

The Tinnerns Way- A birthday walk.

A day blessed with hot sunshine, the Penwith skies clear blue...
late Autumn.

Gentle warm light breeze, a gift of a day towards the close of the year.

Here in Botallack ,we hail the Open top Atlantic Coaster, and ascend the stairs.
An unparalleled view is gained, the astoundingly beautiful unspoilt landscape
stretching around us on all sides.

A tapestry of moorland, glistening sea, granite outcrops, hamlets.

Warm sun on our heads, we need no hat.

Birdsong, laughter from gardens, a distant tractor drones.

Uplifted by the joy and ease of the journey, feeling child- like excitement as we see
over hedges and fences...

Chickens, trampolines, dogs playing, garden flowers, wild flowers.... every sight a
gift.

One of " The most scenic bus rides in England ".

We travel in comfort and wonder.

Alighting, our walk begins.

Leaving the road, manmade, man laid,
we find and step our first stile.

Atop the central stone, I rest my hand on the side.

As so many have done before.

Grey granite, gentle granite...enduring.

How many years, milenia..

Countless seasons, countless suns.

Splashed with spilt paint hues, bright yellow, sharp white, cream, pink and soft sage
green..

The fantastical furled forms of lichen, their evocative names roll with them..foliose
forests,squamulose square block patterns, .fruticose and crustose. .

Scarlet blobs are shining beads, fruiting bodies...

Beauty so miniscule in a landscape vast and undulating.

Grey, nestling villages and hamlets, easy on the eye... blending and harmonious,
almost indiscernible amongst the patchwork moorland, Cornish hedges and small
green fields of the lowlands.

Our path ascends.

Always, always, a vast sweep of the far reaching horizon, the sea, blue and
turquoise today, white capped waves.

Above us, a huge open sky, beneficent.

We are free.

Opening the chest, opening the heart and spirit,

A landscape which enfolds, embraces, heals and disperses.

Onwards and outwards, we traverse.

All around us, bracken shades of russet, browns, orange, gold , ochre and yellows,
glowing now and preparing to lighten the Autumn and Winter months.

In our hearts, the memory of the heather carpets , scented sweeping vistas of mauves, pink and purples...

They will return with the turning of the seasons.

Sun furzy gleams..bright golden gorse, scent of wild honey and coconut.

Spiny and safe refuge for many.

Birdsong flutes, trills and churrs,

Beetles scurry across the paths , metallic bodies gleaming.

In restfulness of spirit, we walk in peace,

wordlessly sharing together.

Our footsteps and our breaths mark our journey.

Another granite stile, the way marker shining yellow and pointing ahead.

Now facing an ancient challenge, we step and wade through water..

Brown and murky, bubbled from gushing springs and tumbled through soil.

Assessing ancient parts of our brains, we each choose our steps, assessing rushes and grassy clumps for their safe footfall.

A skill seldom used in our modern world.

We see the stones of Bosullow Trehylls..

Here lived those of great wisdom, plant and animal knowledge, survival...

Flickering flames of fires and lamps, living on these moors, isolated..

Love and loss, growth and decline

Life and death.

In animal skins, and natural fibres

They found their way with stars, moon, sun, natural landscape features and placed stone markers

We with wellies, cagoules, acrylic warmth and paper map.

They are us and we are they.

Onwards we travel.

We meet no other.

Now at Chun Hill fort,

We squat beside the well, crystal clear water reflecting perfect white clouds.

How many ancient people have drunk here, with gladness and thanks to the Earth?

Our gaze lifts

Far away to our left, taking us by surprise, we see St Michaels Mount, a fairy tale Castle, arising from black rocks in an azure sea.

Iron age earthworks and imported ware, an ancient trading port.

The Atlantic stretches all around our horizon on both sides now..

Distant tiny boats, tankers, even cruise ships, are dwarfed in the enormous distance.

We walk again.

Gentle granite, grey granite.

We wonder what may be hidden beneath the boulders or in a crevice.

A Roman coin, a bronze age axe head, an ingot of gold, a medieval ring
or a geo cache ?..

.
A half hidden sheltered violet, perfect in form and resonant purple.
A snail tucked safely,
. A weasel scuttles , swiftly hidden again.
A beautifully marked spider retreats to its tunnel.....
Treasures.

Descending now we can see ahead , and slowly pass, the solitary Chun Quoit.
No need for us to thankfully shelter beneath the giant capstone,
The weather still gentle.
Far beyond again, on the skyline, Carn Kenidjack looms.
Our way home, our familiar marker.
Dark and gloomy, associated with grim legend, but today, to us, friendly and
supportive.
We cross the main road, impinged on by the modern world and traffic,
We are returning, we have walked in another dimension of time, of many other
times.

Visiting the Boslow stone with inscribed markings,
I am so glad that I have now stood in its presence.

Down, down, our path skirts the Carn,
stepping springy turf and caressing wooden decrepit stiles ,weathered gnarled and
smooth as beach pebbles.
Here in Summer hours, the skylarks soar and pour their exquisite song down to us
And so many birds have solitude to nest and live.
We have watched Badgers, foxes , small mammals, reptiles and amphibians..
This special landscape is theirs.

Bronze age Tregeseal stone circle lies away beyond the glassy waterlily covered
pool,
a lone person sits in contemplation.
A moorhen calls alarm and the Grey Heron rises on languid wings.
Devils Lane and No Go by, ever closer to home.
A landscape ever living, ever enduring, ever home for nature.

Our steps cross the threshold
our granite home built by Tin miners in the 1800's.
Hands cupped round mugs,
The birthday candles glow,
Holding in their warm gaze a quiet focus.... .
. a thankful cycle of celebration and continuity.

By Gail Charman