tumuli and henges.

The Ness of Brodgar lies at the heart of the Orkney sacred sites. If you approach walking from the south-east you come first to the Barnhouse Stone, impressive enough, but startling when the gigantic mound of the iconic Maes Howe chambered tomb is highlighted in the distance behind it across the Loch of Harray. Maes Howe is 5,000 years old, 35 metres across and over 7 metres high. Its corbelled roof reaches 4.5 metres high; it has a 10 metre long passage down which the midwinter sun shines on the shortest day of the year. Off the main cruciform chamber there are three side chambers in which Viking Raiders have scratched their graffiti in runic script. On the south west corner pillar is a Neolithic engraving, similar in style to others recovered from the Ness dig site

and also at Skara Brae. From outside Maes Howe can be seen clearly the Stones of Stenness, the Ring of Brodgar, the site of Barnhouse Neolithic Village and the Ness dig site. The effect on the visitor can be startling: to view so many of these evocative sacred sites in the near distance whilst standing outside another is remarkable and wonderful.

With spirits uplifted, walking from the Barnhouse Stone, to the north lies the splendid Neolithic Village of Barnhouse, with the remains of dry-stone houses, built-in stone beds and dressers with central hearths. Six of the houses are similar to those of Skara Brae but two of them are larger, different and thought to have had a ceremonial or ritual function. These are called House Two and Structure Eight. Studies have shown that there is more to the Village, it extends further towards Maes Howe but this part is as yet unexcavated.

It is considered that the inhabitants built the nearby Stenness Stone Circle and may have contributed to the rituals on the Ness, which can be seen nearby over the water of the Harray Loch. It has also been suggested that perhaps priests or rulers inhabited Barnhouse. The entrance to the henge of the nearby Stenness Stones faces it and it is possible there was a processional way linking Barnhouse and Stenness. The Village had been deliberately destroyed in Neolithic times, perhaps when the occupiers had finished erecting the Stones and henge at Stenness. The ambience today is one of peace and beauty on the green plains surrounded by the Lochs, with the great Stones of Stenness, the enormous Ring of Brodgar and the gigantic mound of Maes Howe adding drama to the archaeological landscape.

The two larger buildings, House Two and Structure Eight, may have been ceremonial. House Two has better quality walling and two rooms instead of one, each with a central fireplace of its own, with six regular recesses around its walls. See the photo below with the pink gravel denoting the fireplaces, and the triangular-shaped stone on the floor of the passage, which covers a burial cist. Structure Eight seems to have been a ceremonial building, with a fireplace unusually (or perhaps symbolically) placed not quite in the centre of the entrance. Fire, of course, is one of the four major elements, the Lochs contribute the symbol of water, earth and air are beneath and above the site.

Continuing to walk, the hinged Stones of Stenness lie very near to the southwest. Part of it was demolished in the 19th Century, and parts have since been re-erected and it is still impressive, with its central hearth site. This hearth is

thought to be connected to Barnhouse Neolithic Village, 200 metres away, another indication of the importance and possible symbolism of fire.

Cross the causeway between the Loch of Harray and the Loch of Stenness on what has come to be known as the Ceremonial Way, thought to be a place of symbolic transition, from what some archaeologists consider the Land of the Living at Stenness and the Land of the Dead at the Ring of Brodgar. Pass the magnificent Standing Stones on each side of the causeway and continue to the archaeological excavations on the Ness of Brodgar.

There is so much going on there that one's capacity to be amazed is overwhelmed. The on-site archaeologists were keen to tell us of the excavation of a large structure which they had dubbed a Neolithic 'Cathedral', (or a 'Temple of the North'), comprising a roughly 15 metre square building with a 20 metre long forecourt. It's walls were double, filled with midden, and about 5 metres thick. The central chamber is cruciform-shaped, similar to that of Maes Howe, not far away. A piece of stone furniture was thought to be an altar, and the many animal bones found were interpreted as the remains of ceremonial feasting. The finds include a polished stone mace head, hammer stones, a 'carved stone ball' and stone roof tiles similar to those of Skara Brae. The current Ness of Brodgar Trust Leaflet lists the excavation highlights as including:

- the finest collection of Neolithic decorated stone in Britain
- the finest Neolithic wall colouration / painting in Northern Europe
- the largest concentration of major Neolithic structures in North Europe
- the origin of the pan-British Grooved Ware pottery phenomenon, with many unique decorated examples, including a coloured pot

Once again, as at Skara Brae and Barnhouse Neolithic Villages, I was excited to find that the people using this site wanted to beautify their building with paint and decoration in much the same way that we do in our own time to our buildings.

Recent excavations have revealed a massive stone wall (the 'Great Wall of Brodgar'), and a second, smaller one around the peninsula, enclosing the monuments. The whole is a part of the World Heritage site. To put this megalithic architecture in a time perspective: when these fantastically evocative structures were being erected on Orkney 5000 years ago, in Egypt people were just starting to settle and farm by the Nile as the whole region became drier, long before the Pyramid Age of the Pharaohs.

With heads and minds in a buzz, the walk continued northwards, past the Cairns and Standing Stone to the overwhelming tall Stones of the Ring of Brodgar Henge, where about 22 of the 60 stones are still standing around the edge of the 104 metre diameter perimeter. With this experience, it is impossible not to feel humbled by the scale and beauty of the Monument, especially as Maes Howe is still dominating the background over the water. With five fallen stones, including one struck by lightning, and a large number of stumps, it is hard to believe your eyes. If you have enough energy, you can continue to other tumuli, cairns, and burial chambers further along. We discovered another henge to the north, as yet unexcavated, called the Ring of Bookan and it will be interesting to see what excavations there might reveal.

In my Travel Diary that evening I wrote two words: 'amazing day'. I was too sated with all the evocative sacred sites I had witnessed to manage any written details.

For further information on the Monuments around the Ness of Brodgar see:
<http://www.megalithic.co.uk/article.php?sid=17401>
<http://www.orkneyjar.com/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ness_of_Brodgar

In my next article I shall be addressing the evocative sites of the Irish Round Towers, which also have the power to cause you to re-visit them repeatedly.



