

FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

Updates from Cornwall Archaeological Society's Area Representatives

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Issue 68

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MILESTONES UPDATE

Ian Thompson of The Milestone Society (<https://www.milestonesociety.co.uk/>) never rests in his research and conservation work. Here is his latest update:

Milestone Society News

Another Tehidy House Milestone found

In 2020, Linda King discovered a milestone inscribed TEH / IDY / 2 / MILE on B3301, the north coast road in mid-Cornwall. This appeared to be the only survivor of a set of milestones erected by the Bassetts of Tehidy on the route from their home, Tehidy House to the church at Gwithian.

In March 2022 Ian Thompson visited the grounds of Tehidy House to look for a stone described as a boundary stone on the HER (ref. MCO 56340). It was marked on the 1880 OS 25" map as 'Stone' in its current location at SW64150 43270, and sketched in Michael Tangye's book 'Tehidy and the Bassetts' (Truran 1984). The stone is the same size (10" by 10" cross section) and shape as the two miles stone on the coast road, with similar lead filled holes in the top. It is inscribed in similar 2" lettering TO / THE / HOU / SE / 1 / MILE. Michael Tangye thought it was a boundary stone, but it must be the missing one mile stone, moved from the north entrance to the Tehidy Estate (SW6402 4380) to its current position sometime late in the 19th century. It is an OOPS (out of position stone).



1. SW64150 43270 Tehidy Country Park, Illogan Photo: Ian Thompson

Milestone Maintenance

In February, Dave Richardson spotted that the milestone on B3254 at Slipperhill, South Petherwin (SX285788) had been broken in two. This was reported to Cornwall Council highways, who removed the milestone for repair. The break appeared to be clean and could be drilled and pinned together again.



2. SX285788 Slipperhill B3258 North Hill Photo
Dave Richardson

In April, Phil Ellery reported that the guide stone, at the St Issey turn on A39 road between St Columb and Wadebridge (SW937682), had been knocked flat. The stone appeared to be undamaged, but needed setting upright again. Cornwall Council highways made a neat job of this in May and agreed that Ian Thompson could repaint the stone, which now looks rather smart.



3. SW937682 A39 St Issey fallen guidestone Photo Phil Ellery



4. SW937682 A39 St Issey guidestone set upright and repainted Photo: Ian Thompson

In June, the Milestone Society received a flurry of reports from Cornwall's milestone watchers about the guidestone at Halwinnick Butts, Linkinhorne (SX3031 7409) which had been knocked by a turning vehicle and was leaning against the bank. Traces of red paint from the vehicle could be seen on the guidestone, which was undamaged. Once again, Cornwall Council highways were contacted and have agreed to set the stone upright.



5. SX303740 leaning guidestone at Halwinnick Butts, Linkinhorne
Photo Iain Rowe

A30 Chiverton to Carland Cross Improvement

The work to build a new dual carriageway parallel to the existing A30 trunk road in mid-Cornwall is massively evident on the ground. It had been planned to lift two of the run of pre-turnpike milestones on the road, store them safely and return them to their original locations at the completion of the road scheme. In May, Ian Thompson went to check on progress.

The milestone at Carland Cross (SW845539) did not need to be moved after all. It was in its original position, guarded by stripy posts and yellow tape.



6. SW845539 A30 Carland Cross in situ Photo: Ian Thompson

Kristina Pill, Costain's engineer in charge of archaeology on the road improvement scheme, showed Ian the other milestone (SW771486) stored on a pallet, swathed in foam plastic, in a locked shipping container in the site compound at Carland Cross, beside two boundary stones, also being stored for safety. One of the boundary stones was broken in two and Ian was able to supply Kristina with details of two Cornish stonemasons experience in repairing this sort of damage. The paperwork for the methodology of lifting, storing and reinstating milestones was exemplary.



