

## Brithdir Report No. 1

9<sup>th</sup> September 2000.

We started on Friday evening with a brief inspection by Jon, Jamie, Jim & Ros, to see the place & the stones. All except Ros had not seen it before, & they all agreed that it had the look & feel of a potential stone circle.

That evening we had a ceremony there, to connect with the ancestors & the stones. We lit a central fire, then sang & touched each stone, tuning in to them, & visualising our intent to raise them upright. A very beautiful evening.

The first day of practical work started by establishing an East-West base line right through the circle, & then measuring the approximate position of each stone, bearing in mind that they were all still partially covered. Jamie & Pete Bodger uncovered stone 1 { Beltane }, which turned out to be huge! .Probably 7-8 tons. While Ros drew the stone positions onto graph paper, Jon drew a 360 degree horizon picture, with significant outcrops etc., & measured the angular positions of the stones, to see what celestial events they could mark. The rest of the stones were uncovered to their apparent edges, & all proved to be quite big, approx. 1.50 x 1.30m on average. On the second day digging continued round the South stone & it was fully exposed, measuring 1.30 x 1.15m x .50m deep. Probably about 4 tons. As we had not known what sizes the stones would be, there was a limited amount of stollage prepared, & two quite short levers, not really long enough. We did lift the stone though, to a 45 degree angle, & then tried to pull it upright with the big horse, Samson. This was NOT effective, being too big & too dead a weight for him to manage.

We then decided to bring the stone up horizontally & pivot it into its hole. We got it as far as ground level, with the pivot log in place, & then ran out of stollage, so it was agreed to stop at that point & continue next month, October, when more of the equipment is ready. Because the stones are set in the ground, we have various different approaches to work out on how, & where, we move them. We are looking at what shape the circle needs to be, & we will try to mark a potential outline in October, with the help of dowsers.

## Progress Report No. 2

We met up again on the evening of 6<sup>th</sup> October, & informed new folk of progress so far, & checked out all the new equipment prepared by the Brithdir folk in response to Pete Bodgers's list, sent after the first weekend.

Saturday morning we all went up to the circle, & the first job was to replace all the wobbly stollage under the stone, using the new ash pole levers & railway sleeper stollage. We then continued levering the stone up until it could go onto the tracks & rollers needed to move it to its correct position. Meanwhile several dowsers had checked out the energy & water lines in & around the circle, & they agreed that energy & water lines both went through true North & South, & that the stone would sit well on the spot where these lines met & passed the circle perimeter. This meant moving the stone approx. 6ft. The dowsing also showed a major energy ley along the Beltane/ Lammas sunset line, which Jamie & Ros had both felt was the major axis of the circle. Jamie had drawn up a plan of the circle which showed it could be marked out to form a Type 1 egg shape, like Prof. Thom had found in ancient circles. By Saturday afternoon we had the stone up to the right height for putting on the rollers, & as it was cold & rainy, we stopped at that point.

Sunday morning, & the rain cleared as we put the stone on rollers, & easily pulled it the few feet it needed to move. We then tried to gently pivot it into its new hole. However the rope holding the pivot log to the stone slipped, & it slid into the hole at a funny angle. We then discovered that, after tightening & securing the pivot log, we could lever the stone by taking a "bite" on the pivot, & it smoothly went up to a vertical position & was in! This seems to be a very useful discovery, as before, moving the stones from 45 to 90 degrees has proved the most difficult part, & has needed a windlass, a very dangerous bit of gear!

A small bit of hand blown glass was found, & some other bits, which Jon has got for future reference.

## Progress Report No. 3

April 2001.

When we arrived at the start of our week-long session, it felt quite bogging, so many stones to work on- another 13 to arrange & adjust- & two up so far. { Jamie had done a lightning trip up in November & put up a little stone in the North- West }. So we decided to start with a little one, about 3 tons, & put it in the right position to mark mid- summer sunset, a setting point actually made invisible from the circle by a little grove of trees about 40 yards away. As with all the stones, the initial chunky appearance of the stone in the ground made it hard to know how it would look when upright, & harder still to know which bit to have as top or bottom. But when it was fully uncovered, & the process of moving it had begun, sliding it upslope approx. 8ft., the appropriate placing became clear. The rather small initial team of 7 proved perfectly able to move it, & it was upright & in place after only a day & a half's work.

The next stone we decided to do was the Beltane stone, one of the biggest we'd uncovered so far, at least 7ft. long by 3ft. wide by 2-4 ft. thick. Happily, it had a interesting "shelf" at one end, which made an ideal leverage point, & the great thickness at the other end made a good counter-balance. We did not need to raise the whole stone above ground level, or move it in any direction other than up, so two days of levering & propping & our bulky, misshapen giant was sitting comfortably, its huge bottom mainly below ground, & the shelved top standing proud, its flat face & height a lovely match for the South stone, erected last September.

