

The Lundy Egg - Largest in Britain!

*"There is nothing, absolutely nothing, as useful
as a theodolite on Lundy island"*

with apologies to Kenneth Grahame

What a place is Lundy! Everybody needs to go there at least once in their lifetime. It has held its secrets well. I was there this time to do further research into a secret from the Stone Age, described in my earlier books and, most recently, in *The Measure of Albion*, co-authored with John Michell. Lundy holds a secret about our national temple, Stonehenge.

I had been asked to be a speaker and to lead field trips at the recent moot of the *Society of Leyhunters* on Lundy Island, I said yes, but.... living in wild West Wales, and being of a green persuasion, it was clear that a drive to Devon via Bristol to catch the 20 mile ferry to Lundy was ecologically bonkers, so I asked my good friend Paul Welch, owner of the 1913 ketch *Keewaydin* (*above & centre, right: www.keewaydin etc*) if it were possible to make the trip from the Welsh side - just 50 miles south.

Thanks to the sterling efforts of Emma Orbach and the West Wales Lightworkers Group, the *Keewaydin* was duly chartered and eventually, despite easterly gales that made landing on this tiny plateau in the Bristol Channel impossible awhile, we anchored on the west of Lundy in Jenny's Cove (*lower right*) and passed the time effecting repairs to minor items on the boat and catching Pollock with which to make delicious fish pie.

On Tuesday the 30th April 2007 landing by dinghy was again abandoned and Paul sailed to Bideford and fellow speaker Hugh Newman and myself and three others caught the MS *Oldenburg*, finally placing feet onto Lundy after a nearly aborted docking on the jetty at Rat Island, and on Beltane too, the evening bringing a perfect Full Moon.

Following a field trip to the tump where this secret is revealed, there was about an hour or so left before the half-mile trek back to the Marisco Tavern and fine lunch. Laurence Main and two dowsers had previously and independently suggested that there appeared to be a stone circle to the southwest of the tump (which marks the centre of the island and is *exactly* west of Stonehenge). What megalithomaniac, armed with a good theodolite and willing helpers to carry same, could resist such a challenge?

Initially I was unimpressed with the site but, choosing a spot estimated to be close to its centre, the theodolite was duly stationed, levelled and used to get an accurate azimuth from the sun. A radial survey with tapes and using the theodolite bearing of the centre of each stone was used to make a quick but adequately accurate record of the placing of each stone. The bookings were recorded by Adran Hyde, tape runs by Hugh Newman. In less than 90 minutes the data was on the paper and the gear packed up. Pat Toms and Adrian Hyde helped carry it all back - my thanks to both of you for that!



On returning home, calculations undertaken in my blossom bedecked garden produced that most welcome of plans, a once geometrically perfect example of a Type I egg. More than this, the largest known in the UK. Despite the damage done to the right side of the ring, and that the modern coastal walk footpath weaves across its western edge, the geometry is plainly revealed. Further work showed that the axis of the ring pointed directly to the tump at the centre of Lundy (the elbow point or right angle of *Ynys Elen* - Lundy's old Welsh name).

Even more calculation revealed that the axis was also oriented to the rising of the moon at its minor standstill in the north. For an archaeoastronomer this is very funky.

Archaeology still has to catch up with the rest of us concerning Alexander Thom's geometries and the astronomical realities measurable at many many sites. This little article may help them to at least begin that process, as also might my forthcoming book - *Alexander Thom: Cracking the Stone Age Code*. For the rest of us, and particularly those who delight in megalithomania, feast your eyes on this Lundy egg, a long held secret from prehistory now revealed at Beltane - organic and free-range too!

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