

PENWITH ROUND - Devised and researched by Alexandra Pratt – with original commentary

These route directions are based on the original text from the Celtic Way. This is a long distance route devised by Val Saunders Evans and originally published by Sigma Press of Wilmslow in Cheshire. It runs for some 700 miles from Strumble Head in Pembrokeshire to St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, passing by Caerleon, Avebury, Stonehenge, Glastonbury, Cadbury Castle and Maiden Castle. An alternative from Glastonbury crosses Exmoor and Dartmoor, using the route devised by the Land's End Trail Team, on its way to Cornwall. The text includes much informative commentary on interest encountered along the way. I have edited the text somewhat. In some places I felt that the directions were insufficiently clear and detailed and needed amplification. Elsewhere, I have taken minor liberties with the text but only to enable it to fit the page, justified. Occasional notes in parentheses and italics are mine.

Stage 1: Trencrom Hill To St Michael's Mount - 5 miles

Stage 2: Mousehole to Treen - 7 miles

Stage 3: Treen to Crows-An-Wra - 8½ miles

Stage 4: Crows-An-Wra to Cape Cornwall - 6 miles

Stage 5: Cape Cornwall to Penzance - 11 miles (*but I suspect it's nearer 14*)

Stage 1 Trencrom Hill To St Michael's Mount

Route: Trencrom Fort - Ninnbridge Chapel - Ludgvan Church - St Michael's Mount.

Distance: 5 miles. **Terrain:** Easy. **Parking:** SW corner of Trencrom Hill.

Trencrom Hill is where the Celtic Way leaves the Land's End Trail which continues westwards to its final destination of Land's End. So, although the Penwith Round is really a circular route from the Penzance area to Cape Cornwall and back, I have started with Alexandra's stage from Trencrom Hill, mostly waymarked as St. Michael's Way.

This part of the route follows the pilgrim path St Michael's Way, which is part of the European Ways of St James, all of which lead to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela, Spain. St Michael's Way proper starts near St Ives, but the Celtic Way joins it at the start of Stage 1, Trencrom Hill. (*Views from here are terrific*) The summit of the hill is crowned by an Iron Age hill fort, which was possibly in use as late as the 8th or 9th century. The shape of the hill fort is still clearly visible, as parts of the single rampart remain, as do the foundations of round houses inside. Like all such places in the far west, its history is interwoven with legends of 'spriggans', possibly a folk memory of the Beaker People, who lived here during the Bronze Age and were short and powerfully built.

Route Directions

From Trencrom, the views are breathtaking and stretch from sea to sea, including Mount's Bay, the conclusion of this section. To start the walk, descend the hill to the south west corner and turn right onto the road. After about 200 yards, take the first turning on the left down to Ninnbridge. The path turns right in front of the cottages, past the chapel, now converted. This is one of the many chapels founded by John Wesley in the 18th century. His HQ was nearby in St Ives.

Go over the wooden stile and follow the yellow way markers across the fields to Trembethow Farm. In the farmyard, go left at the marker in front of the barn, swinging right and crossing two fields, a sunken lane and three more fields (shown on the map) before walking downhill through some gorse to the road. Turn right and cross the Red River Ford, and then follow the road uphill, taking the hairpin bend to the left at the junction. 100 yards past Boskennal Farm there is a stile on the right. Cross this into fields which look down to St. Michael's Mount. Follow clearly marked way downhill and cross the stream, climbing uphill. Then head for the pylon and enter the road over a granite stile. Turn left along the road for about 200 yards, then turn right between buildings, following the signs to a footbridge. Continue straight up the valley and eventually onto the track which leads into Ludgvan.

The church in Ludgvan is Norman, although there was probably a Celtic chapel here before the arrival of William the Conqueror's half-brother, Robert of Mortain. It is through the church that this tiny village can claim one of its several famous connections. For fifty years, the rector was a Dr William Borlase, a famous antiquary and naturalist, who wrote extensively about Cornwall in the 18th century, including his most famous work 'Antiquities Historical and Monumental of the County of Cornwall' (1754).

