

West Penwith Antiquities Walk Watch Croft, Nine Maidens, Bosporthennis, The Porthmeors 6.85 miles

Carn Galver Mine car park to Bosulow – 1.80 miles

Start from the small Carn Galver Mine car park on the B3306 St. Ives to St. Just road at 42135/36439.

Set off R down the road towards Rosemergy. Very shortly after a cattle grid, pass on L at 160 yards a galvanised hunting gate to a path up to Nine Maidens Common. However, unless wishing to save 2 miles, and miss Mên-an-Tol and Mên Scryfa, this is not your route. Stay on the road through Rosemergy (*seasonal cream teas*). At 350 yards note on L at *Boscarn Cottage an old water pump with large stone trough*. After 730 yards pass on your R a footpath heading down to the coast path. 40 yards on, go L on a bridleway and pass a NT Watch Croft sign. **(0.44 miles)**

The bridleway starts as a clear narrow steepish path uphill, widening further up the hill. At 0.47 miles, pass on your L a capped and hedged mine shaft. *From here, looking off R, you can see Pendeen Watch and The Wra rocks*. At 0.68 miles you pass through a whole chain of hedged mine shafts, much overgrown by furze. The path now becomes more of a track. At 0.71 miles pass through fairly massive granite gate pillars. At 0.84 miles pass on your R remains of Garden Mine engine house. A few yards on pass a house on your R, Garden Mine Cottage, presumably once the mine count house, its entrance at 745 feet. *Looking R you see Pendeen, Geevor Mine and a line of hills stretching south – Carnyorth Common, Carn Kenidjack and an Air Traffic Control aerial array*. **(0.89 miles)**

The path ends but the way downhill towards Bosulow continues as a well made track through heathland. *Note that this land, like Carn Galver and much of West Penwith, must once have been grazed as there are many regular hedge lines, badly overgrown*. At 41718/35053 at 1.26 miles, cross a FP from the Madron road that passes the Men Scryfa field and comes out at the beginning of Nine Maidens Common. The track reaches the Madron road through massive granite gateposts at 1.49 miles. Go L on the road downhill, passing immediately on your L a farm track to Dakota, further on passing on your R a lane signed to Great Bosulow and Chûn Castle. At 41677/34555 pass on your L a mile post 'P 3' (Penzance 3) with a crow's foot symbol, the War Department broad arrow, indicating wartime use by the Ordnance Survey Military Transport section. At the Old Chapel (1882) on your right go L across a small car parking area to an iron gate at 545 feet to a (mostly) well made track to Nine Maidens Common. **(1.80 miles)**

Bosulow car park to the Nine Maidens stone circle – 1.59 miles

Go through the gate and follow the track gently uphill. It goes all the way to Nine Maidens Common. It is rocky in places and muddy in places, particularly towards its end near the Four Parish Stone. At 42181/34559 at 2.01 miles a granite cattle stile stands isolated. At 42416/34842 at 2.24 miles pass on the L the remarkable ancient barns of Little Higher Bosulow and a few yards on an unusual walled green lane leading to the former farmhouse. At 42523/34991 at 2.36 miles, follow a WM post on your R, signed Mên-an-Tol. Cross a clapper over a small stream and go over a granite cattle stile to follow a clear path to **Mên-an-Tol** (*adds 0.16 miles, included*) at 42647/34948. **(2.44 miles)**

Return to the track (2.52 miles) and go R on it still gently uphill. At 42681/35200 at 2.68 miles, go L over a granite cattle stile by a galvanised gate to a field. Cross the field NW to **Mên Scryfa** (*adds about 0.12 miles, included*), an inscribed stone commemorating Riolobran. Return to the track. *At about 2.73 miles the track can become so muddy as to be virtually impassable. At one time you could get into the field to the right but barbed wire now prevents that so you may have to scramble up on to the hedge for a short distance*. The track ends at 2.94 miles and the ground opens out before you get onto Nine Maidens Common proper. At 3.01 miles pass on the L an abandoned building, with Carn Galver southern tor behind. At 42970/35424, where a grassy track goes L (roughly NW) between Watch Croft and Carn Galver towards the coast, the path continues ahead towards Nine Maidens. **(3.04 miles)**

Continue for 10 yards to the **Four Parish Stone** (*a cross carved in it*) at 42982/35420. Just beyond this the path divides, R heading towards Ding Dong mine. Take the L path heading roughly SE for the Nine Maidens stone circle on a clear but narrow path, sometimes rocky, sometimes muddy, uphill through mostly heather. At 43269/35343 at 3.23 miles a path goes R up through scrub to an impressive cairn, worth the detour. At this point note a faint path through the heather to your left, this will be your route after the Nine Maidens. Continue on the main path to reach the **Nine Maidens** stone circle at 43420/35144 at 740 feet. **(3.39 miles)**

Nine Maidens to Bosporthennis Fogou – 1.13 miles

Leaving Nine Maidens do not be tempted to take a short cut immediately ENE towards Brook Cottage; the ground is treacherous. Instead, return to the faint path, now at 3.55 miles and go R on it, initially NE. After 120 yards, with Carn Galver to your L, cross a narrow track for 10 yards, then bear R on a clear but narrow, rutted and muddy path, overall roughly ESE. At 3.85 miles pass on your L a boundary stone 'G'. From here, looking half L, you can now see the roof of Brook Cottage, for which you are heading. At 3.88 miles, the main path bears slightly R as a track. Here keep L on a very indistinct narrow path through low furze. Soon you will spot a large boulder ahead, aim just R of it to reach a grassy/stony track, the driveway to Brook Cottage, at 43874/35414 at 635 feet. **(3.97 miles)**