Maes Howe

Eileen Roche was brought up in Central Africa and travels extensively, contributing articles about overseas sacred landscapes and sites to a variety of e.m. publications. She had the honour of having a Ley named after her, the "E-Line", when she discovered it in Surrey in 1990. It runs from Leysdown on the Isle of Sheppey in the east across the south of England to Cornwall in the west and many groups have helped to track, dowse and record it. Now, she has discovered an important and powerful Ley running through Leyland in Lancashire and is hoping to record the same for that on its route across the land. All help needed. Thanks.



Eileen will speak at our Newport Moot on Saturday, 17th June.

Strange Energies and Fairies in Iceland

by Sue Pine

Iceland is an incredible country, young in every sense of the word. Before it was settled in the Viking era, no one lived there but a handful of Irish monks. Straddling the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, the land itself is a 'work in progress', with regular volcanic activity generating brand-new land off the coast. The Icelanders are not pure Viking, but mixture of Irish and Viking and this mixed ancestry goes a long way to explain some significant features about their culture. Many Icelanders openly believe in fairies and elementals and 'themselves' are consulted about new roads or building projects. As a result, many of the elementals are quite used to being spoken to people. Unlike in Britain, there *are* no megalithic stone circles or barrows carefully regulating energy flows across the landscape, so the ley hunter can be in for some surprises.

Icelandic earth energy lines do *not* behave like those in the UK. The first thing to notice is that they are extremely strong and in some places unsafe for long exposure, so it is vital to do your protection. Von Pohl readings (to establish if the energy is safe for humans) at the very top of the scale are not at all uncommon. I dowse some earth energy lines like this at Dimmurborgir, a lava labyrinth near Lake Myvatn. Also, the actual structure of the energy lines is not at all what we see here.

Taking a single line, I found that some sub-bands were ten paces wide or more. At the same time, other sub-bands of the same line were extremely narrow- only a couple of inches wide. I am sure that some of these very narrow bands were responding to seismic activity, which of course can change on a minute by minute basis in that country. The bands close to the centre line seemed most affected.

Encounters with Elementals

Elemental (fairies, trolls, water etc) come in all shapes and sizes, from tiny to over fifty feet high. The sinister lava labyrinth at Dimmurborgir is a famous fairy location. Here, there are giant sleeping trolls, birch tree

maidens whole troops of small pixies swarming among the trees. The pixies can be a real nuisance if they can get away with it. They think it is great fun to befuddle the consciousness of visitors and get them to lose their way among the narrow twisting paths. Once I let them know that I could see them and that I wasn't going to put up with any of *that* nonsense, they settled down. As I left the labyrinth, they lined up respectfully to wait for a blessing.



The waterfalls are immense and so are the powerful elementals associated with them. Here is an example of how assumptions can lead us astray. At the Godafoss waterfall, I attempted to chat to the spirit of the falls, using my dowsing rods, as one does. I got the feeling that the spirit was very angry, so much so that I dare not go right up to the falls in case of an accident. I have always been successful with water fairies in the past, so I couldn't understand what was wrong. Asking questions with the rods, I decided to go back to first principles. "Are you female?" "No" came the answer. Now I understood what the problem was! I'd been assuming the spirit was a 'she' because I'd never met a male water spirit before! After that, we got along fine and had a pleasant chat. Later, I read that male

water fairies are quite usual in Iceland and they have many legends about them.

The great forces that are still shaping the structure of our planet have their own elementals. At Namaskard geothermal area I met a huge troll-like earth elemental among the bubbling mud pools and sulphur deposits. He appeared out of a fumarole (volcanic vent) and towered over me. I was touched by his gentle concern for the safety of human visitors. He said quite clearly, "*We do not mean for you to be here.*" Then there was only smoke. (see photo below).

If you ever get to Iceland yourself, remember to respect the fairies !





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Book Review:

Finding Elen: the Quest for Elen of the Ways

Edited by Caroline Wise. Reviewed by Sue Pine

This lovely little book is a welcome addition to the field of Goddess studies. In format, it is an anthology of articles about this elusive British Goddess, written by a number of noted contributors, including Caroline Wise herself, Chesca Potter, Caitlin Matthews, John Merron and Alex Langstone. Elen is traced through history, mythology and archaeology. She is encountered in visions and through art. She leaves her hoof-prints in Lapland, Europe and Turkey; in pine woods, beside wells and in ancient cairns.

Who is this Goddess? Alex Langstone disentangles Elen of the Ways (in British legend the originator of an ancient road network) from St Helena, the Christian saint and discoverer of the true cross. Caroline and Chesca's valuable insight is that Elen can also be understood as a 'Green Woman', feminine counterpart of the Green Man so beloved of British folk tradition. As the Green Woman, she appears sometimes as a fawn; sometimes as an antlered Goddess, acting as protectress of the wild deer herds. Caroline and her friends have been exploring this idea since the 1980s when, sadly, her ideas sometimes met with disapproval from some individuals within the pagan community, who were not happy with the idea of an antlered Goddess. It is worth remembering that, ultimately, everything is energy and it is not helpful to put barriers in the way of your own understanding. The image and idea of the antlered Elen as a Green Woman is a meaningful symbol of the secret and powerful feminine aspect of nature. It is well worth exploring and may be a point of entry into other hidden mysteries of our own island and beyond.

Finding Elen: the Quest for Elen of the Ways, edited by Caroline Wise is published by Eala Press. ISBN-13:978-150 8644033

Caroline Wise will speak at our Pembrokeshire Moot on 17th June

The Callarde Experience

Part 2 : The History Concealing the Portal

Mark Herbert

Resilient Even unto Elizabeth :

In his fine topographical review (1605-32), *The chorographic description or survey of the county of Devon*, unavailable until 1811, antiquary Tristram Risdon (1580-1640) wrote of Callarde :

“**Burrington**, in ancient deeds, *Borington*, which manor, in times past, pertained to the abbey of Tavistock (981-1546). In this parish is *Callard*, the lands of a family so called, who continued their dwelling in this place, **even** unto the reign of queen Elizabeth.”

Residing just five miles north-west of Callarde across Burrington Moor along the Rumansleigh ridge for much of his life and writing his survey fifty years of Callarde's demise, Risdon was well placed to know the site's antiquity, strong monastic ties and the events that had occurred there. Yet he is uncommitted to explain why, after two centuries of sanctuary in this place, the Templar dynasty suddenly fell from grace, becoming extinct nobility by 1620, their Devon mansion in ruins.