Take the road opposite the church and at the first turning on the left, continue straight on to Tregarthen. About 550 yards past here, cross the track into a field, then turn left on a lane. Continue down this lane for about half a mile (taking care not to go left up a private track crossed earlier), before reaching a T-junction. Follow the sign straight on across fields down to Long Rock, and the busy A30. The path emerges onto another branch of St Michael's Way, which then follows the Coast Path to Marazion and St Michael's Mount.

Sites of Interest in the Penzance Area

Around the bay from the Mount is Penzance, a pleasant and elegant town with subtropical gardens and a large harbour presided over by St Mary's Church. Chapel Street in particular is worth a stroll, as it is home to the 'Egyptian House' and the original home of Maria Branwell, mother of the Bronte sisters. There are several significant historic sites in the area. Most notable of these is of course St. Michael's Mount. Located just offshore from Marazion, Cornwall's oldest town, it was probably named after Mont Saint Michel in Brittany. This link has existed since the Bronze Age, or even earlier as precious metalwork was exported from here to Brittany and the Mediterranean. It is almost certainly the port of 'Ictis' mentioned by Greek explorers Pytheas and Diodorus around the 3rd century BC. (*The old Cornish name for the Mount, Carrek los y'n cos, means 'ancient rock in a wood', reference perhaps, to the 'legend' of Lyonesse, a lost land said to have stretched from the Lizard to the Isles of Scilly*). This mythical land was engulfed by the sea, leaving only one survivor, who escaped on a white horse. This tale may not be as far fetched as it may appear, as fossilised remains of a sunken forest and Stone Age axes have been found on the sea bed of the bay. The earliest visible remains however, are of a Benedictine chapel and two Saxon crosses, with the castle dating to the fourteenth century, although not appropriated by the Crown for another 200 years. The harbour can be visited all year, but the opening days of the castle should be checked in advance. Access is via the causeway, or by use of the ferry, depending on the tide. Interestingly, Penzance also lays claim to both the largest and the smallest Iron Age hill forts in the area. The former is called Lescudjack and is sited at the top of Castle Road, just above the railway station. Measuring 500 feet from east to west, it is now badly neglected and obscured by a concrete wall, although part of the 16 foot rampart can still be seen. In contrast, the smaller Lesingey Round, meaning 'hedged stronghold', is just 260 feet in diameter, although the clearly visible rampart reaches twelve feet in height. It has yet to be excavated and is appropriately covered in trees. On a hill above a Youth Hostel, access is frustratingly difficult as there is no direct footpath and visitors must go round by road, then take the track marked 'Lesingey'.

From St. Michael's Mount, to continue the Penwith Round with Stage 2, simply follow the Cornish Coast Path for 7 miles to Mousehole. Despite all the interest in Penzance and Newlyn, for the serious walker this may be a bit boring. In that case you can get there by First buses 2B and 5, 6 or 6A.

Stage 2 - Mousehole to Treen - 7 miles

Route: Castallack Round and Stone - The Pipers - Merry Maidens Stone Circle - Tregiffian Barrow - Boskenna Cross - Treryn Dinas Cliff Castle - Treen.

Terrain: Moderate to difficult. Includes some steep stretches of coast path. **Parking:** Mousehole harbour.

Mousehole

Pronounced locally as Mowzle, this is reputed to be Cornwall's prettiest fishing village. The pilchard fishing around which the village grew died out years ago (*it has revived since, to some degree*), although Mousehole is still a working harbour. Beyond the harbour walls lies 'Merlin's Rock' which features in a prophecy made by the seer himself: "*There shall land on the Rock of Merlin those that shall burn Paul, Penzance And Newlyn*" Astonishingly, this is exactly what happened in 1595 when the Spanish invaded and burnt all but the manor house, now the Keigwin Arms, to the ground. The area is also famous as the resting place, inland at Paul, of Dolly Pentreath, the last native Cornish speaker, who died in 1777. Despite decline in fishing, life and the sea are still closely interwoven in the far west. In 1981 the local life boat 'Solomon Browne' was lost with all hands whilst trying to rescue a coaster. Even in the modern age, life can be lost to the vagaries of the ocean.

