

Earth Energies Special Interest Group – Visit to Uley Long Barrow 20th June 2026

Introduction

Uley Long Barrow is also known as Hetty Pegler's Tump, named after the wife of Henry Pegler, the landowner who owned the land in the 17th century. Hetty died in 1694 and Henry in 1695. It is a Neolithic burial mound considered to be at least 5,000 years old and is one of the best surviving of the Cotswolds-Severn group of barrows.

History

The barrow was first archaeologically excavated in 1821 revealing the remains of fifteen skeletons and a later intrusive Roman age burial above the northeast chamber.

However, the barrow as seen today is largely the result of the excavation and reconstruction carried out by Dr John Thurnham in 1854 and subsequent repairs in 1871, 1891 and 1906. In 2011 major structural work was undertaken to make the site safe, and as a result it is one of the few chambered tombs you can go inside.

Over the years a total of twenty-three skeletons has been recovered. Two skulls went to Guy's Hospital in London, but it is said that most of the bones were reburied in the churchyard of St Giles's in Uley.

Despite its apparently good condition, the barrow has suffered considerably from vandalism and casual excavation. Coins and pieces of broken pot found inside the barrow indicate that it was opened in Roman times. It was probably broken into again in the Middle Ages and damaged further in the 19th century.

Description

The barrow is 120 feet (37 metres) long and 10 feet (3 metres) wide. It is of the 'transepted type', which is to say that its cruciform plan resembles that of a church. It once had two chambers on each side and one at the end. The two chambers on the north hand side have since been destroyed leaving two on the left or south side. The earthen mound is surrounded by a dry-stone wall.

The barrow is orientated east-west so could be aligned to the Equinoxes. It apparently is known as a fertility site. In his video of the site Hugh Newman (author of "Earth Grids", the Secret Patterns of Gaia's Sacred Sites) suggests that the barrow is aligned and connected to other barrows.

Function of Barrows

According to the well-known dowser Billy Gawn burial mounds vary, in that some are earth covered and others are simply cairns constructed of smallish stones. Some have internal chambers, others not. Some have a passageway leading up to internal

chambers, and some of these passageways are orientated to the rising or setting of the sun. He goes on to say that generally they were constructed over just one major flow of underground water. Usually, two major energy lines cross near to the chamber. In some cases, as with smaller cairns and mounds, there is just one major line, with a minor one crossing it. The presence of crossing points of energy lines appears to have been the pre-requisite for the selection of the site. He goes on to say that it is now no longer perceived wisdom that the cairns and great mounds functioned primarily as burial sites. Contemporary scholarship regards the passage cairns more as sacred places associated with life, rebirth and regeneration.

Dowsing at Uley Barrow

Firstly, there is the area around the barrow itself to see if any energy lines can be detected, and if so of what type (type 2,3 or 4 according to Rory Duff), and in what direction.

Secondly, on top of the barrow itself to locate any nodes or presence of water. However, the sides are a little steep, so only for those with the confidence to do so.

Finally, inside the barrow itself, to again locate nodes, water, spirals etc. However, to venture inside you will need to enter on all fours and have either a torch or other form of illumination as it is quite dark inside. Also, suitable attire is recommended.

Overall, it would also be interesting to dowse for any connection to other known local barrows.

One other area to investigate. Is in the adjacent field to the site. Somewhere near to the central area is a circular patch which responds to both rods and pendulum. For those interested it is worth a visit to see what can be unravelled.

Location

The barrow is located some 300 yards from the B4066 road (Crawley Hill) between Uley and Nympsfield and is clearly signposted. Parking is in a lay-by the other side of the road diametrically opposite the path to the site or a second one a few yards further along the road. Neither is ideal as you need to cross a busy road. Alternatively, one can park at Coaley Peak car park and walk 0.87 miles along the Cotswold way to the site.

The actual barrow sits on the edge of the Cotswold escarpment, and there would be a magnificent view over the Severn Vale if this was not obscured by a line of trees at the rear of the barrow. Interestingly many of the barrows in the Cotswold landscape also sit on the edge of the escarpment as well, such as barrows at Coaley Peak, Selsey and of course Belas Knapp. Perhaps siting these barrows at the escarpment edge gave greater security or perhaps elevated places close to the sky were more revered, connecting the dead to ancestral spirits and the heavens.