With team spirit, & numbers, building up well, we turned our attention to the North stone, another huge, chunky block, around 6 tons, & almost a cube in shape, approx. 4ft. square. As we started to lever it up, many discussions were held as to Which Way Up? A decision was almost reached, but then a strong message from the stone, during a tune-in session, led to a re-think, & a decision to turn the stone through 90 degrees & expose the bottom as the side to face into the circle. And then a small miracle occurred; as we applied the levers, this enormous lump started to turn itself, swivelling on some hidden point, & gently placing itself into the hole we'd prepared. So no need for complex manoeuvres, as we levered, it turned, & with remarkable ease erected itself into the right position, marking the North-South axis, & a major energy ley running through the circle. Most amazingly of all, the chunky cube became a perfect match for the Beltane & south stones, of similar height & with a lovely flat face showing inwards to the centre.

With each stone only having taken 2 days, we still had time for one more, & , after a lovely day trip to the coast, & seeing Carreg Samson, a beautiful dolmen, we considered using the three small stones in the North-east to make a small "cove" to receive the sun's rays at midsummer sunrise & midwinter sunset. But once again, during our tuning-in session, inspiration came, & we decided to move the largest of the three to the point marking the Moon's major Northerly standstill, between the North & Beltane stones. This meant moving it quite a long way, about 15ft., but as it was quite small, around 1.5-2 tons, this was quite easily accomplished, lifting it onto tracks & then pulling it along with a rope. We reached the hole, raised the stone a little higher & , Hey Presto, it did a lovely balancing act as the stollage was removed, then dropped neatly & exactly into its hole! Once up, it made a pleasing symmetry with the midsummer sunset stone, & we had a whole arc of the circle up & looking good.

So, 4 stones in a week, & the weather really smiling on us, no rain at all, though the Northerly wind kept us pretty cool. The team left, well pleased with our work, & hoping to return in the autumn to carry on.

## Progress Report No. 4

September 2001.

This was a time of huge upheaval, 5 days after the New York plane attacks, & we started the week with only 3 of us able to work, so the first day it seemed as though we were on a hopeless mission. However the sun was shining, & our spirits were keen, so we decided to tackle another of the small stones in the North-east.

On tuning in it became clear that one of them was ready to move, right across the circle, to mark the potential point of Imbolc-Samhain sunset –potential because this is the direction of Carn Ingli, the holy mountain, & the sun disappears behind it long before it actually sets. So, having levered the stone up, we set the tracks & the 3 of us moved a ton or so of elegant rock approx. 40ft across the circle. Although it was a lightweight stone, it was about 3ft. tall, so we carefully placed it so that its sloping top echoed the shape of the mountain behind it, from the centre of the circle.

The next day more folk arrived, & we set to on the stone for the East. This one was about 10ft. outside the circle, in the East-north-east, so we had to raise it out of its hole, onto rollers, then move it about 15ft. to its new location. As it must weigh around 6 tons, & is about 5ft. by 3ft. by 2ft., & had to be rolled uphill initially, this was quite an effort, with 5 people pushing VERY hard! Still, we did it, & at a ton or more each, those pushers certainly showed their true strength! Then we tried to drop it into its socket nice & neatly, but alas, its starting level was too low, & it went at a 45 degree angle, so we had a day of levering & stollage moving, & final sideways tweaking, before it sat tidily upright in the right spot. This was just a couple of days before Autumn Equinox, & the next morning at dawn, one of our team had the pleasure of seeing, & photographing, the sun rising neatly behind the stone. This is a particularly beautiful stone, a blunt triangle, that once again matches the other large stones in both height & its flat inner face.

The next day we had the privilege of having a geologist visit us, & check out what the stones are, geologically speaking. They seem to be a mixture of Dolerite & rhyolite, created by underwater volcanoes, a true blend of Earth, air, fire & water. They are first formed underwater, then deposited on land, & compressed under the mile thick ice formed in this area during the last ice age. This is perhaps why they nearly all have these lovely flat bottoms, which we are now using as the faces into the circle.

Our last stone of the week was a really big, heavy one, over in the West-north-west. It is a sort of diamond lozenge shape, around 7ft. long, at its widest 4ft. & 2-4 ft. thick. Luckily it was already in the right place to mark the Beltane-Samhain sunset, & so all we had to do was raise its 8-9 tons of weight upwards! This was an intense & fraught procedure, with our numbers low again, & 3 or 4 people trying to lift such a heavy being, but we pressed on & gathered extra folk at crucial moments, & finally had it upright & correctly aligned, after 2 days very hard work. The next morning, we came up to fill the hole around it, with earth & then turves, & had to go the side of the field to strip turves as we had run out. [the larger a stone, the bigger the socket hole left behind, & the more extra turves needed to fill it in.] As the final piece was laid, around 2pm. On a beautiful sunny day, a barn owl flew out of the hedgerow trees beside us, & flew in a circle above our heads & the stone, before silently disappearing into the grove. A Magical moment, & a wonderful reward for all our efforts!

That night, 22<sup>nd</sup> of September, the Brithdir folk & us joined up in the circle to light a fire & celebrate the Equinox. It was lovely to see the stones by firelight, & sing & dance amongst them, under a starlit sky. The circle is now 2/3 of the way to completion, with 9 stones up & 4 to go, & we hope to do our last session in the spring of 2002.