7. A30 Carland Cross depot, milestone from SW771486 in protective storage Photo: Ian Thompson

Ian Thompson
July 2022

Ian's book Cornish Milestones: The development of Cornwall's roads in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Twelveheads Press, Truro 2013) is a fascinating, lavishly illustrated account of how our modern road network evolved and is highly recommended.

SIBLYBACK REVEALED

The heatwave and impending drought have directed public attention towards our reservoirs as water levels drop to worryingly low levels. There is one upside though, which is that archaeological features are revealed. Brian Oldham (Area Rep for Liskeard and President of Liskeard Old Cornwall Society) has been investigating the present and past of the reservoir:

Siblyback Reservoir (SX2336070883)

Although 'a large Maglemosian flint obliquely blunted blade with trimming at its base' was recovered from Siblyback Reservoir back in 1983 (HER: 1338), the current low water levels haven't exposed anything quite so exciting. However, the series of Early Medieval field

boundaries, earth and stone banks, and a drainage system (HER: 54731, 54828 and 54733) are revealed, as at 24th July 2022.

Leaving the excellent 'Olive & Co' café in a northerly direction, the remains of a stone wall can soon be seen just above the water level, which continues to the North for about 150m. It ends at the point where it meets another, more distinct, boundary wall (HER: MCO38071) which heads East to the lower slopes of Tregarrick Tor (SX2414171184) and disappears into the Reservoir to the West.



Start of the 150 metre North-South wall

Photo: Brian Oldham



The 150 metre wall ends at East-West wall

Photo: Brian Oldham

From the western bank of the Reservoir a long loop of boundary wall can be seen which ends at the confluence of two of the feeder channels, one bringing water down from Craddock Moor to the East, and the other from Siblyback Moor to the North, both parts of the much larger Bodmin Moor.



East-West wall

Photo: Brian Oldham



Long looping wall at the northern end of the reservoir

Photo: Brian Oldham



Leat from the North on the left; leat from the East straight ahead

Photo: Brian Oldham

The first turf for the Reservoir was cut by Sir Vernon Seccombe. The dam was built in two years and was opened in June 1969 by Sir John Carew Pole after a dedication service led by Bishop Key of Truro. The Reservoir can hold 750 million gallons of water, the following year a Recreation Centre was established, activities are now run by South West Lakes.



Sir Vernon Seccombe cutting the first turf in 1967

On the approach road from Common Moor hamlet is the scheduled Crylla Wayside Cross-shaft (HER: 1297; Scheduled Monument 24258; Listed Building (II) 62194; SX 2372 7041; St Cleer parish) which was moved to its present site in the 1950s from the centre of the road, and had to be re-erected in 1996 after being knocked over by a vehicle (from 'Stone Crosses in East Cornwall' by Andrew Langdon).