Risdon's lifetime occupied a period of great local and national turmoil; aftermath of the state-enforced dissolution of the monasteries, controversial introduction of a common prayer book and ensuing rebellion, a nation on the brink of religious civil war, Risdon's neighbouring Torrington itself a battlefield (1646), situated on one of the three leys that junction at Callarde. His literal emphasis of Callarde's possession of this sacred land **even** until Elizabeth's reign (1558-1603), when perhaps this should have not been the case so long after the monastic suppression of 1539, is the prime clue of Callarde resistance to relinquish their powercentre and way of life.

A similar account of Callarde's dispossession of their other stronghold in Buckland near Dover, located at the end of an 185 mile alignment, each site centred on ecclesiastical Winchester (see J.NLH Issue 21), is given in Edward Hasted's *History and topographical survey of the county of Kent, Canterbury* (1800) :

Manor of Buckland near Dover, in 1375, “the *Callards* ... became possessed of it, and continued proprietors for several descents ... a family who had long been resident in this part of Kent ... They alienated it at length about the end of queen Elizabeth’s reign ...”

Thereafter, Callarde disappeared into obscurity as did the nature of their Burrington abode, along with its secret history. Yet the site became a listed monument in 1964, deemed to be of medieval period, inexplicably immortalising the name Callarde to this day.

Callarde Returns :

Curiously, two centuries on (ca. 1747-65), as if to echo that Ecclesiastes sentiment of re-birth “*What has been will be again ...*”, a noble family named Callarde suddenly re-surface amid the former monastic lands of Axminster and its three great Cistercian (and thus Templar-connected) houses, then of east Devon (now west Dorset since 1842). The abbeys of Ford (1136-1539), Dunkeswell (1201-1539) and Newnham (1245-1539), all within a short distance of each other, encircled a hub of even greater antiquity where Callarde made one of his two dwellings – Stockland Hill, chosen since 1973 as a primary site for UHF transmissions serving the south-west peninsula. Callarde’s other abode was beside the lesser known Weycroft Abbey in the heart of Axminster.

Temple Callarde –a Monastic Grange :

Although Burrington came under Benedictine rule from its Tavistock mother house (despite being 30 miles north over Dartmoor), there are stark indicators that Callarde had loyalties to other fraternities –the Augustinians for one, bestowing to them land in Canterbury Cathedral precinct. Their Templar links are indisputable –the earliest being a grant of land from Frater Richard de Hastings (Master of the English order of Knights Templar) to Richard fitz (son of) Callarde de Dinsley (near Hitchin, Hertfordshire, 1155-85). A Court of Chancery pleading to the Archbishop of Canterbury (1486-1515) records a land dispute between “John Callarde the elder” on his return to England and, his elected sitting tenant to manage the manor in his absence, who refused to hand back thirty acres at Callarde. Recent evidence also supports a tie to the Knights of St Thomas (à Becket) of Canterbury at Acre.

In his principal work, *A View of Devonshire in 1630 with a Pedigree of most of its Gentry*, finally published in 1845, Thomas Westcote (ca. 1567-1644), Devon historian, topographer, associate of Risdon, not only referred to Callarde as a “godly tribe” and dispossession of their Burrington domain to the Crown’s agent after 1558, he also wrote that :

“Callard had here a **large farm** of his name.”

This is a vital clue as to the land’s function and scale of Callarde’s operation as farming formed the core of Templar activity, as typified by Abbas (“*of the Abbey*”) and Templecombe preceptory in Somerset. Unlike their Benedictine and Augustinian counterparts, who preferentially chose to reside among the well established and enriched populous, the Cistercian order sought solitude and self-sufficient enterprise in nature’s most untamed and remote places. It is said that, like the Druids, the Cistercians were connected to “Earth Forces” and, in contrast to their two monastic rivals, their institution was extremely open to manual labour as hinted by their motto *Ora et Labora* –pray and work. In his book, *Abbeys –An Introduction to the Religious Houses of England and Wales*, R. Gilyard-Beer, Assistant Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Ministry of Public Building and Works (1959) writes,

“The sites chosen for Cistercian houses were remote from towns, and the energy of their monks found an outlet in agricultural enterprise on a large scale. A special class of monks, the lay brethren, and a more highly organised type of grange or farm were used in the working of the estates and to preserve the seclusion of the choir-monks who, from their unbleached habit, were known as white monks ...”

The Cistercians not only introduced the revolutionary concept of ‘lay’ brethren, but became the foundation from which the Knights Templar would historically emerge. These two cooperative institutions grew rapidly becoming self-sustaining and profitable ventures remote and independent from a mother house, as Callarde’s 250 year-long tenure of its Burrington abode, detached from Tavistock, would strongly suggest. A large farm in monastic terms is a *grange*, comprising land and buildings of an outlying estate held by a monastery. Gilyard-Beer continues to inform,

“... the largest (granges or farms) were almost monasteries in miniature ... The abbots of the greater houses often used particular estates as country retreats, and built themselves substantial houses.”

A "substantial house", another expression for a "mansion", was a vital clue as Ordnance Survey maps from 1889 until 1964, identifying Callarde a site of antiquity, were simply annotated,

"Callard – Remains of a Mansion"

Thirty-eight years after Westcote's survey, between 1668 and 1787, Callarde was duly recognised as a *Barton* – a Devonshire term for the manorial home farm held by a non-ecclesiastical lay lord. As I was discovering, Callarde had an intriguing, eminent yet silent past. There was something exceptional and mystical about this place. Even though its chronicles appeared destroyed and its history suppressed, a few shreds of evidence remain to rebuild a coherent picture of its past.

Safe House to the New World :

Of paramount importance is the date when the Callarde Templar's began their Burrington occupancy –around 1360. Thereafter, Callarde's exploits were concerned with the Iberian Peninsula –i.e. Portugal and Spain, one of three possible destinations for fleeing Templars who, in 1307, faced execution on charges of heresy following the papal decree to dissolve their Order. On the surmise that many Templars escaped arrest, the crucial question remaining is, where did all the Templars go? Those with the quest to reconstitute an Order may have sought a secluded haven of protection and sanctuary, an interim safe house awaiting secure onward passage. Callarde's remoteness would have served as an ideal concealment. Moreover, the Callardes also held land with strategic maritime access; not least Dover but also St Budeaux near Devonport, Plymouth having direct sea routes to Iberia and beyond. One of the last glimpses of the Templars was their fleet departing La Rochelle ca. 1314-28, the same period in which escaping Templars also went north of the border to assist Scotland's struggle for independence from England –Bannockburn timed for the Templar's Baptist day 1314.