Route directions:

Leave the village via the footpath marked clearly on the south side of the chapel. This leads straight uphill to a lane. Go right for a few yards, left through an iron gate into farmland. Now follow the footpath as marked on the map through the fields past Halwyn Farm; the stiles are well maintained and fairly easy to spot. Don't forget to look back, because the views of Mousehole and across the bay to the Mount are amongst the best in this entire route. On reaching the lane turn right, then left at the T-junction. This lane goes to Castallack and the footpath follows the same route, but on the other side of the hedge; it is clearly marked. At Castallack, go past the large modern barn on the right and a gable end, before turning right through the wooden gate, past the house and down the grassy lane. This is most likely to be a very old path, as it leads to Castallack Round. Look out for a narrow path through the grass on the right after the lane has become a path. The Round is a circular field, with parts of the wall remaining up to six feet high. Just to the north west of this and a little further along the path are the remains of a hut circle. To the west by a few yards, following the little paths, is a Bronze Age standing stone, six feet in height. On returning to the main path, it widens once again and winds downhill into the almost perfect valley of Lamorna. There are also some excellent views, inland this time, from this part of the path. The lane emerges on to the B3315.

Turn left and follow it until it climbs a hill. This ancient hamlet is called Trewoofe. Several legends in the area link the once powerful Lovelis family with the Devil, usually portrayed as riding a black horse. The Rosemerryn fogou is still said to be haunted by Squire Lovelis's tormented spirit. (*Now on private property, ask at Rosemerry Wood, the house at the end of the first track on the right after Trewoofe for permission to view – or telephone Rob and Laura on 01736 810530, or email enquiries@rosemerrywood.co.uk.*) On an equally cheerful note, the next hill leads to a 'place of slaughter', otherwise known as Boleigh, which was the site of the last battle between the Cornish and English in AD 935, completing King Athelstan's conquest of the West.

Once over the hill, the 'Pipers' can clearly be seen, set back a little from the road, but are easily accessed. (*If you are worried about trespassing, ask at Boleigh Farm, which you pass*) The tallest of the two menhirs is 15 ft high, the other 13.5 ft. Thought to be Bronze Age in origin, during which time this area was densely populated, they may have acted as wayside markers or territorial boundary stones. They may also simply be part of a system of outlying monuments connected to the 'Merry Maidens' stone circle, which lies four hundred yards to the south west. To reach this, follow the first footpath sign for the circle at the bend in the road and go across a field. This is a very well known and often visited site, perhaps because of its location. The nineteen stones form a true circle 78 feet in diameter which was probably used for public ceremonies and rituals. The legend of schoolgirls caught dancing on a Sunday and turned to stone along with their musicians, the 'Pipers', probably dates from as late as the 18th century, though possibly of pagan origin.

Leave the circle through the wooden stile in the far corner and go left on the road. A few yards further on is Tregiffian Barrow, a Neolithic chambered tomb, first excavated by the aforesaid Dr Borlase in 1871. It is 14 feet long, but amazingly, the road goes over part of it, despite the fact it is a national monument. When excavated, an unusual carved stone was found, now replaced by a replica, the original in the Royal Cornwall Museum, and on the floor were bones, charcoal and some urns containing human remains. Continuing along the road, the route passes the Boskenna Cross, unusually mounted on a cider press, millstone and field roller, and decorated with a Christ figure and wheel cross. In the hedge to its left is a standing stone, on the right is a stile into a field. A path across the field emerges onto the lane down to Boskenna itself. Once through the hamlet, where the lane bears right, continue down a track to woods and the pretty hamlet of St Loy, claimed as the sunniest village in England.

From here follow the yellow acorn way marks of the South West Coastal Path in a stunning walk along the cliffs to the picturesque fishing hamlet of Penberth. Cross the harbour and climb the cliffs to the promontory with the famous Logan Rock perched perilously at the very top. This area is the site of an Iron Age cliff castle known as Treryn Dinas, now owned by the National Trust. Ramparts and ditches up to 300 yards long and 21 ft in height can still be seen. Many legends surround this site involving witches and 'small people'. The castle is also said to have been one of King Arthur's at some point and a cave beneath the rock is supposed to hold Merlin, imprisoned within it forever by magic. To find the village of Treen, turn right at the National Trust obelisk and follow the well-worn path inland across the fields. It takes 10 to 15 minutes and as a reward there is one of the cosiest little pubs in Cornwall waiting. There is accommodation available at the campsite next to the village.

