

## FROM YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENTS

### Updates from Cornwall Archaeological Society's Area Representatives

Any opinions or errors in these articles are those of the authors and must not be assumed to be those of Cornwall Archaeological Society.

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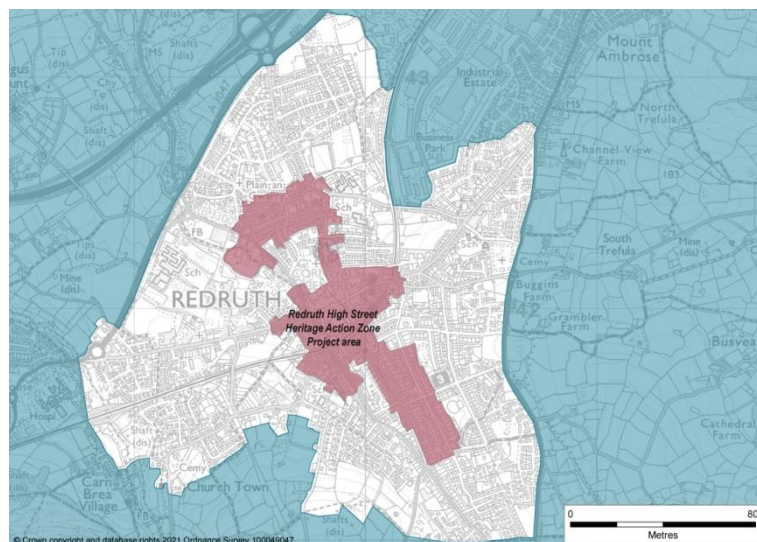
### THIS MONTH'S FEATURES

- **ENTERING THE LISTS**
- **STILES AND MORE IN THE FAR WEST**
- **CALSTOCK ROMAN FORT OPEN DAY**
- **MOOR HELP FOR CHILDREN IN NEED**
- **INVESTIGATING BRIDGES**
- **PROBLEMATIC PRESERVATION OF PAN-KILNS**

### ENTERING THE LISTS

How well do you know your own village, town or parish? Can you think of anything that tells you about the history or archaeology of your local area that deserves official recognition? Even though Cornwall's Historic Environment Record is wide-ranging, its custodians would never claim that it covers everything. Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks, Gardens and Battlefields may be found there, as well as historic wrecks, mines etc, but people who know their own patch will almost certainly be able to point to unrecorded features and say, 'Over there, behind that wall, is a well', or 'That cottage was a cobbler's shop where children were taught before the Board School was built', and so on. What a shame it would be if this knowledge was to be allowed to dribble into the sands of time and be forgotten. The good news is that Cornwall Council has launched a pilot study in two areas to allow us, the public, to add features to the Cornwall Local Heritage List. This will identify and record 'heritage assets that are significant and have local distinctiveness but would not meet the criteria for being nationally designated. This could include all types of heritage assets that hold meaning for people, from a network of stiles along a popular walk, to an historic pub, or a quarry with surviving features, an artist's studio, a local park or cluster of farm buildings'.

The pilot project is looking at two areas: the china clay area and Redruth.



Both areas are historically and archaeologically rich yet offer huge potential for identifying more features. Matthew Knight (Senior Strategic Historic Environment Advisor) and Annemarie Bala (Cornwall Local Heritage List Community Outreach Officer) from Cornwall Council's Strategic Historic Environment Team have issued this invitation to anyone who'd like to get involved:

*We encourage anyone with a particular interest in heritage to register their interest via email at [LocalList@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:LocalList@cornwall.gov.uk) to volunteer and improve our records for each site.*

*Once on the list, these assets become known as Non-Designated Heritage Assets (NDHAs). They differ from those sites that have statutory protection and national designations, such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens.*

*You can volunteer to add the entries to the Local Heritage List with the designated candidates by [registering](#). This process will involve using our digital platform to add the relevant information. There will be training provided and some technical support for this role. Other volunteering roles may involve researching particular places of interest, helping with data entry or sharing your story about a place you care about.*

There will be an online training session for the public on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 4-6 pm, or you can access the training on YouTube (see below).