With North America actually discovered by Scandinavians five centuries before Columbus' celebrated claim in 1492, it is conceivable that the rune stone found in Kensington, Minnesota in 1898, adorned with Old Swedish glyphs and inscribed with the date 1362 –a timeline consistent with Callarde's initial occupation, was a record of just one of many Templar voyages further west to re-establish gnosis outside of Europe's ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

GIANTS OF STONEHENGE AND ANCIENT BRITAIN

Hugh Newman

From *Giants On Record: America's Hidden History, Secrets in the Mounds and the Smithsonian Files*

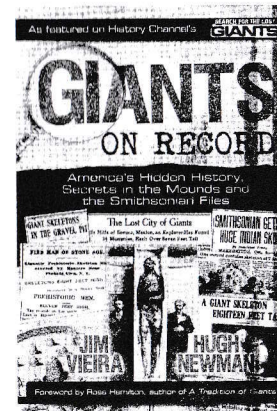
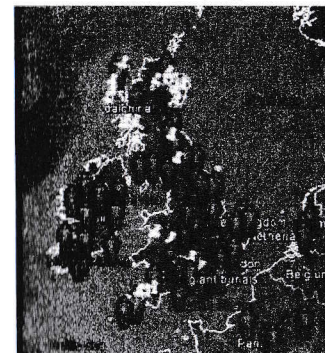
In honour of Anthony Roberts' *Sowers of Thunder* book (1978), I am currently exploring the mystery of the legendary giants of the British Isles, including the founding of Britain by Brutus who defeated the giant called *Gogmagog*, plus the *Fomorians* and *Fir Bolg* of Ireland, the mighty megalith builders of England, the *Cawr* giants of Wales; as well as a surprising amount bones of giants that have been unearthed throughout the country. Numerous oversized skeletons were said to have been found near Stonehenge, and over 100 other skeletons (and bones) have been reported across Britain, as well as numerous oversized artefacts. I have been investigating the archaeological evidence, decoding the legends, and have found evidence that populations of powerful tribes ruled ancient Albion from prehistoric times, who may have been responsible for the megalithic constructions, and even the leys. There are hundreds of myths; and stories of how they could affect weather, had shamanic powers and how they impacted civilisation. But did they really exist, or are they simply the stuff of legend?

In the past giants were seen as gods, elementals, and aspects of the sacred landscape, that would bring fertility to the crops, affect weather, align sites over great distances (by dropping stones and earth from their aprons), and remind us of a greater power beyond our scope of reason. The more one looks into these tales of old, the more one realises they exist in almost every country on every continent.

In my home town of Cambridge, there are rumours that a giant was still buried at the sacred spring in Cherry Hinton at the base of the Gog Magog Hills called 'Giant's Grave,' which has a 20 ft island in the middle of it said to be his resting place. It is directly across the street from the *Robin Hood and Little John* (the giant) Pub. In the pub's car park a chunky monolith sits with a mysterious footprint carved in it that to this day no one knows how it got there or who carved it out.

Local tradition, relative to the origin of the hills said there, "...was a very large cave, which was inhabited by a giant and his wife (a giantess) of extraordinary stature, whose names were *Gog and Magog*." On 27th May 1854, a short item appeared in the *Cambridge Chronicle* that described a find by workmen who were preparing the land for the first reservoir for Cherry Hinton upon Lime Kiln Hill, about one mile from Wandlebury Hill-Fort. Nine skeletons were found: "Several of them were of large size, and were evidently the remains of men who reached to a greater height than ordinary men in the present day." According to local researcher and archaeologist Michelle Bullivant, "this sparked local interest as to a possible race of giants having once lived upon the hills." Unfortunately this is the only record of that particular discovery and many more could have been discovered, but it gave some clout to the giant legends that persist around the Gog Magog Hills.

Like in North America, giants are often linked to mounds, earthworks and hill-forts. Heydon Ditch in Cambridgeshire, has



erie stories of giant warriors, but when it was excavated in the 1950s several taller-than-average skeletons were unearthed. A similar, although much grander ditch is the Devil's Dyke. In *Legends of the Fenland People* (1926), Christopher Marlowe describes an old story associated with the dyke saying it was constructed by "...a race of giants, renowned alike for cunning, strength and ferocity."

If we survey other parts of Britain, legends of giants emerge again and again. Hundreds of ancient megalithic sites have 'Giant' in their name. The first known name of Stonehenge was 'The Giants' Dance.' Stonehenge is a later Saxon name. 'Giant's Grave,' 'Giant's Hill,' 'Giant's Causeway,' 'the Sleeping Giant,' 'Giant's Well,' and 'Giant's Bed' are some further examples.

'The Giants' Dance,' now called Stonehenge, is without doubt the most famous archaeological site in Britain. The earliest known depiction of Stonehenge has a giant in it and comes from a manuscript called *Le Roman de Brut* by poet Wace dated to around 1150 AD (based on *History of the Kings of Britain* by Geoffrey of Monmouth). In the illustration it shows Merlin directing a giant human to move a stone lintel into place. In the text it explains that Merlin is constructing a burial place for Aurelius Ambrosius, an ancient King. However, *History of the Kings of Britain* also states that the monoliths originally came from Africa: "Giants of old did carry them from the farthest ends of Africa, and did set them up in Ireland when they lived there." The original 'Giants' Dance' stone circle was said to have been constructed by giants at Mount Killarus in Ireland, then Merlin magically transported them over to Salisbury Plain. But were there any actual giants discovered near Stonehenge?



In *Journey into South Wales* (1802) George Lipscomb states: "...it should be remembered, that Leland, in his "Collectanea", quotes the respectable authority of his friend, Sir Thomas Eliot, as recording, that himself had seen, at some place, near Salisbury, a skeleton which measured

fourteen feet ten inches in length." In the *British Critic*, Volume 42, pg 544, 1813, the following is reported, "Such were the arms found with a skeleton of large dimensions, in a remarkable barrow, on the verge of Wiltshire, by the road leading from Salisbury to Blanford." In *A Theological, Biblical, and Ecclesiastical Dictionary* (1830), it describes a 9 ft 4 in skeleton unearthed near Salisbury in 1719 (see left). It also recounts a mound named 'Giant's Grave' next

GIANT SKELETON AT SALISBURY.—A French paper on giants gives a list of several, whose the biggest is one found near Salisbury, and the reference is to a French paper, 1719. Its length was 9 ft. 4 in. English, which is the largest human stature of which I ever heard. At Salisbury I remember in childhood a mound in a field, north of St. Edmund's Churchyard, called the "giant's grave." Is there any account of this skeleton, and where is it kept?—as a skeleton of that size was surely worth preservation. E. L. G.

to St Edmunds Church. This church was part of the original college founded by the Bishop of Salisbury, Walter de la Wyle in 1269, and is located a few miles from Stonehenge.