Stage 3 - Treen to Crows-An-Wra - 8½ miles

Route: Penberth - Standing Stone - St Buryan - Boscawen-ûn Stone Circle - Sancreed Church and Crosses - Chapel Downs Holy Well - Sancreed Beacon - Carn Euny Settlement - Brane Barrow - Crows-An-Wra.

Terrain: Easy to moderate. Mostly farmland walking on good paths, with a short but strenuous coastal section.

Map: OS Explorer 102 Land's End. **Parking:** Large public CP in Treen.

Route Directions:

From Treen, turn right out the village, then take a sharp right and follow the lane for ½ mile to Penberth. Take the coastal path up the cliff on the left side of the harbour, but leave it at the second fork, going inland. This path curves to the right becoming a wide track, passing through Burnewhall Farm. Cross the B3315 road, following the footpath sign over the stile and into a field with good views to the north. Keep to the right and go through the gate into the next field, which contains a standing stone. Follow the line of stiles, keeping the spire of St. Buryan Church in view. The path leads onto a lane. Turn left and follow this until it joins the B3283 outside the village.

St Buryan has maintained a significant role in this part of the county for centuries, not least because its 92 foot spire can be seen for miles around, providing useful orientation for walkers! It was an important monastic site as early as the 10th century as confirmed by Athelstan's charter (*granted after his defeat of the Cornish at Boleigh*). The churchyard still has the raised oval outline of an early Christian cemetery enclosure and a 9th century cross. Nearby is thought to be the battle site from where Arthur fought off the Danes who had landed on Gwynver Beach part of Whitesands Bay at Sennen Cove.

To continue on the route, take the B3283 past the church until the public footpath sign on the edge of the village. Follow this across fields, past Pridden Farm and then head north-east, crossing a stream, until the path joins a wider hedged path. Take a sharp left and continue until it emerges at Boscawen-ûn Stone Circle, the most complete and possibly the most significant circle in West Penwith. It certainly has an atmosphere, lacking in more touristy sites. Each of the stones is granite, except one which is pure quartz. The central heel stone leans towards two stone slabs, possibly cists, which lie on the outside of the circle. It was in use up to the Dark Ages as a site of the Gorsedd of the Island of Britain. Druid Henry Jenner revived this in 1928 and the Gorsedd is now held annually at different sites around Cornwall, including Boscawen-ûn. Retrace the path and continue past Boscawen Farm, where it becomes a track, passing a standing stone in the hedge on the left. Cross the A30 and follow the footpath signs to Sancreed, through the tiny hamlet of Tregonbris, crossing and re-crossing country lanes.

Sancreed has two of the best late Dark Age stone crosses in Cornwall, both of which are in the churchyard. The one on the south porch is inscribed with the sculptor's own name 'Runho' and the shaft has double knot-work. The other cross is inscribed 'INCX X' with designs on all four sides, including a vase and flower. Many Cornish churches are built on or near to the cells of early saints or hermits. These had been located by 'holy wells', which often have a Christian superstructure, but pre-Christian powers. Chapel Downs Holy Well is a good example of this. Just a few minutes walk from the village, following the signs opposite the church and passing the concrete hut, there is a tiny ruined chapel next to it and a modern cross. The tree overhanging the holy well is adorned with rags and other such offerings. This is an ancient custom used to invoke the well's healing and prophetic powers.

Retrace the path to the Church and turn left and left again, uphill to Sancreed Beacon. At the summit is a wooden gate on the right onto the Beacon. At 560 feet, this offers some of the best views in West Cornwall, rivaled only by Chapel Carn Brea. The Beacon is owned by Cornwall Heritage Trust and is a nature reserve, as well as the site of a Bronze Age settlement, the outline of which can still be seen, as can the remains of a Celtic field system and a burial mound. Five minutes further down the road there is a left turn onto a bridleway, just before Grumbla. Follow this until it forms a T-junction with a wider track. Turn left and follow the signs for Carn Euny.