Crylla cross-shaft

Photo: Brian Oldham

Report and photos: Brian Oldham

PILLARS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT

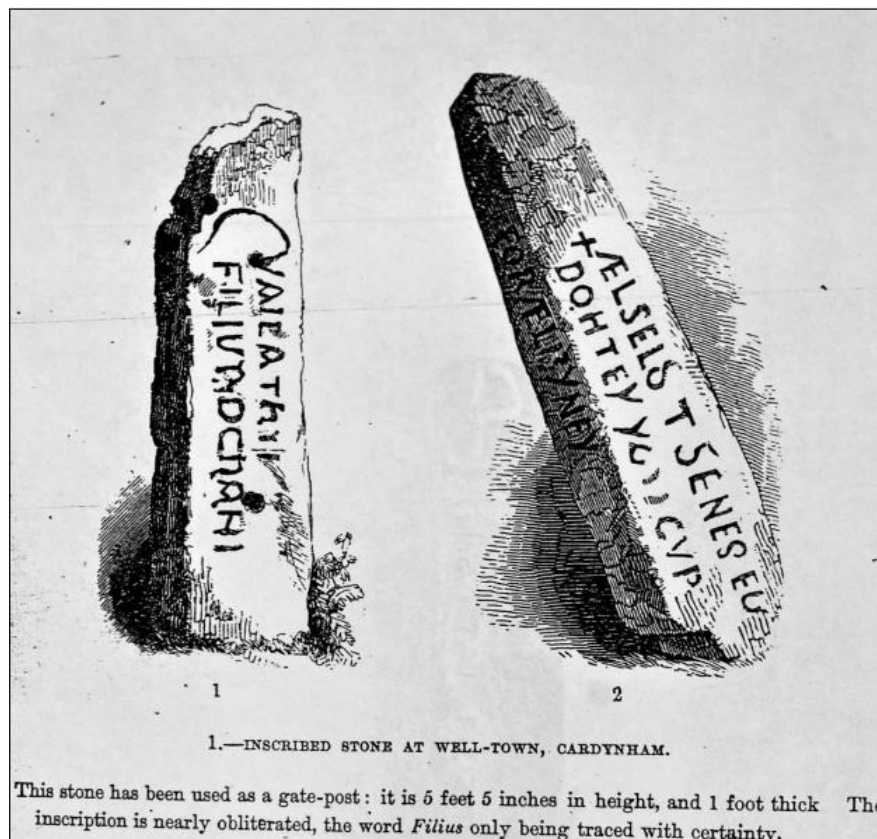
Karen Dickin has been helping to uncover two very significant Early Medieval inscribed stones that had become engulfed with vegetation growth. Together they comprise Scheduled Monument CO152 and are recorded locally as HER 2963 (SX 1360 6784; Cardinham parish) and HER 2964 (SX 1361 6784; Cardinham parish). Here is Karen's account:

Inscribed Stones at Welltown, Cardinham

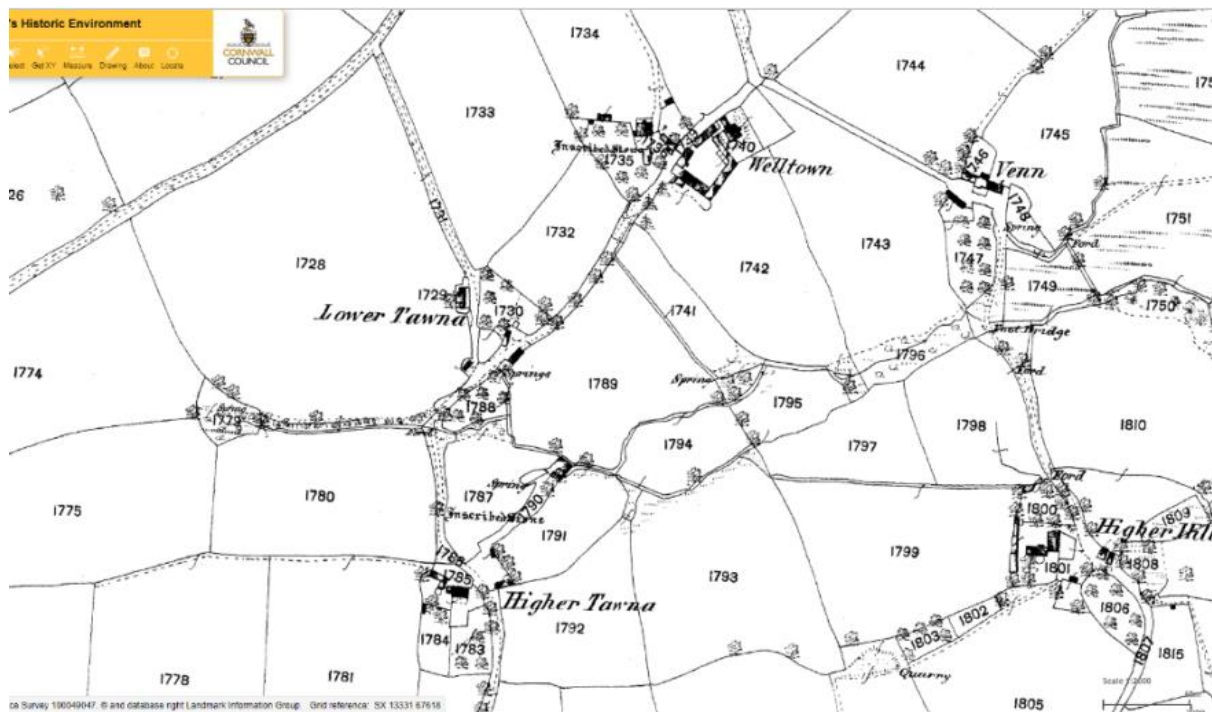
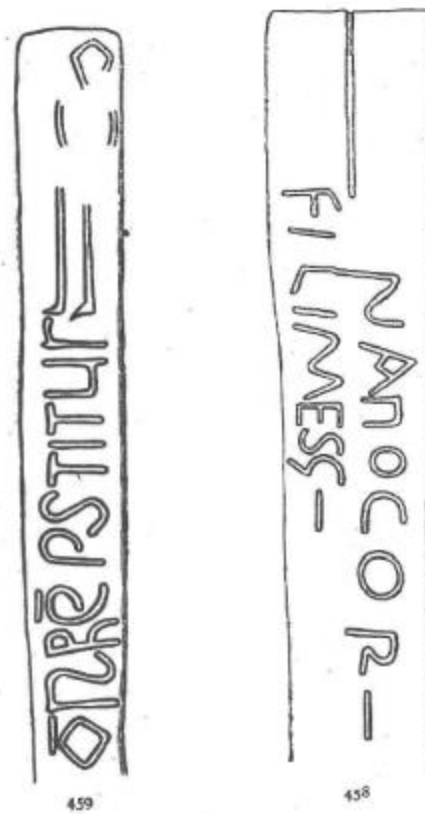
Sitting high on top of the hedge beside the crossroad, just north of Welltown in Cardinham Parish, sit two ancient, inscribed stones. These scheduled monuments are early Christian memorial stones c.AD 400-1100 and quite rare, two of only 37 surviving in Cornwall.