The stories, bones, and reports are not only in Wiltshire. All over the country there are many examples that could prove there may be some reality to these myths. Their connection the sacred landscape, and the leys is of great interest to me, and I'll be sharing my latest research at the Moot in June, and there are some from West Wales too, so we can all not only go *Ley Hunting*, but *Giant Hunting* also!

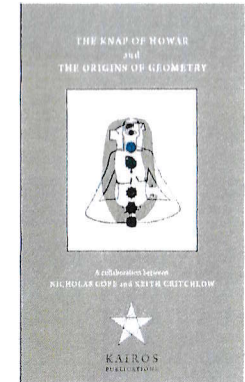
Hugh Newman is author of 'Earth Grids: The Secret Pattern of Gaia's Sacred Sites' and co-author of 'Giants On Record: America's Hidden History, Secrets in the Mounds and the Smithsonian Files' (with Jim Vieira). He is organising and speaking at the Megalithomania conference in Glastonbury on 20th-21st May 2017, and he co-organises the Origins Conference in London with Andrew Collins. He lives near Stonehenge. His websites are www.megalithomania.co.uk and www.hughnewman.co.uk

BOOK REVIEW

The Knap of Howar & The Origins of Geometry

- Nicholas Cope & Keith Critchlow

Publisher: Kairos, London 2015, 108pp,
ISBN-13: 978-0992682330



The Knap of Howar is said to be the oldest dwelling in the world. It consists of two distinct rectangular stone buildings (one bigger than the other), side by side, near the sea, located in Papa Westray, in the Orkney Isles. It is believed to have been built earlier than 3500 BC, a thousand years before Stonehenge or the Great Pyramid of Egypt. It is believed to have been occupied from then until about 3000 BC. *Knap* means 'cap', *howar* means 'mound' and refers to the fact that it lay covered in sand for many centuries and appeared as lump in the landscape. As the coastline eroded, it became exposed to view again.

The book is divided into two parts – the first, written by Nicholas Cope is about the Knap itself, and the second, written by Keith Critchlow about the roots of geometry.

Nicholas Cope starts by describing the Knap of Howar itself and then goes on to compare its structure to the human body including looking at it from a point of view of chakras, and also suggesting the larger building and the smaller building of the Knap relate to each other as 'mother and child' with the passage that connects them as an umbilical cord linking the two. Nicholas Cope also shows how the Knap is formed with the Golden Ratio - that very special harmonious ratio so loved by ancient philosophers and mathematicians like Pythagoras and Euclid and Renaissance artists such as Leonardo da Vinci. The author talks about how the human body was used as a means of measurement – 'feet', 'hand spans', etc. and talks about the dimensions of the Knap in terms of the megalithic yard.

Keith Critchlow continues the discussion in the second half of the book, and adds into the mix, an analysis of the geometrically regular three dimensional shapes, sphere-like (about the size of a tennis ball) resembling Platonic solids that were found in Orkney and discusses these in context with what was mentioned in part one of the book, that the ancient builders of the Knap were well aware of the science of geometry and mathematics. There is also much reference to Da Vinci's geometrical lay out of the human body - the Vitruvian Man.

- Liza Llewellyn

THE STABLE END

with

Richard Knight,
the Rustic Farrier



Obelisks and Ancient Sites

Having studied obelisks further north, I was of the opinion that there is no folly or randomness in how the obelisks are sited, so I had a look around the sites of Wiltshire and Environs. My opinion was reinforced.

From Glastonbury and moving clockwise through Stanton Drew, Avebury and Stonehenge, obelisks have been erected in straight lines to highlight these monuments in stone. Not only that, but the ancient circles and a tor are positioned in a beautiful geometrical pattern using two similar (same angles, different sizes) right-angled triangles.

As a bi-product of my quest, the use of O.S. maps led me to the discovery of the origins of the O.S. map! The ones we use now are actually copies of copies of military sheets.

Also, on - or very near to - the lines of the diagram (but not shown here) are the following sites with OS map references: -

The genuinely old white chalk horses in the landscape at -
CHERHILL (SU 695051),
MILK HILL (SU 639107)
& WESTBURY (SU 898516)

The deserted village of
IMBER (ST 965485)
which is at the start of the Ridgeway.

CASTERLEY CAMP (SU 535115), and...

MOTHER ANTHONY'S WELL (SU 999643) which, although in a beautiful spot, is little more than a spring and a ditch quite out of proportion to the billing it gets on all maps.

The Bath Key to the Ancient Monuments

Look at O.S. map 165, Weston-Super-Mare (one inch). Down the bottom of the map in Great Breach Wood is the little word "obelisk." It is easy to miss and was raised by the only sister of Mr. Hungerford Colston who accidentally shot himself while out hunting with friends. These friends subsequently left it to this woman to leave a monument in 1852. I am not here to judge and it seems a small thing except that it is the beginning of the linking of all the southern ancient monuments with obelisks!

A line up through Glastonbury Tor runs slap bang into the only other obelisk on this map about 20 miles away in the middle of nowhere, minding its own business, with no dedication and on a lane by the Chew Valley Lake. Built around 1850 at Breach Hill. Two obelisks at either end of a line running through Glastonbury Tor. One to the South in Great BREACH Wood, one to the North on BREACH Hill, both built around built around 1852.

The line passes through Wookey Hole and near to the Priddy Circles. A new line joins this obelisk to the one on Stoke Hill in North Bristol on the map O.S. Landranger 172 Bristol and Bath. Built in 1761 by Thomas Wright, it is dedicated to Elizabeth Somerset who fell off her horse and sadly died, and also sadly, it is just a stump as it was smashed by lightning...twice! The line passes through Temple Meads, originally "Temple Meadows." It was a Templar preceptory.