Occupied periodically throughout the Iron Age, Carn Euny has an excellent mixture of round and courtyard houses. However, its most notable feature is the 60 foot long fogou, meaning cave in Cornish, or souterrain. Comparable to those in Brittany, it has a side passage leading to an intact circular chamber with a mysterious flueless fireplace. It is still unclear as to what the fogous were used for. Opinion is divided between their role being for religious purposes, as a cold storage, or as a refuge from raiders.

From this point, the two campsites of Crows-an-Wra and Treave offer a choice of accommodation. The way through Crows-an-Wra - meaning 'Witch's Cross', named after a hermit who lived in the chapel on Carn Brea, accused of being a sorcerer by the Dean of St Buryan - follows the track through the hamlet of Brane, turning right at a T and then following the first footpath on the right, clearly defined and easy to walk. This passes Brane Barrow, a well preserved Scillonian chamber tomb from the Neolithic period which is 20 feet in diameter and 7 feet tall. The barrow is on private land (*ask the farmer, who will happily grant access*) but can be seen from the footpath, which is itself part of an ancient route stretching from Land's End to Penzance. The Crows-An-Wra campsite is just over a stream on the left hand side and Treave is a little way along the A30, on the left.

Stage 4 - Crows-An-Wra To Cape Cornwall - Distance: 6 miles

Route: Crows-An-Wra Cross - Chapel Carn Brea - Nanjulian Cove - Carn Glouce - St Just.

Map: OS Explorer 102, Lands End. **Terrain:** Moderate. Coastal, farmland and moorland walking.

Parking: No official parking at Crows-An-Wra.

Route Directions

This stage starts with a stiff climb up to Chapel Carn Brea the first and last hill in England, and one of the highest in West Cornwall, not to be confused with Carn Brea near Redruth. Take the right turn at the Crows-An-Wra cross and go up the lane until the NT car park on the left. The path to the top is at the far end of the car park, through a kissing gate. The views from the summit are stunning, stretching in every direction and taking in the huge expanse of the Atlantic, the hills and moorland to the north and, away to the east, massive white satellite dishes at Goonhilly Earth Station on the Lizard Peninsula can just be seen on a clear day. Also at the summit are remains of two Bronze Age barrows and a medieval chapel. It is the site of the first in a chain of bonfires lit across Cornwall on Midsummer's Eve and members of the St Just Old Cornwall Society sing and pray in Cornish whilst sacrificing herbs and flowers to the sun god.

From the summit, take the path on the left downhill, bearing left at the bottom, and go through a hunting gate into an overgrown green lane. Turn right, then right again through a gap, and follow the RH hedge to Kerrow Farm. Cross the track and follow a FP sign across two fields to the B3306 opposite Brea. Go through Brea to the courtyard to the back of the buildings, where a yellow waymark points right. Follow waymarks across farmland and on through Brea Veian to a lane. Where the lane turns right, go forward and follow waymarks to Land's End airfield. Keep to the left until the path joins the lane to the coast. This ends at Nanjulian. The driveway to the house is private, except for the footpath, which goes right in front of the buildings and leads to the cove of the same name. Turn right onto the coast path proper and enjoy stunning views.

(When you reach Porth Nanven, do go left to the sea to see the remarkable rocks on the beach and in the cliffs and the mine remains to the left) (If you are going directly into St. Just, leave Porth Nanven on the lane along the Cot Valley as far as Cot Mill. From here a path goes L up the hill towards St. Just) If continuing on the Coast Path to Cape Cornwall, climbing steeply out of Porth Nanven, you pass capped mine shafts before reaching the remarkable Bronze Age Barrow of Carn Glouce, also known as Ballowall Barrow. (No one even knew this was there until 1878 when Cornish antiquarian W C Borlase discovered it under mining spoil) It would have been an enclosed chamber up to 10 feet tall, surrounded by cists. Now only the stones remain. It remains, however, fairly intact, including the strange T shaped pit in the centre. It is appropriate, perhaps, that such a remote and desolate spot should be full of stories of 'small people' dancing in the moonlight. Fanciful in the daylight maybe, but this walker saw it in thick mist at twilight! (Shortly before starting the climb up to the mine chimney on Cape Cornwall, do go down left to the sea for charming Priest's Cove where net huts are built on to and into the cliffs) The large sandy bay which comes into view, looking south towards Land's End from Cape Cornwall, is Gwynver Beach, where the Danes who fought King Arthur landed. (If now heading into St. Just, turn left and right at Boswedden for a field path and lane to the village)