**A candidate for inclusion: Luxulyan Institute**



**A candidate for inclusion: Former board school in Luxulyan**



Matthew and Annemarie have gone to great lengths to provide simple guidance. For more information, training, how to register and the project's website, go to:

**Website:** <https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cornwall>

**Register:** <https://local-heritage-list.org.uk/cornwall/local-heritage-list-pilot-areas>

**Training videos:** [Cornwall's Local Heritage List Project - Training Part 1 - YouTube](#) and [Cornwall & Isles of Scilly HER - YouTube](#)

And if you still have queries:

**Contact us for any enquiries at:** [LocalList@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:LocalList@cornwall.gov.uk)

Some, like the writer of this (born in Redruth and living in the clay country) might feel a special inspiration to get involved but it is open to everyone, and it is hoped that one day the scheme might be spread to the whole of the county.

## STILES AND MORE IN THE FAR WEST

Dr John Riley is a busy man. Not only is he a trustee of Cornwall Archaeological Society but he is also the secretary of St Just & Pendeen Old Cornwall Society. He and fellow OCS members have thrown themselves into the Cornwall Stone Stiles Survey initiated earlier this year by Ian Thompson (see *From Your Own Correspondents* 54, June 2021). As a result they have been able to record numerous stiles in their area and by doing so have drawn attention to pathways and routes that have been, and still are, locally important. John has very kindly sent in some photos of these stiles. Just looking at them makes you want to put on walking boots and explore further.



St Just stile 3 from the south

Photo: John Riley



St Just stile 4 from the north

Photo: John Riley



St Just stile 24 from the east

Photo: John Riley





St Just stile 24 from the west

Photo: John Riley



St Just stile 29 from the east

Photo: John Riley



St Just stile 55 from the south

Photo: John Riley



St Just stile 66 from the south

Photo: John Riley



One of the advantages of exploring on foot is that there is so much more to see, as John demonstrates with this picture of a cross re-used as a lintel at Zennor (Treveglos medieval cross; HER 33294; SW 4544 3850; Zennor parish). John writes: 'on the occasion of the Cornish Ancient Sites Protection Network (CASPN) Pathways to the Past visit to Zennor last May, I photographed this cross slab used as a lintel at the back of the Tinnners' Arms pub in Zennor. I kindly received the following comment on it from Professor Michelle Brown, FSA, who said that this: "is a stylised modification of a Celtic ring-headed cross (with the 4 bosses representing the interstices in a ring head and emphasising the numerological symbolism of the fourfold gospel harmony). I would say it is probably 10th-11th century in date and of recumbent grave slab form, of the sort we found when excavating the St Buryan churchyard cross with CAU about 4 years ago."'