Back to Breach Hill obelisks and start again, this time through the Church and standing stones (two separate rings) of Stanton Drew and up to a monument dedicated to Bevil Grenville of Stowee. This is an English civil war memorial like the one at Kington, erected in 1720 for Sir Bevil who, mortally wounded, fell of his horse at the Battle of Lansdown in 1643 one year after the Kington fight.

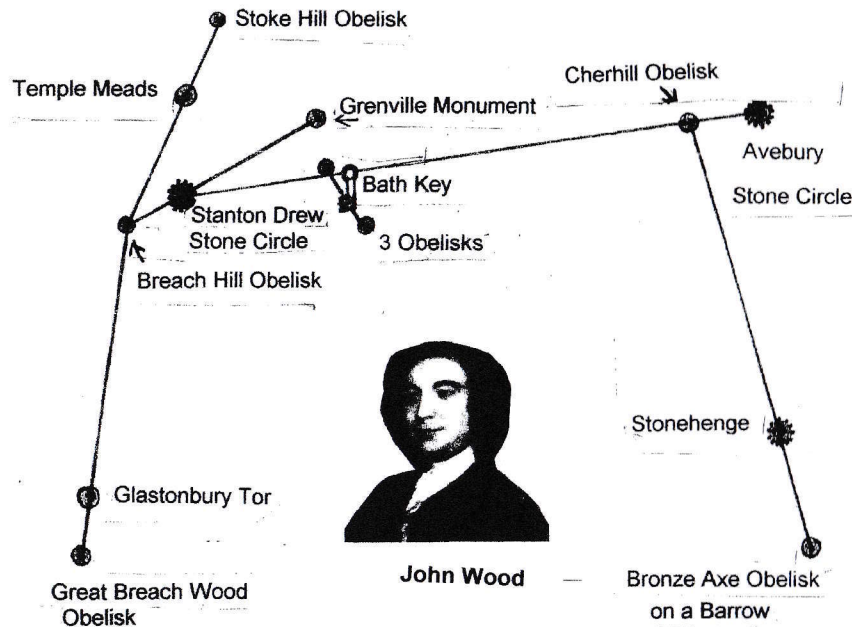
Now back to Stanton Drew, the third largest collection of stones in England, and a line through Bath plum through the obelisk at Cherhill to the largest stone circle in Europe, Avebury. But before this line takes a well-deserved bow, let's retrace our steps to Bath. In Bath I came across a set-up that was done and dusted before I got there, something that was finished and all over before. I wish the French had a phrase for this, I bet it would be pithy and elegant.

The Stanton Drew - Avebury line passes though the Circus in Bath which is a circle of houses built by Druid and Freemason John Wood the Elder and his son John Wood the Younger from 1754 to 1768. Emblazoned on these houses are 525 symbols, Masonic, Druidic and Esoteric. Originally called the King's Circus, it is joined by Gay Street to Queen's Square and this triad forms the Bath Key, all deliberately.

In the middle of Queen's Square is an obelisk designed by wood and built by Richard Beau Nash in 1738, the year that saw the ex-communication of Freemasons by Pope Clement. The obelisk is dedicated to Caroline, wife of

George II and it is joined by two more obelisks, all of course in a line! To the north-west in Victoria Park, there is one dedicated to Queen Victoria, 1837 and to the south-west at Orange Grove is one dedicated to William of Orange who died when he fell off his horse, sadly. Wood was obsessed with Stanton Drew and Stonehenge and based the Circus on the measurements of the latter.

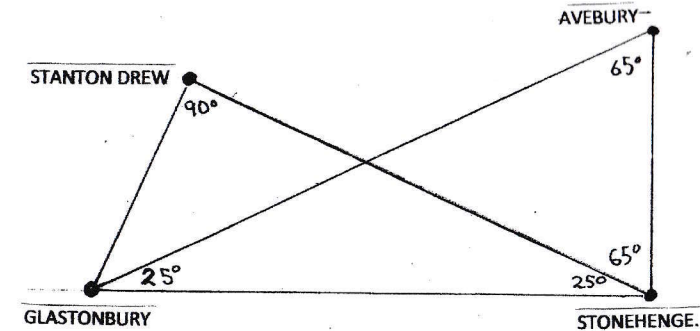
The Cherhill obelisk is dedicated to the first Marquis of Lansdowne and if you go down Lansdowne Hill from Grenville's monument you will end up in the Circus. Now, I need a rest!



Editor's Note. It is important that we provide a platform for the rustic farmers of this world to share their wisdom. This article is published as received without any polishing - a rough diamond. Since one inch maps disappeared in 1974, please look at OS Explorer 141, grid reference ST 502317 to see "Mon". This is the Colston Monument Richard refers to. It is on the exact nose of the Leo figure in the Glastonbury Zodiac!

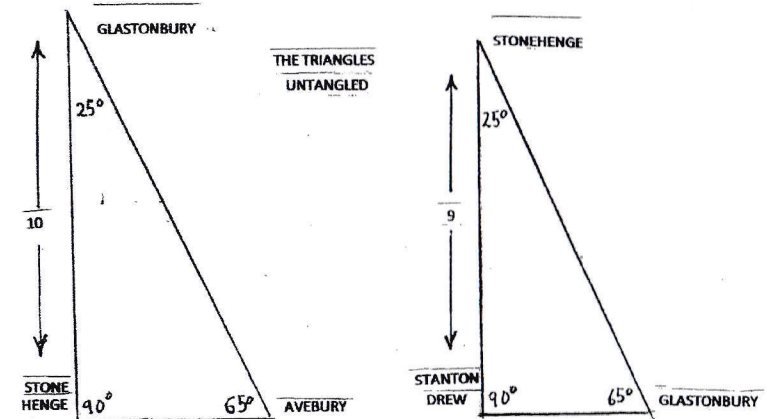
There is an obelisk marked at ST 512310, being a monument to Lord Roundhay. **Contributors**, please give grid references and use OS Explorer maps! Thank you.

