

FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

Updates from Cornwall Archaeological Society's Area Representatives

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Issue 52

THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

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AROUND THE COUNTY

Hands up if 'Zoom' or 'Microsoft Teams' were known to you a year ago? Very few CAS Area Reps would have put their hands up, yet they are now proficient in communicating across cyberspace. So on March 13th we had the first Zoom meeting of the year, convened by Iain Rowe.

We were lucky to be joined by representatives of Cornwall AONB, Cornwall and Scilly Historic Environment Service, and Historic England. PC Julian Fry, Rural Affairs Officer, Devon and Cornwall Police, spoke about heritage crime (see *ON THE CASE OF HERITAGE CRIME* below). Tasha Fullbrook, who is Cornwall's Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, and a CAS trustee, introduced herself and gave a short talk on the scheme.

The meeting was also an opportunity for Area Reps to give updates from their own parishes:

In the following report Sheila James describes investigations of a clapper bridge and a Methodist chapel on an ancient site:

HER MCO58723 Treloggas Clapper Bridge

The remains of a clapper bridge over a stream between Treloggas and Higher Lanner, Kea parish, were identified and recorded in the HER in 2017. During storms the following winter the bridge was partially swept away. All remnants of the old bridge have now been cleared away and a new bridge built over the stream. Nothing of the old bridge has been retained.



Treloggas Clapper Bridge, March 2017

Photo: Sheila James



Treloggas Bridge after it had been broken in the storm.

Photo: Sheila James



Treloggas new bridge, November 2020

Photo: Sheila James

HER MCO32169 Carnon Downs Wesleyan Chapel

The small building to the rear of Carnon Downs Wesleyan Chapel is in a poor state of repair and a pre-application planning enquiry has been raised for advice on its demolition.



Carnon Downs Wesleyan Chapel stable, March 2020.

Photo: Sheila James

The chapel was built in 1825 and the stable was built in 1834, as recorded in the Chapel Account Books now in the records office, reference CRO MRT/117. The stable was intended “for keeping the Preacher’s horses” and was built some distance to the rear of the chapel, which was later extended to join it. The stable was built by local resident William Murton who had requested permission to lease land from the Chapel on which to build a cottage. One of the conditions for granting the lease was that Mr Murton

should build the stable. In order to do so, he was further granted permission to “carry off as much earth of the old Barrow at the end of the Chapel as he shall think proper”. This is the only reference to a barrow on the site, but the reference has been added to the HER (MCO55294) as the location is in rough alignment with a number of other Bronze Age barrows in and around the village. If the stable is demolished, there will be an opportunity to investigate the ground underneath.

According to Ms Ann Street, who raised the application on behalf of the Chapel, the stable building is considered to be dangerous as it is liable to collapse and has an asbestos roof. It cannot be demolished yet because a bat survey identified a single bat roosting there. The next bat survey is due in May/June. Following a report from the HER an historical impact report has been requested from the Heritage Trust. Assuming the demolition is allowed to go ahead, the site is to be used as a memorial garden. If it is the site of a Bronze Age barrow then this would be quite appropriate!

Report and photos by Sheila James

Peter Crispin was impressed with Cormac’s latest repairs to Trekelland Bridge (see Issue 51) and was praying fervently that there would be no more collisions. So far, there was no more news about the Lezant stone row but when there is it will definitely be covered in *From Your Own Correspondents*.

Karen Dickin and Emma Allen had different observations about monuments on Bodmin Moor. Karen noted that gorse was encroaching on the Trippet Stone Circle on Manor Common (HER 1928; Scheduled Monument CO126; Blisland, SX 1310 7501) and had made arrangements with the relevant authority to do some clearance when the lockdown was eased.



Trippet stone circle

Photo: Karen Dickin

Emma Allen was curious about disturbances of the turf around some stones at the mysterious King Arthur's Hall (HER 1967; Scheduled Monument CO81; St Breward, SX 1297 7765). So far no explanation has been discovered.



King Arthur's Hall

Photo: Emma Allen



What has caused this?

Photo: Emma Allen

The society has received other reports about disturbance of stones on features in the Minions area and the situation is being monitored by the relevant authorities.