The first stone of rough granite is about 1.5m high and in addition to four modern drilled holes it bears an inscription in two lines of capital letters which reads 'VAILATHI FILI VROCHANI' (Vailithus son of Vrochanus or variation thereof). The stone was moved to its current location from Welltown where it was discovered beside an outbuilding.

The second stone measures approximately 1.7m high with the inscription 'ORATE PRO EP iScopus Titus'. This is thought to refer to a bishop Titus, although not known in the historic record. It was moved to the crossroads from Tawna Lane where it was being used as a gatepost. Both stones were first recorded by Langdon in 1906 and relocated to their current locations in 1932.



RAS Macalister 1945, Corpus inscriptionum insularum Celticarum, vol. I





Photograph of the stones circa 1930

Over the decades, although periodically cut back, vegetation has grown on the hedge, now completely obscuring the iron railings in the photograph above. In June this year there was an urgent need for some clearance work when Ann Preston Jones arranged for Historic England to undertake photogrammetry on the stones. This is a recording technique of taking multiple images of an object which is then stitched together using computer software to create a 3D image and uncover fine geometric details.

Ann Preston Jones, Andrew Langdon and Karen Dickin set to with loppers with the aid of landowner Andrew Hammond and his chainsaw to create better access around the stones.



Vegetation around the stones in June 2022

Photo Karen Dickin



**Landowner Andrew Hammond hard at work
with chainsaw Photo: Karen Dickin**

The impressive 3D images from the photogrammetry are now live to view on the links below:

<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/welltown-memorial-stone-1-4c014f26fb4348a79e5b8ffe2e850371>

<https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/welltown-memorial-stone-2-7522627483ca42bb88015a782006a153>



The stones revealed after clearance June 2022

Photo: Ann Preston Jones

Report by Karen Dickin

P.S. You really must look at the 3D images!