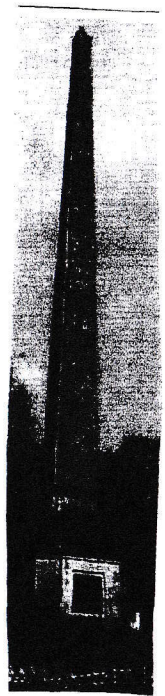
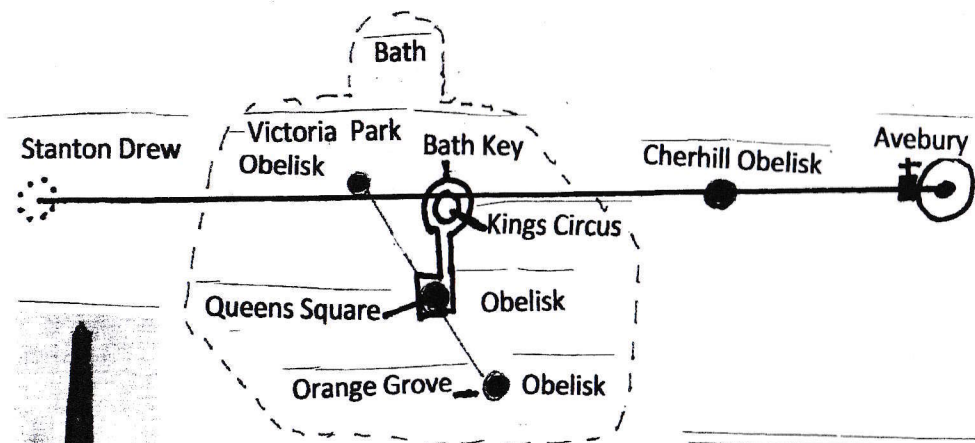
It then seemed an obvious step to see if John Wood's Key could produce more magic, and it certainly did when I studied the relationship of arguably the four most famous ancient sites - Stonehenge, Avebury, Glastonbury and Stanton Drew.



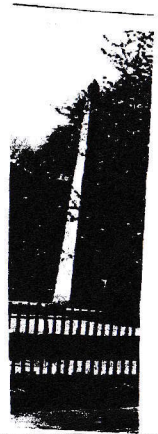
The four sacred sites are arranged into two right-angled triangles, so arranged as to share a side (Glastonbury - Stonehenge). The triangles are *similar* - same angles, different sizes and the size ratio is 10 to 9.

To draw the diagram takes only seconds as you only need a set-square and a 25 degree angle, no measurement of length required - Magic at its best!





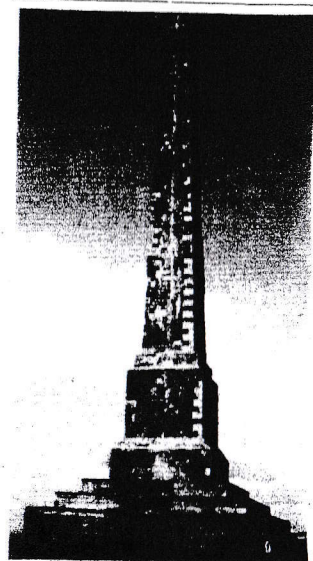
Victoria Park



Queens Square



Orange Grove



Cherhill Obelisk

These and Breach Hill and Star Hill and Grenville Monument are the only Obelisks on two maps.

LANDRANGER 172 and LANDRANGER 173

By the way, the marvellous Bronze Axe Sculpture bore some numbers and letters which led to the discovery of a little nugget. On the map, tucked in between Old Sarum and the Axe we read the small legend "GUN END OF BASE" – very mysterious! In 1794, Captain William Mudge of the Ordnance (guns) department of the army buried a cannon in the ground here with the muzzle sticking out as the unmovable site for his new theodolite (device for measuring angles) which he trained on Beacon Hill, some 7 miles away. This was now his base line for a trigonometrical survey of Britain and the cannon was of course the GUN END of it. The resultant maps were the product of "The Ordnance Survey" and I think that any of us who have ever used these matchless sheets should visit the small inscribed stone at the side of the road where the cannon muzzle can still be seen and bow down to the great "Smudger Mudge." I am assuming that his mates called him Smudger!

The cannon muzzle at Gun End of Base



BOOK REVIEW by Laurence Main

The Sacred Sphere, by Paul Burley, Beaver's Pond Press Inc, 7104 Ohms Lane, Suite 101, Edina, MN, USA. www.BeaversPondPress.com 2012, pb 535pp, col/bw illus, ISBN 978-1-59298-406-0. US \$ 25.

Do you, like me, start each day by casting a circle within which to say your prayers? If so, you are partaking in an ancient, global practice. This book explores sacred concepts and cosmic consciousness through universal symbolism. The author has an engineering background, is an academic in Minnesota USA, and has lived with the Lakota (whom I knew as the Sioux). His close knowledge of Native American philosophy of life reveals how "native science is born of a lived and storied participation with the natural landscape.... The Native American lifeway is symbolised in many ways by the Sacred Hoop." Everything is done in circles. Other traditions are investigated to display the universality of the symbolism, from Ancient Sumer to India (e.g. the ring of fire around Shiva as Nataraja). The Egyptians, Jews, Mayans, Celts – even the Freemasons – are all shown to share symbols. Ancient mythological teachings are reappearing in theoretical, mathematical discoveries. This comprehensive work links the patterns to the living nature of the land. This conforms to the conclusion of a study of leys.

Nanteos Cup – an update, by Ian Pegler

What a relief it was, just over a year ago, when the Nanteos Cup was recovered a year after having been stolen from the home of the guardian. I know how special the “Welsh Holy Grail” is to some of you so I thought I would write something to bring you up-to-date on more recent events and to relate my point of view regarding events leading up to the theft.

Some of you may know that I am co-authoring a history of the Nanteos Cup with the well-known Arthurian and Holy Grail writer John Matthews, which will draw upon historical work done by the late Fred Stedman Jones, combined with our own research findings. This work is still ongoing and the book is more than half complete. We are now looking for a publisher.

During my researches I discovered that the Cup had been shown on television as early as the 1960s but there seems to have been a long hiatus until the 1990s when the Rev. Lionel Fanthorpe came along with an episode of his “Fortean TV” which revealed the Cup to a modern TV audience. This was the first of about half a dozen or so TV programmes in recent times to show or at least mention the Cup. One of these was an episode of the American show “Unsolved Mysteries” and this was also shown in other countries and dubbed into different languages. In short, the Cup is now the subject of a lot more publicity than it ever got when Margaret Powell was alive. These “Holy Grail” documentaries seem to be produced more for entertainment than for accuracy or historical depth but they are visually impressive and atmospheric. The guardian (Fiona Mirylees) would appear in silhouette, but in a later show with Simon Armitage her identity was revealed.