CAS members will have had a chance to read John Allan's fascinating paper on the architecture of Launceston Priory (HER 2613; Listed Building (II*) 370061, Scheduled Monument CO268; Launceston, SX 3281 8501) in the latest journal (*Cornish Archaeology* 58), which includes Richard Parker's account of how he made his wonderful reconstruction drawing of how the complex may have looked circa 1500. Launceston was the largest Cornish monastic house and was staffed by Augustinian canons. Diana Sutherland has been tracking a planning application for '8 dwellings and associated infrastructure on *previous approved land*' and has been trying to discover if the previous application, or the present one, will require an archaeological survey as a condition. She noted that: 'A previous house building spree, on the north side of this area, for some reason did not have archaeological input and a lot of granite slabs were found and thrown aside. These now reside in the museum part of the Launceston Steam Railway but, of course, by the time they were collected it was too late to speculate on their use.'

Andrew Langdon reported that work on the A30 between Chybucca and Carland Cross had started. A line of boundary stones existed in this area (including HER MCO62892; Kenwyn SW 7784 4876). Two had disappeared, hopefully just for temporary storage while the work was carried out, but he would keep an eye on the situation.

Nigel Allen was very concerned about the condition of Great Wheal Busy near Chacewater. This is the only Scheduled Monument in the parish (HER 19318; Scheduled Monument 32992; SW 7393 4462) and played a very significant part in Cornwall's mining and engineering history. The calciner (HER MCO61254; Scheduled Monument 32992; Listed Building 63184; SW 7382 4453) has become the focus of large amounts of fly tipping and the metal work is in poor, possibly dangerous, condition. The smithy (HER 19318.02; Listed Building 492506; SW 7388 4475) is in a sadly neglected state too.

TRENCROM HILL?

On a post lockdown trip to Trencrom Hill (HER 31136; Scheduled Monument CO31; Ludgvan SW 5178 3621) Adrian Rodda was dismayed to find signs of digging. He suspects rogue metal detectorists have been at work. Lest responsible detectorists take unnecessary offence, it should be pointed out that it is only illegal activity that is being criticised here. Most detectorists follow a code of practice, report any finds to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and collectively have made a huge contribution to archaeological knowledge since the scheme began. They would be among the first to condemn digging anywhere on a Scheduled Monument. You can read more about their Code of Practice at <https://finds.org.uk/getinvolved/guides/codeofpractice> . And if you would like to see examples of some great finds, try the PAS database: <https://finds.org.uk/database> . Here is Adrian's piece about Heritage Crime at Trencrom hillfort:

Where better to go once one could drive further than in my case the forbidden but promised land west of the Hayle River? To take my dog up Trencrom has been an ambition that could be realised on 1st April. There was a shock waiting at the summit, but I was not

fooled. Metal detectorists had taken advantage of the lockdown quiet to explore the Neolithic tor enclosure with its fully looted Bronze Age Barrows. Having recently read a new edition of English Heritage's booklet on Heritage Crime I could recognise the pits and scrapes for what they are. The shape of the favoured metal detectorist's tool was clear. I had seen what I suspect are detectorists' intrusions around the cross at St Piran, but with the area being sand and rabbits often enlarging the scrapes, as well as digging their own, it is hard to be certain. These shallow pits are definitely illegal interference on a Scheduled Monument.



Photo: Adrian Rodda



Photo: Adrian Rodda



Photo: Adrian Rodda



Photo: Adrian Rodda

They had also pecked away at the base of random grounders. I think this had been reported some time ago, (pers com John Moss) which goes to show how long the damage can linger. Very sad.

Report and photos: Adrian Rodda

ON THE CASE OF HERITAGE CRIME

Devon and Cornwall Police force is giving heritage crime a much higher priority. The change came in 2018 when the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) announced a new Rural Strategy to tackle wildlife and rural crime across the UK. While the named priorities (theft of farm machinery; livestock offences; fuel theft; equine offences; fly tipping; and poaching) do not specifically mention heritage, it has been found that there is a crossover between the perpetrators of those crimes and those who are a threat to heritage. Consequently, Devon and Cornwall Police have developed a Heritage Crime policy. This has allocated defined roles to the Rural Affairs team, which has 2 officers in Devon and 2 in Cornwall. PC Julian Fry provides the lead for both counties. Nationally, there has been a move to appoint Heritage Crime Liaison Officers, with such crimes being defined as 'Any offence involving damage or loss to the historic environment, including all such offences involving cultural property'.