LESS LEAKY LEAT*

**Hopefully*

Luxulyan Valley has an abundance of leats spanning many centuries. The only one that still flows (well, just about) is the Fowey Consols leat (HER 9400; SX 0693 5708; Lanlivery parish). Water is taken from the Bokiddick Stream near Gattys Bridge. Originally (from about 1822) the leat flowed all the way to the massive, internationally important (but largely forgotten) Fowey Consols mine at the top of Penpillick Hill. Joseph Austen (later and better known as Treffry) was keen to use water power if possible and this watercourse was his first significant intervention in the Luxulyan Valley. Incredibly, the leat continued to be useful until very recently as it was adapted to generate hydro-electricity at Pontois Mill first by the china clay industry, then as a community run project in partnership with Restormel Council.

So besides being an historic asset within the World Heritage Site, it has potential to deliver green energy. Unfortunately, it has not functioned properly very recently and no electricity has been produced for some time. To do that, leaks need to be stopped, new fish passes installed and the turbine house revamped – all in all, quite an undertaking. But work has

started on making the leat waterproof, as these photos from Jenny Heskett, Cormac Ranger for Luxulyan Valley, show. Over the years various methods of repairing the sides and base have been used, including clay, foam and even concrete.



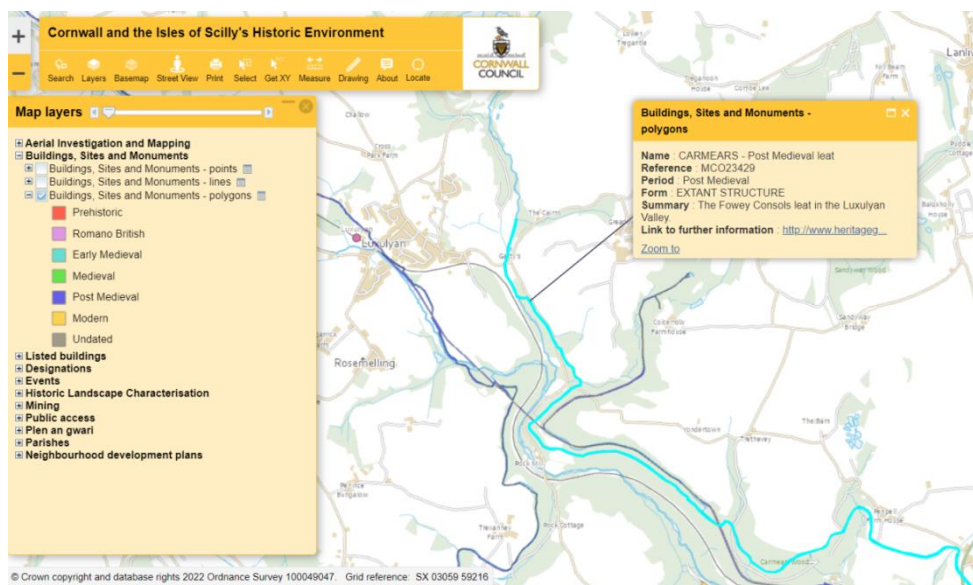
Don Semmler of Cormac inspecting the leat bed

Leats are often thought of as pretty simple features requiring little maintenance but that is not the case. Not only did it take great technical skill to construct them, especially getting the gradient right, but they need frequent, regular attention and a significant investment in materials and manpower. Jenny and her colleague Don Semmler inspect this leat every week, in addition to looking after the rest of the Valley. The leat requires all sorts of care, such as mending leaks, clearing leaves and branches, and dealing with the erosion caused by dogs climbing in and out. But for it to flow properly, this major intervention is essential. It does mean that the leat path is temporarily closed but hopefully it will be worth it in the long run.

