

Feel the Energy

This month our Richard shows magical qualities!

IN CORNWALL LAST YEAR we started to find things about dowsing and energy lines after visiting a fascinating stone circle called 'the hurlers'. In a brief burst of enthusiasm we then joined the British Society of Dowsters – then, as is our custom, did nothing more about it, except to receive their regular journal which was added to the pile of unread magazines in our kitchen.

Then over the last bank holiday weekend we went to the village of Hopton which we had hardly heard of even though it is just 25 miles or so along the coast from where we live.

It was a hot day – the hottest so far – and the traffic increased in direct proportion to the level of mercury in the thermometer. By the time we reached Great Yarmouth, it was virtually gridlocked. As we sat steaming in the car, there was much talk of turning round and doing something else. But we ate two packets of chocolates and persevered.

Eventually we found Hopton and its ruined church of St Margaret's. And in the grounds around the ruins we found a lively village fete – but with a strong sense of the mystical and history. Also present were the members of the Sunrise Dowsing Group.

Dowsing sounds completely wacky. It is a practice of locating water (and also oil, buried treasure, even dead bodies) using dowsing rods. The idea is that the rods help to amplify the signals that we can pick up naturally. Dowsing does not have the support of conventional science, and studies have showed results that are no better than chance. It was therefore with a high level of scepticism that I agreed to give it a go.

One of its members, Sue, thrust a pair of dowsing rods into my hands. In truth it was no more than two bent pieces of coat hanger. I was told how to hold it – arms away from the body, rod loose in each hand. I had to ask it to say what it meant by 'yes' and what it meant by 'no'. Obediently the ends of the rods came together for yes and went slightly apart for no. 'Easy,' I thought to myself. 'I did that.'

Then I was asked to find an energy line. As I walked along, the rods suddenly came together. Now this time I did not feel that it was under my control.

'Spot on,' said Sue. 'See, you can do it.'

I was then asked to find a water main and – damn it (because I really did not believe it was going to work) – I located the water main accurately.

A while later, after listening to some singing to the earth energy and beating of gongs (really not my scene yet!) we went to have tea at Somerleyton Hall – a huge Tudor-Jacobean mansion just into Suffolk.

Pause for the Mary and Michael lines. It is said that there is a virtually dead straight pair of energy (or Ley) lines crossing the country in parallel from the end of Cornwall, passing through Avebury and Bury St Edmunds and all the way to Hopton where it goes under the sea and then on into Europe –



they are the Mary line and the Michael line.

Many churches are built exactly on these lines and most are dedicated either to St Mary (or Margaret) or to St Michael – and those names were chosen long before people came along in this and the last centuries and started to trace Ley lines across the country.

Somerleyton Hall is built on one of these lines too. And this is where it gets weird. Walking across where the line is supposed to run I noticed a faint but distinct tingling in my hands (a little like the aftermath of a nettle sting). The tingling was there for only a few feet, then it disappeared. Again and again we criss-crossed the line. And each time there was the tingling while I was over the line, and it stopped as soon as I cleared it.

Bewildered and intrigued, we then went to another church on the line – St Mary's church Haddiscoe – and, blow me, the same thing happened. All the way down the aisle my hands tingled – but it stopped as soon as I went to one side or the other. My wife's feelings were stronger, and she also picked up another well or water supply.

I found the entire experience unsettling but I could not even console myself with a mouthful of chocolate: we had eaten them all in the traffic jam en route.

So instead we took the charming and quaint Reedham Ferry. It is drawn by chains from one side of the River Yare to the other. It is the only place to cross the river between Yarmouth and Norwich. I had been thoroughly spooked by the experiences of the day, so we stopped off on the other side for a drink at the Reedham Ferry Inn. All the same I did not need dowsing rods to tell me we had been over a river, or that the much needed therapeutic contents of my glass were brewed by Woodfordes.