According to Historic England: *'Unlawful works, theft, criminal damage and anti-social behaviour can be devastating to individual historic buildings or sites and have an attritional effect on our heritage generally. Around 20% of listed buildings are harmed by crime every year and the figure is near double for listed places of worship.'*

More information can be found here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/heritage-crime/>.

So, what should we do if we suspect heritage crime?

How to contact Devon and Cornwall police:

Do you need help and advice? Not sure where to look or who to speak to? Why not AskNED – Devon and Cornwall Police's non-emergency directory.

AskNED combines the most commonly asked questions with contact details of those who can help.

If you do need to contact Devon and Cornwall Police about a non-emergency, you can contact them via:

- Online webchat at dc.police.uk
- Online crime reporting form
- Phone: 101
- Email: 101@dc.police.uk
- More information

In an emergency situation, always dial 999

You can also report crime anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via their website: crimestoppers-uk.org

VIEWING REDGATE CROSS – A THORNY PROBLEM

Iain Rowe's Good Friday exercise was very appropriate – clearing thorns from a cross. This was Redgate Cross (HER 17260; Scheduled Monument 24253; St Cleer, SX 2277 6858). If you have visited the Doniert stone you may have passed this monument but there is a very good chance that you may not have seen it because of vegetation and a rash of road signs. Iain's work has made it easier to see and appreciate.

This is the description from Heritage Gateway:

A mutilated Latin cross stands at the north-east corner of Redgate cross roads and is recorded by the OS as the remains of a stone cross (h2, b4). This cross was set up in its present position by Liskeard Old Cornwall Society after its removal from North Trekeive Farm (17260.1) in 1930 where it had been found in use as a gatepost (b2, b3, b5). The cross consists of a granite shaft 1.7m high, 0.36m wide and 0.203m thick. It has no arms but has an incised latin cross on both faces, 0.76m long and 0.203m wide (h1, h3). The cross is now mounted on a heavy boulder (h1) although the OS record that the base is concrete (h2). The cross has a chamfer cut down one side and the remains of a staple leaded into one side (h1, h3). The monument is included in the Schedule, revised August 1993.

Iain's first job was to locate the cross, not easy with the visual dominance of numerous road signs. However, it is just visible in this picture if you look very, very carefully.



Redgate Cross sitting shyly behind modern clutter

Photo: Iain Rowe

As the next 3 photos show, the cross was shrouded in vegetation, so Iain duly rolled up his sleeves and started clearing.



Photo: Iain Rowe



Photo: Iain Rowe

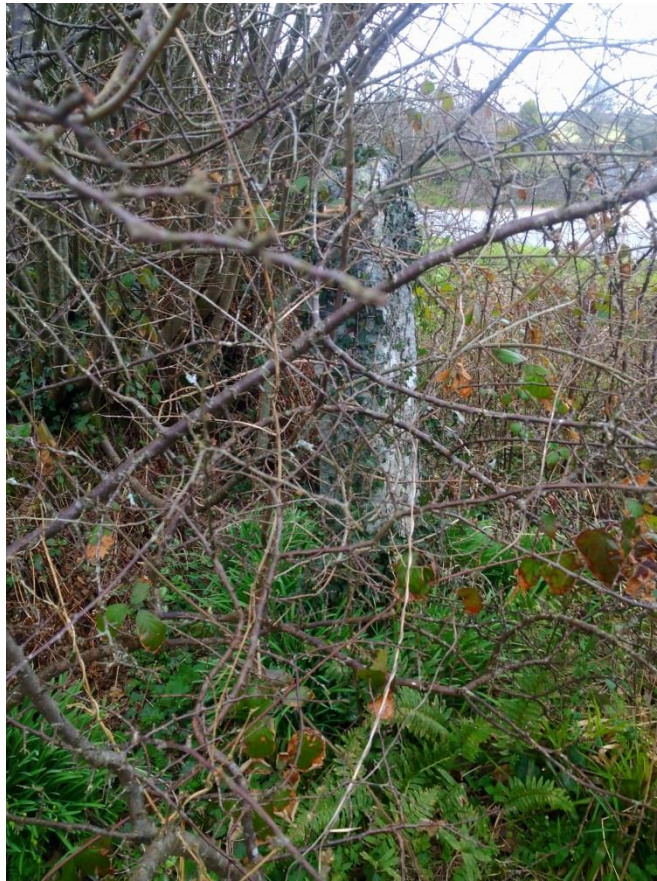


Photo: Iain Rowe

His efforts paid off. At last, the Latin cross was visible.