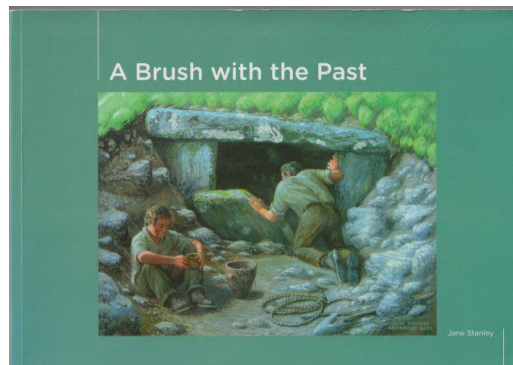


An old repair using concrete revealed

As an aside, some people might wonder how a linear feature like a leat is shown on the online Historic Environment Record map. Lots of features are shown with a dot, colour-coded to show the period of origin, which is linked to Heritage Gateway. But what if the feature is not confined to a specific point? Well, the clever people at Cornwall Council Historic Environment Service have thought of that. If you go to the online mapping at https://map.cornwall.gov.uk/website/ccmap/?zoomlevel=1&xcoord=162690&ycoord=64380&wsName=CIO_historic_environment&layerName=, select the *Buildings, Sites and Monuments* layer and click 'polygons'. In the case of the Fowey Consols leat, you can see that it is indicated by a polygon:



A BRUSH WITH THE PAST



You have visited the sites, read the dig reports and the evidence is stacking up in your mind, but still there is the nagging thought 'What was it really like to live back then?' Recreations on TV and in film don't quite convince you. If this is your experience of archaeological sites in Cornwall there is a solution in the form of Jane Stanley's *A Brush with the Past*.

Jane Stanley's reconstruction paintings blend artistic skill with details obtained from the very best archaeological research. She has captured the day-to-day lives of people at numerous sites in Cornwall from Mesolithic times onwards. Now we can see what life would have been like.

The book comprises 151 pages, is printed on high quality paper with over 50 full-colour illustrations. In addition to reproductions of the paintings there are sections explaining the research on which they are based. Originally published in 2009, these beautiful books have become hard to obtain. Now a small supply has become available and can be purchased from Cornwall Archaeological Society: journalsales@cornisharchaeology.org.uk.

Paperback:

Retail price: £10, plus postage and packing

Hardback

Retail price: £15, plus postage and packing

The late Tony Blackman, formerly President of Cornwall Archaeological Society and Chairman of Cornwall Heritage Trust, said this of the book:

'This is an outstanding collection of artwork, which really brings Cornwall's past to life.'

SPECIAL OFFER!!!!

If you live in Mid-Cornwall (taking Lanivet to be the centre) it may be possible to deliver your copy free. To check if this is the case, please contact:

secretary@cornisharchaeology.org.uk

HOW TO BUY YOUR COPY

We hope to have copies for sale at future talks, walks and other events. Or you can order by completing this form.

Name	
Address	
Email address/telephone	

Item	Number required	Add postage and packing	Total payment
<i>A Brush with the Past</i> paperback @ £10		£3.75 (UK only)	
<i>A Brush with the Past</i> hardback @ £15		£3.75 Per copy (UK only)	
		Total payment	

By cheque

Cheques should be made out to *Cornwall Archaeological Society*. Please send the cheque and completed order form to:

CAS Secretary, 18 St Sulien, Luxulyan, Bodmin, Cornwall, PL30 5EB

Online payment by card or PayPal

1. Please email this order to journalsales@cornisharchaeology.org.uk
2. To pay, go to <https://cornisharchaeology.org.uk/>. Press the *Make a Donation* button. This will bring up the following table. You can select 'Other' to enter the amount.

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Area Representatives would love to hear from fellow CAS members, and the general public, about any feature of the historic environment in their parishes, whether a new discovery, something causing concern, or even just to answer queries. If you have any concerns, or new information, about any archaeological feature, please contact the Area Representative for the parish. If you do not know who that is, just look at the inside back cover of the latest journal, *Cornish Archaeology* 58, or send an email to arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk.

Roger Smith, 15th August 2022