Bodrifty Iron Age Village and Roundhouse detour – adds approximately 1½ miles

*Go R on the track for about 600 yards, down to a T with a well made track (from Tredinnick). Go L on this track, towards Bosporthennis, for 120 yards. Follow a yellow arrow R for 25 yards to a cattle stile (yellow Round Houses sign) to **Bodrifty Iron Age Settlement** at 44395/35420. A storyboard is at 44467/35408. From here bear R to a gap and cross fields, following yellow WMs for about 500 yards to Bodrifty Farm for a recreation of an **Iron Age Round House**. Return to where the detour started and go forward towards Brook Cottage.*

Go L on the track for about 40 yards and on through two galvanised gates. Opposite Brook Cottage, at a tall wooden gatepost at 4.06 miles, go through a gap on R to a field. Cross diagonally NE to the opposite hedge to a crude stile at 43885/35615 at 4.10 miles. Go forward to a clear enough path through scrubby Open Access land, heading overall roughly N towards Bosporthennis. At 4.15 miles, go over a stile (WM) to a rough field. Continue to a step stile in the opposite hedge at 4.26 miles. The path continues to a granite cattle stile (WM) at 43922/35975 at 4.33 miles. Ignore the WM direction and follow the RH hedge to a gap at 4.37 miles to the next field. Go L (roughly W) to the far end of field to find **Homestead**, shown on OS map at 43798/35997 at 4.46 miles. Now follow the LH hedge (roughly E), with a small square field on your L. Immediately after it go L down into the next field and follow the LH hedge to the end. **Bosporthennis Fogou** (or **Beehive Hut**) is on your L at 43778/36052. **(4.52 miles)**

*The next major antiquity is fallen **Bosporthennis Quoit** at 43575/36551. This stands in a hedged field about 650 yards NNW of the Fogou. Since the pattern of fields is so random and so many have entrances but not separate exits it is almost impossible to give directions from the fogou to the quoit. I have found it easiest to approach it from Bosporthennis Farm, relying on GPS. Whatever route you take might add about ½ mile or so to the total distance.*

Bosporthennis Fogou back to Carn Galver Mine car park – 2.33 miles

From the fogou there is no one obvious route to Bosporthennis but it is clearly visible so make your best way to its W end. When you get there, go through a galvanised gate, E between buildings on a track, and turn L on a track to an iron gate at 4.93 miles. Follow a grassy track, with a stream below R, roughly NW (*the direction all the way to the road*) to a high cattle stile to a field, by a massive clapper bridge to nowhere. Continue through small fields, over stiles and through gaps to a wooden stile (*WM permissive path*). **(5.35 miles)**

Go down 8 steep rock steps to stepping stones over a stream. On the other side follow a grassy path for a few yards to a wide grassy track. Go L on the track, still downhill, through young trees and scrub. The track becomes stony in places and can be very wet and muddy, particularly where a spring flows across it. Finally go through a wooden gate (*difficult to unlatch*) and forward 10 yards to the road from St. Ives to St. Just. **(5.50 miles)**

Go R on the road uphill through Higher Porthmeor hamlet. After 370 yards go L over a rising coffin stile (*FP sign missing*) and over a wooden stile. Cross a field downhill, passing an 8 foot **standing stone**. Continue to a wooden lift stile at 5.78 miles and a cattle stile down to a farmyard and forward (possibly through galvanised gates, if closed) to a gap to a field at 5.81 miles. *Looking ahead, you can clearly see the path heading up the other side of the valley.* Go straight across the field downhill to a wooden lift stile (WM), and down 8 granite steps to Lower Porthmeor.

Continue over two cattle stiles to a field and cross to the far L corner to a coffin stile. *On the way, ahead L, with Carn Galver beyond it, you can see the remains of what OS 102 describes as ‘Homestead’, ahead R you can see the remains of Porthmeor Mine.* Down to a bridge over a stream and an open cattle stile. On through a (probably open) galvanised gate to a junction of paths. With **Porthmeor Mine** remains to your R, cross a cattle stile by an iron gate. Go uphill between hedges to another cattle stile and continue uphill. *Nice view back to the Porthmeors and down to Porthmeor Cove.* At 6.06 miles note on your R a massive hedge running downhill towards the cove. Continue up, Bosigran Farm in view ahead, Watch Croft to the L, passing ancient small fields on L. Go through a gap into a small field at 6.08 miles. Forward 15 yards to a gap to the next field. Cross diagonally L (heading as between barns) to a massive open cattle stile by an iron gate, leading to a grassy area between Bosigran Farm barns. **(6.13 miles)**

Cross to the top of a tarmac parking strip and bear R, wooden cattle barn on your L, to a wooden gate (WM), a short path and another wooden gate to an open grassy area. Follow a muddy track, bearing R uphill to an unusual cattle stile by a (probably open) wooden gate to a second field. On to another cattle stile by a (muddy) gap into a large third field. Continue uphill, straight across to another cattle stile by a gap to a fourth field. Follow the LH hedge to a gap to a fifth field. Follow LH hedge to a gap to a sixth field. Bear L to a gap to seventh field. *Carn Galver Mine engine houses now clearly in view half left.* Continue on the same line to a wooden gate to a scrubby area at 6.53 miles. Cross aiming slightly R of Rosemergy and after about 50 yards bear L through gorse directly towards Carn Galver LH engine house to a cattle stile by an iron gate. Follow a grassy track to the road. Go R on the road, past the Climbers Club building to the Carn Galver Mine car park. **(6.85 miles)**