Photo: Iain Rowe



Photo: Iain Rowe



Photo: Iain Rowe

Showing immense self control (or perhaps a lack of cutting equipment) Iain left the road signs but his work has made this lovely cross visible again. Not only that, he cycled all the way from Liskeard to do this work.



Photo: Iain Rowe

The good news is that plans are being made to tidy up this verge, so that the cross will be visible and not obscured by so many signs.

CORNISH STONE STILES SURVEY

Ian Thompson of the Milestone Society is keen to record the numerous ancient stiles on local footpaths. Our extensive footpath network can tell us much about our ancestors' movements between the significant locations in their communities. The durability of stone stiles means that they remain as markers of routeways that may be of great age. However, very few are on the Historic Environment Record. Indeed there may be no records of many of them at all. Worse still, some may be under threat. Ian has been in touch with Dr John Riley, Secretary of St Just and Pendeen Old Cornwall Society and CAS trustee, who has recently been involved in the emergency rescue of a coffin stile near St Just. In Gloucestershire a survey of stone stiles is underway and Ian has obtained permission from the survey's founder, Peter Wilson, to modify his survey form for use in Cornwall.



Stile on Luxulyan Footpath 408/7/1 near Trevellyn Farm (SX 04303 6112)

Ian says he is willing to 'collate the survey forms and submit the data to Cornwall's HER, if they would be willing to help, to post the data and images on Historic England's Heritage Gateway. I know this is not listing, but it is a step in the right direction. At least we would know what we had.' This is the form (which you should also have received as a separate attachment):

Cornwall Stone Stiles Project

There is no definitive list of Stone Stiles in Cornwall and most are unprotected and yet a valued feature of our countryside. Most are over 200 years old and we invite your help in producing a record of them, as a further step to securing their preservation.

Your name:

Your email address: (not for publication):

Photograph(s) enclosed:

(Permission is given to publish if the photographer is acknowledged. Please photograph the most visible side of the stile. More than one photo would be welcome.)

Date of photo(s):

Location of stile:

MAP REFERENCE:

Describe location:

Right of way: From:

To:

Parish:

Please add anything known about the stiles below.

When built:

Accessibility:

If Private or on public right of way:

Any other information:

Signed:

Date:

Thank you for helping with our Cornwall Stone Stiles Project.

Please return this form and your photos of the stile to:

i.thompson029@btinternet.com

Or post to: Ian Thompson, 4 Penmere Drive, Newquay, Cornwall, TR7 1QQ

Thanks are due to Peter Wilson of the Gloucestershire Stone Stiles Project and the Council for the Preservation of Rural England for the design of this form.



A recently collapsed stile on Luxulyan Footpath 408/9/1 near Higher Menadue. Will it be repaired or lost for ever? Recording it may reduce the chances of it being lost for ever.

The stones used in stiles may have had interesting previous uses, such as Rostigan cross shaft, incorporated in a stile on St Wenn Footpath 423/10/1 (HER4112; St Wenn, SW 9718 6468). The lower portion of a cross shaft was found in 1989 following a search for a cross recorded as a bound stone in 1601. The tenon can be seen on the left in the photograph below. Who knows what will be discovered in this survey?



This is not only a worthwhile project in its own right, it will allow you to get exercise and learn about your local paths. Finding information about paths, including the parish and the path numbers is really easy because all the information is on the Historic Environment interactive mapping page at:

https://map.cornwall.gov.uk/website/ccmap/?wsName=CLOS_historic_environment

Please get involved!

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* 57, or send an email to arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk .

Roger Smith, 16th April 2021