Lintel at the Tinnners' Arms, Zennor

Photo: John Riley



Lintel at the Tinnners' Arms, Zennor

Photo: John Riley

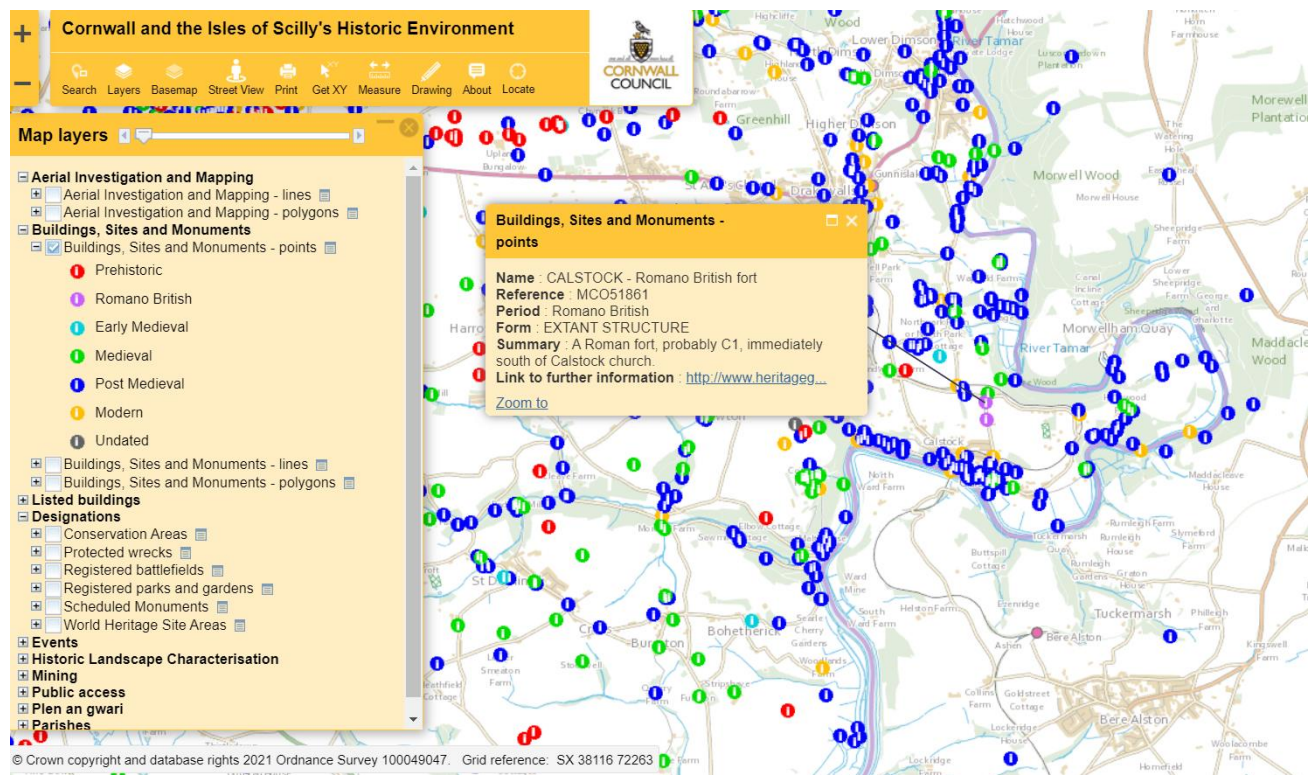


### Further information:

- A recording form for the **Cornish Stone Stiles Survey** can be found here: <https://www.cornwalllocalhistorians.co.uk/stiles>
- **St Just & Pendeen Old Cornwall Society** website: <https://kernowgoth.org/member-societies/st-just-pendeen-old-cornwall-society/>
- **Cornwall Ancient Sites Protection Network (CASPN)**: <https://cornishancientsites.com/> and <https://en-gb.facebook.com/groups/137301386294086/>

## CALSTOCK ROMAN FORT OPEN DAY

*Richard Heard attended the recent open day at Calstock Roman Fort (HER 176023; SX 4362 6918; Calstock parish). The project is being led by Dr Chris Smart of Exeter University (see: <https://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/archaeology/research/projects/calstock/> ).*



*Here is Richard's report:*

We entered a field opposite the church and were directed to the east side of Calstock Roman Fort. A large L-shaped ditch was nearing closure of excavation. At the east end of the same, 2 two metre sections of ditches and ramparts were exposed. The ditches were typically V-shaped and judged to be back-filled with rampart material.

Some sort of deep sump was excavated within the fort. Beam slots for barrack blocks were found but one arm of the L-shaped ditch southwards was dominated by a subsequent medieval farm and a metalled road.



East end of fort, looking westward

Photo: Richard Heard

About one hundred metres southwards, shrouded by mist, was a second trench. This was chosen to investigate an unusual outer polygonal fortification (as seen on geophysics); again evidence of rampart and ditch plus a likely gateway. Apparently the ditch yielded much occupation rubbish and "crates of finds"!