Stage 5 - Cape Cornwall to Penzance - 11 miles *(but almost certainly a fair bit more)*

Route: Cape Cornwall - Tregeseal Stone Circle - Chûn Castle and Quoit - Bosulow Trehyllys and Bodrifty Iron Age Settlements - Mulfra Quoit and Settlement - Gulval - Penzance or St. Michael's Mount.

Terrain: Moderate. Mostly moorland. **Map:** OS Explorer 102 Land's End. **Parking:** Cape Cornwall and St. Just.

This section of the path covers a wild and ancient landscape with only the occasional farm or minor road to betray the existence of the 20th century. Indeed, much of this section follows the ancient 'Old St Ives Road', or Tinnars Way, a trade route dating from the Neolithic period. However, in practical terms, this may well present difficulties for the walker. The remoteness of the path means that there is no accommodation en route, so unless one is lucky enough to stumble across a seasonal B&B, there is little choice other than to stagger on to the very end. We also suggest that the detailed OS Explorer 102 map is essential, as is a compass *(and perhaps a GPS)*.

Route Directions

From the car park at Cape Cornwall, take the Cornish Coast Path towards Pendeen Watch. As the path swings inland into the Kenidjack Valley, follow the line of the valley to emerge at a small group of houses by a stream. Cross the stream and take the path uphill, turning 90 degrees to the right at the second track. Continue down this until it comes to the B3306. Cross the road and walk down Truthwall Lane which is marked by a camping sign. At the end of the road, turn left up No Go By Hill and take the first right, Kenthyon Lane. This is part of the 'Old St Ives Road' which then crosses Carnyorth Common, so follow waymarks to just after a pool, go through a hunting gate to Open Access land and continue for a few yards to Tregeseal stone circle. This remote yet fairly complete circle is the sole survivor of a pair. Nineteen stones stand to a height of up to 5 feet, but there is no central stone. A few hundred yards to the north-east are ruins of two chambered tombs and there are several holed stones, known as Tregeseal Holed Stones, often hidden in the gorse covered common.

Follow a cleared horse track north-east, keeping Carn Kenidjack to your left, to a hunting gate near Higher Boslow Farm. The commons around Carn Kenidjack are said to be haunted by the Devil mounted on a black horse. Anyone wandering near the Carn at night or in fog needs to cross a stile in order to escape his grasp. Once safely past the Carn, and through the gate, continue on a track, which swings round to the left to a road. Go right here to the B3318 at Woon Gumpus Common. Directly opposite is a small parking area and the start of a well trodden track over Open Access land. From here you can see Chûn Quoit. This part of Woon Gumpus Common is haunted by a 'spriggan' who is, by all accounts, extremely unpleasant and not to be confused with the more helpful 'small people', whose dislike of being seen at their good work is recorded in the old rhyme: "Piskey fine and piskey gay, Piskey will now fly away" Where the track forks, keep left to a stile to a field. Cross this field on a permissive path and continue straight up a scrubby hillside directly to the Quoit.

Chûn Quoit itself is very well preserved. Although originally part of a barrow 35 feet in diameter, the capstone still rests on all four uprights which have supported it since 3000 BC. There is a burial chamber inside, but it was found to be empty on discovery in 1871. A few hundred yards to the east is Chûn Castle, which was built around 200 BC. Evidence of tin and iron smelting have been found dating from the same period inside the castle walls, supporting the claim that the county has been trading in these riches since before the time of Christ. Indeed, even the metalwork in King Solomon's temple is said to have originated from Cornwall. Chûn's importance to this trade is suggested by its defences, which include ditches, walls and a clever staggered entrance which can still be seen. It is thought to have been occupied as late as 500 AD, thereby being in use for almost a thousand years.