In the wake of Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) there has been heightened interest in the Grail in all its forms and there was a change in the genre. In place of the spiritual quest we had instead the “page-turner” – novels that imitated Dan Brown's style with its penchant for riddles, clues, mysteries and murders. I discovered that in some of these novels the Nanteos Cup became the “MacGuffin” – the object of desire which certain desperate criminal people would do anything to get hold of.

Well, we now have proof positive that life imitates art because these novels pre-date the time when the Nanteos Cup was stolen *for real*. West Mercia police set up “Operation Icarus” and the search for the Nanteos Cup became part of this wider operation to tackle what is sometimes referred to as “Da Vinci Code inspired theft”. Our churches and cathedrals are no longer a safe place to store religious artefacts of any significant value.

More recently with the advent of a TV show “A Great Welsh Adventure” which featured Griff Rhys Jones there was yet more publicity and Nanteos hotel widely advertised its “Holy Grail bus tour”. Within a few months of this, the Cup was stolen.

It is quite obvious that the Nanteos Cup was specifically targeted by professional crooks who didn't bother stealing anything else. Then came the truly ludicrous response from the press who seemed to go into Monty Python mode, followed by the “salad bowl” story which again resulted in massive publicity through its sheer silliness – more insane babble spouted by the British tabloid media.

The Cup was featured on two BBC Crimewatch appeals, the second of which led to a mysterious meeting on a Welsh lay-by, when this shadowy figure emerged and handed over the Cup. “It was all a bit James Bond” said one police officer – well I despair, but at least the Cup was back in safe hands.

More recently the news broke that the Cup was to be put on permanent display at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. About seven months before the announcement was made official it was rumoured on the Internet that negotiations were under way. The Cup remains the property of the Mirylees family but they have permitted the Cup to be exhibited so that ordinary people may come to look, pause and wonder. Once each year it will be taken to Strata Florida under the auspices of the Strata Florida Project where its traditions will be celebrated.

The Cup now rests in a burglar-proof, glass case. It is rumoured that some compromise arrangement has been reached that will allow the healing tradition to continue but this needs to be squared with the National Library's responsibility for conservation. It is at least now in a safe place. Go and see it!

DISCOVER THE 'HOLY GRAIL'
AT THE NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES

NANTEOS
CUP



THIS FRAGILE PIECE OF WOOD IS ALL THAT REMAINS
OF AN ANCIENT MAZER BOWL COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE NANTEOS CUP.

Volunteers are always welcome to help in many ways. We are all volunteers. Any profits are ploughed back into the Network. We try to reach out to others. If you can make good use of our leaflets, we will send you some. We will take tables at events and give talks to audiences. Articles are written for other magazines. Please just ask!

Network of Ley Hunters

The cross of St Brigid (see back cover)

St Brigid is known as St Ffraid in Wales, as in Llansantffraid (Church of St Bride). Like St Patrick, St Brigid is one of the first Irish Saints. Her Saint's day is 1st February and she is associated with snowdrops.

She was known as 'Mary of the Gael' Patroness of Ireland, and was born in the year 453 AD near Dundalk at Fochard.

The town of Kildare was the venue of her first Irish Convent. The day on which she died was the first day of Spring, 524 AD. Her body lies at Down-Patrick, beside the graves of St Patrick and St Columba.

The usual day for the blessing of St Brigid's Cross is traditionally the first day of Spring and is piously believed to keep evil and hunger from homes in which is displayed and so, down through the ages, these Crosses have been woven and used in Christian homes.

St Brigid's father was a pagan Chieftain. When the time of his death was drawing near she sat by him in prayer. While she kept her long watch, she passed the time by weaving her first cross from rushes at her feet. (Rush and rush matting was the floor covering at that time). Her father, seeing the cross, asked her to explain its meaning, and as a result, became deeply interested in this Cross of Christ – the Christian symbol. He eventually became a Christian, and the Rush Cross has been Brigid's emblem ever since.

It is an ancient Irish tradition to give a cross as a way of marking St Brigid's Day. In some parts of Ireland the custom still survives that when a young couple are married and move into a new house, the Cross is taken from the old home to indicate the continuity of family and faith. It is still exchanged among some farming families and hung in the out-houses to protect the harvest and livestock from lightning and disease. We have one in our house.

When they converted to Christianity, just as they took over the old pagan sites to build their churches on them, they also replaced the old Celtic Gods and Goddesses with Christian Saints. St Bride replaced the Triple Goddess Bridget, composed of Brigid the woman of healing, Brigid the woman of light and Brigid the smith-woman. The Goddess was believed to inspire the poetry of the Druids. Water was also sacred to Brigid.

Megan Wingfield

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BOOK NOW FOR OUR LICHFIELD MOOT

We continue our Pilgrimage up the **Spine of Albion** under the guidance of authors Gary Biltcliffe and Caroline Hoare, dowsing the Elen and Belinus serpents, over the weekend of **Saturday, 9th and Sunday, 10th September, 2017**. Preceding this will be bonus walks led by Laurence Main on **Friday, 8th September**, at Wall (the navel of England) and Lichfield (local bus fares and admission charges payable). We'll be based at the historic Cathedral city of Lichfield (train plus B&Bs). We've negotiated our own field to camp in at only £5 pppn (full facilities) at Fullbrook Farm on the northern edge of Lichfield, postcode WS13 8EP, grid ref. SK118128 on OS Explorer 244 (OS Explorers 220, 232, 245, 258 & 268 also useful). Just say you're with the Ley Hunters when booking your tent pitch for the long weekend (or fewer nights) from Thursday, 7th September, with Sarah on 01543 410759. We've booked our own coach and driver for both the Saturday and the Sunday, starting each day at 9 am from the campsite and picking up at Lichfield City railway station (9.30 am) – returning to both places from 4.30 pm. We'll discover the highlights of the **Spine of Albion** from Barr Beacon through Staffordshire to The Cloud. Some admission charges payable. Cost: **£60** for the whole weekend; £45 for either the Saturday or the Sunday. The Friday is a bonus. **Secure your seat now!** Post your cheque (payable to Network of Ley Hunters) to Laurence Main, 9 Mawddwy Cottages, Minllyn, Dinas Mawddwy, Machynlleth, SY20 9LW, tel. 01650 531354.



The cross of St. Brigid
(see page 36)
Megan Wingfield



The Triple Goddess
Bridget and her two
sisters with the little
people at her feet.
Megan Wingfield