In the finds tent we were shown south-west lattice decorated ware, amphorae sherds, a fine ware resembling white china, samian ware, ironwork and various curiosities. Only one period coin was found.





Finds exhibits under an Awning for the Open Day

Photo: Richard Heard

Dr. Chris Smart, Director, declares the fort was only in use for 20 years, assumed to be 55 AD to 75 AD when the Exeter Legion departed for Chester. Look out for publication, it will fascinate.

**Text and photos: R.M.Heard**

## MOOR HELP FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

*Indefatigable Brian Oldham (President of Liskeard Old Cornwall Society and CAS Area Representative) recently organised a very successful BBC Children in Need Ramble which combined archaeology and fund-raising. Here is Brian's report:*

The 1840s saw a number of mines and quarries opening up on Bodmin Moor, north of the village of Minions. The Duchy of Cornwall, presumably concerned about the possible loss of dues from the mines and rent from the quarries, decided to clarify the extent of their Manor of Rillaton. Unable to build hedges or fences on this unenclosed area of the moor, they decided to erect 10 Boundary Stones and make use of 2 *in situ* boulders of granite, each one carved with 'RIL 1846' and its individual number from 1 to 12.

A visit to all 12 markers was the aim of a on October 9th, organised by CAS Area Representative Brian Oldham. In preparation for the Ramble Brian obtained permission to visit '5 RIL 1846', the only one on private property, and gave it a clean up first.



'5 RIL 1846' before

Photo: Brian Oldham



'5 RIL 1846' after

Photo: Brian Oldham



'12 RIL 1846' has always been a challenge to locate, so that was given a tidy up as well.



'12 RIL 1846' before

Photo: Brian Oldham



'12RIL 1846' after

Photo: Brian Oldham



All 40 ramblers, including Brian, had only ever seen '11' and an arrow to its right carved into a boulder at the far western extremity of Bearah Tor, until the suggestion was made that perhaps we should follow the arrow! Which we did, and to everyone's delight '11 RIL 1846' was located further along the tor. Brian returned a few days later for another cleaning job. It has to be mentioned that, although this discovery was new to those present, Peter Moore had indeed written of it in his book 'The Southern Moor'\*, so not the ground breaking discovery we thought it was.



'11RIL 1846' before

Photo: Brian Oldham



'11RIL 1846' after

Photo: Brian Oldham





'11RIL 1846' with Bearah Tor beyond

Photo: Brian Oldham

Brian had set a target of £200 to raise for BBC Children In Need; donations to date have now exceeded £900! This is the link if you feel inclined to add to the total [www.justgiving.com/Brian-Oldham1](http://www.justgiving.com/Brian-Oldham1). A Zoom chat with John Craven took place on Langstone Down and, if selected, will appear on Countryfile on October 24th.



Brian and fellow walkers wave for the BBC's John Craven at '9RL46'

**Text and photos: Brian Oldham**

\* *Moors, Hills and Tors, Discover Bodmin Moor on Foot the Southern Moor*, Peter Moore (St Ives Printing and Publishing Company, 2013).

## INVESTIGATING BRIDGES

This newsletter has often featured medieval stone bridges, usually reporting damage to them caused by motor traffic and, sadly, this edition will be no exception, but more of that later. It is more uplifting to learn of a welcome initiative to study, catalogue and generally appreciate Britain's historic stone bridges. Earlier this week, completely out of the blue, a pamphlet arrived explaining the methodology and results of a nationwide survey. The person behind this is Dr T. Robertson, a retired research manager with a background in physics and metallurgy, and evidently very knowledgeable in the field of civil engineering. He has very kindly sent a copy to Cornwall Archaeological Society for the use of our members.

In this fascinating pamphlet, *Some Recent Investigations of the Historic Stone Bridges of the British Isles* (Dr T. Robinson, Rigg Free Publications, Edinburgh, 2022, ISBN 978-17399648) he describes how the project began and grew. At first he intended to revisit the surveys of Edwin Jervoise (*The Ancient Bridges of Wales and Western England*, Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings, London 1936) and to add information on other areas, including Scotland and Ireland. After starting a database, he set himself a further task of estimating survival rates for bridges known to have existed in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. His findings may be found on his excellent website:

<https://historicbridgesofbritain.com/> (and also through a master website, <https://drtomsbooks.files.wordpress.com/2021/07/the-old-bridges-of-great-britain-2021-review-h.pdf> ).