From Chun Castle, the path follows the ancient way more closely, passing, after a while, the unexcavated Bosulow Trehyllys settlement. Finding the way can initially be quite difficult. Look for a small path through the bracken and gorse north from the walls of the castle – roughly opposite the gate posts. After a few yards it bears right downhill through thick scrub. (*Here it is important to follow a bearing due north-east to emerge at the bottom by a gate with a gap to its right*) Go through the gap to continue north-east on a muddy overgrown track between hedges. This passes Bosulow Trehyllys settlement on the right. Visits are by appointment only (call 01736 261402) but worthwhile, as this Romano-British village contains three courtyard houses and several round houses. The remains of a field system can also be seen. At the end of the track, cross a field and continue north-east over Open Access Carn Downs to the minor road from Penzance to Trevowhan. Go right downhill to the Old Chapel on your right. Opposite is a small car parking area at Bosulow Common.

Go left through a gate on to a well made track, signed to Men-An-Tol, again heading north-east. You pass a stile to Men-an-Tol on your right. These unusual stones date from the Bronze Age and have defeated all attempts to discover their true purpose. Legend suggests that the middle stone, which has a 20 inch hole, has a curative effect on those suffering from Rickets who crawl through the hole widdershins and in addition will act as an oracle if two brass pins are crossed on the top. The name itself gives few clues, simply meaning 'stone of the hole'. (*Current thinking is that the stones were part of a burial cairn on which they stand and have been moved, the round stone having been a grave entrance*) Another mysterious stone is the Men Scryfa, a few hundred yards from Men-An-Tol in a field on the left of the track. The Latin inscription is to Rialobran, a young Dark Age warrior who died defending his land against a usurper. The end of the track is marked by the Four Parish Stone and the path emerges onto high windswept Open Access moorland of Nine Maidens Common - about as different as is possible from the soft wooded valleys on the southern side of Penwith, just a few short miles away.

Ignore the forward path and continue up the ridge, heading south-east towards the Nine Maidens stone circle on the left side of the path. Do not confuse this with a group of barrows and their ring of retaining stones on the right of the path, a hundred yards or so before the Nine Maidens. Nine Maidens is a true circle dating from the bronze age with unusually high stones, some over six feet. After some restoration, eight remain upright. This ridge has several other monuments, including a cist and a standing stone. You will now need to return to the preceding cairn and follow a faint, then clear but stony, path approximately north-east, following the left-hand hedge. At a massive boulder you come to a rough rocky track, leading left to Brook Cottage. Go right to a lane from Tredinnick. Go left on this and, after a hundred yards or so, go right over a stile into Bodrifty Settlement. This site, though not as impressive as Carn Euny, was excavated in 1950 and revealed some Bronze Age pottery and various other household objects, although the remains, including a field system and round houses, date from the Iron Age.

Take the path from just to the right of the main storyboard on the south-east side of the site, follow it through Bodrifty Farm (*where a round house has been re-created*) and across three fields to a track from Tredinnick. Go L up the track and then across 2 fields to the Open Access land of Mulfra Hill and on to Mulfra Quoit. A Neolithic tomb similar to Chûn, Mulfra has not stood the test of time so well, as the absence of the fourth upright has allowed the capstone to slip and now stand at an angle. However, it is an impressive 36 feet across and well over 6 feet high. There are also several barrows on the northern side of the summit, although these are not easy to distinguish. Although the quoit may be reason enough to climb the hill, the stunning views to both coasts, including St Michael's Mount to the south-east, are a great added incentive.

Leave the summit by the path going south. As it becomes a sunken lane, look to the right for Mulfra Veian Courtyard House Settlement, which has the remains of three houses dating from the late Iron Age. Once through the hamlet of Mulfra, the lane is paved. Turn left at the T-junction, then right at Newmill. Continue down the road until a footpath is marked on the left through the woods. Follow this path uphill through Boscobba and Polkinghorn to Rosemorran. From here it is easiest to follow the lane down into Gulval, where a good pint might be an appropriate award for any survivors! From the church at Gulval, St. Michael's Way heads down to the Coast Path. Go right on the Coast Path for Penzance, left for Marazion and St. Michael's Mount.