Some of this has been desktop research, including the use of John Leland's references to bridges in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and digitised versions of maps produced by Christopher Saxton (c. 1585) and John Speed (c. 1610). He has also visited 835 (93%) of the bridges that met the criteria of his project and appears slightly vexed that 68 were beyond his reach!

To cherry-pick his findings would be a disservice to such a wide-ranging investigation but it is interesting to note that: 'Over a thousand bridges on late 16<sup>th</sup> century maps of England and Wales were identified and reference to the compendium showed that 17% had survived.' In the South-West the survival rate is 18%.

Anyone interested in ancient bridges will enjoy and learn from Dr Robertson's research, which, he points out, is continuing.

Well, that was the good news, and readers will, no doubt, have a premonition of what will come next. Ruthern Bridge (HER 26032; Scheduled Monument 15576; Listed Building (II\*) 67605; Lanivet parish) is a beautiful structure thought to have been built around 1450, possibly by the canons of Bodmin priory. Not so long ago it was repeatedly damaged, allegedly by farm traffic, and was considered by Historic England to be at risk.



Then, mysteriously, stout wooden posts appeared at the approaches to the bridge and all seemed well. And now – you have guessed it – this lovely old bridge has been hit again.



The eastern approach with the wooden posts and damaged section beyond



A length of the parapet has been dislodged





During this visit several large tractors and trailers crossed the bridge at a brisk pace but that doesn't prove anything about the cause of the damage



Masonry from the parapet now lies in the river below

This sad situation prompts the fear that Dr Robertson may have to adjust his figure for the survival rate of ancient Cornish bridges downwards if this sort of carnage continues.



## PROBLEMATIC PRESERVATION OF PAN-KILNS

Is there a decline in the number of pan-kilns, or china-clay dries as they are often called? These were developed from the 1860s and 1870s as a more effective method for drying china-clay. John Smith in *Cornwall's China Clay Heritage* (John R. Smith, Cornwall Archaeological Unit, Twelveheads Press, 1992) explains their function:

*The design was simple, echoing the principle of the old Romn bath-house, with its hypocaust, or heated floor. A furnace at one end of the building was connected to a chimney stack at the other by a series of brick flues running beneath a tiled floor. The tiles on the floor, or **pan**, were porous. At the rear of the kiln or **dry** were a series of stone-lined settling tanks into which the clay slurry was run and allowed to settle, the clear water being drawn off from the top at intervals. When the clay had thickened to the consistency of a thick cream it was run onto the floor of the pan through hatch doors, and spread to an even thickness. The hot flue gases drew the moisture from the clay through the porous tiles and out through the stack in a white plume. Below the the pan was the **Linhay** or storage area, into which the clay was shovelled when dry.*

These buildings were once commonplace, especially in the china-clay heartland of mid Cornwall, and many readers will remember them being in use, but that seems to be changing. Some dries are being engulfed by vegetation, others are being converted for housing or other purposes, and some (like those on Par Moor) have just been scat down – sorry, demolished.

Jenny Heskett, Cormac Countryside Ranger for Luxulyan Valley, knows only too well what a challenge it is to keep vegetation at bay so that a historic dry can be seen and appreciated. Recently, she and a work party of volunteers from the *Friends of Luxulyan Valley* cleared sections of the Central Cornwall, or Trevanney, Dry (HER 9050; SX 0659 5626; Luxulyan parish). Despite their efforts, further visits will be needed in a never-ending programme of maintenance and conservation.



Clearing the linhay in Luxulyan Valley (half-time)

Photo: Jenny Heskett



The linhay – more work needed but huge progress in one day

Photo: Jenny Heskett





The pan kiln cleared (right) but the settling tanks (to the left) will be the next target  
Photo: Jenny Heskett

To really understand china-clay dries, and the history of the industry, a visit to Wheal Martyn is essential, not least because it is housed in a former dry (HER 20021; Scheduled Monument CO1066; SX 0037 5545; Treverbyn parish; <https://www.wheal-martyn.com/> ) What is often forgotten is that it was just one of many dries in the valley leading down to St Austell. Once the chimneys were so common that it was like looking at a thicket of minarets but vegetation growth, conversion and demolition are changing the scene.





**Wheal Martyn**



**An installation on the Clay Trail based on the once common pan-kiln chimneys**



The next photo shows the Carlyon Farm dry at Trethowel (HER 20433; Listed Building (II) 494894; SX 0133 5358; Treverbyn parish), apparently the largest pan-kiln ever built. This structure, now almost invisible, was completed in February 1921 by John Lovering to serve his works at Higher and Lower Ninestones. It sits besides a stretch of former railway that is now part of the Clay Trails network. According to Heritage Gateway, it was:

*Completed in February 1921 by John Lovering to serve the works at Higher and Lower Ninestones, two pans abutted a central furnace room and coal hoist, with a square chimney stack at each end. Built of granite rubble masonry, the kiln is now unroofed, and was served by the Trenance Valley Branch of the GWR from a railway siding and wharf at the front of the linhay. The settling tanks at the rear survive but are obscured by vegetation. The remains are visible on aerial photographs (p1) taken in 1948 and were plotted as part of the NMP. A detailed site description and history, 'China Clay Kilns and the Trethowell Dry', by JR Smith (1985) is included in the SMR Information File. Declared as an industrial site 'at risk' by EH in October 2011 but not added to the Heritage at Risk register as only grade II.*



Carlyon Dry at Trethowel, now largely invisible, even from the adjoining trail





One of a few remaining pan-kin chimneys in the Trethowel Valley

Lansalson Dry (HER 27035.20; SX 0085 5472; Treverbyn parish) is on private land so it is not possible to comment on its preservation. But this is what Heritage Gateway says about it: *A china clay pan-kiln at Lansalson, first recorded on the 2nd Edition OS 1:2500 of 1907, was visited by CAU in 1990 (b1). The kiln has been extended and modified with blockwork additions to the original granite rubble masonry structure, under a corrugated asbestos sheet roof. The chimney stack survives to full height and is of granite with a white brick cap and iron bands. Inside the furnace room, the fire doors are in situ and are marked "Charlestown Foundry". At the rear are rectangular settling tanks.*



Lansalson Dry (on the left)



Ruddle No. 3 dry (HER 27036; SX 0096 5454; Treverbyn parish) is being converted, possibly for housing. It is hard to see but the conversion seems to be attractive, with some attempt being made to incorporate historic features, including part of the chimney. Not everyone will agree but it is not possible (or desirable) to preserve everything and sometimes sensitive conversion might be the best option. In the case of Ruddle No. 3 it was not in a good state beforehand. According to Heritage Gateway:

*First recorded on the 2nd Edition OS 1:2500 of 1907. Visited by CAU in 1990 (b2). The pan-kiln survives but is completely overgrown with rhododendron and brambles. There is a series of settling tanks at the rear; the pan and linhay survive but were difficult to access. Also extant is a granite chimney stack with a local white brick cap (h1). The remains are visible on aerial photographs (p1) and was plotted as part of the NMP.*



Ruddle No. 3 Dry

For a full consideration of the impact of china clay extraction, including survival and possible mitigation measures for historic assets in the china clay area, see Graeme Kirkham's: *United Kingdom china-clay bearing grounds: mineral resource archaeological assessment*. Kirkham, G. (Cornwall Archaeological Unit, 2014), <https://doi.org/10.5284/1040157>. See: <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/issue.xhtml?recordId=1136133&recordType=GreyLitSeries>

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](mailto:arearep@cornisharchaeology.org.uk).







