

Ross Rocks by Richard Gabriel



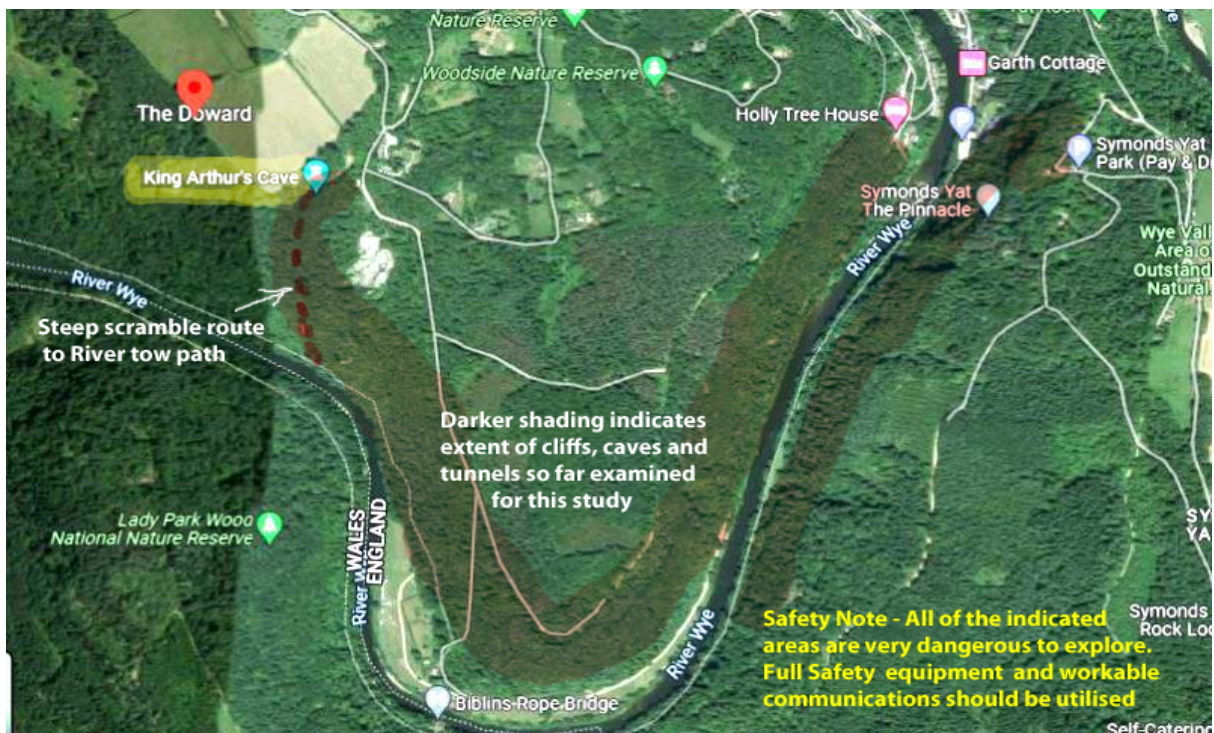
Less than 20 car minutes from the centre of Ross there is a wonderful place on the edge of the Forest of Dean, frequented by thousands of locals and tourists every year. It is known as the Arthurs Cave system starting from the Doward pathway indicated on the maps below.

A quick Web search will tell you of its Palaeolithic past when the Wye River cave systems were inhabited by our ancient ancestors. From 10,000 years ago and beyond, the inhabitants shared the river environment with many exotic animals. These included Hyena, Lion, Beaver, Rhino, Mammoth, Elk, and many more species.

However, there is one huge feature that is little known to archaeology and the multitudes of visitors; (and is almost invisible to the naked eye.)

The rock surfaces were used by those ancient people as a canvas for astonishing illustrations, etchings and carvings.

Many years ago and quite by accident I discovered a way to recover degraded illustrations from rock surfaces. Deep UHD photo analysis enables illustrations to be rediscovered and exposed again. This article is by way of introduction to some of the results from the River Wye valley. I hope it will help any future visitors to see more than just regular rock surfaces.





The illustrations are selected randomly from the shaded search areas shown on the maps above. Literally all the rock surfaces throughout the valley are covered with other examples... When we think Palaeolithic we have a traditional idea of primitive cave-people with little sophistication. The recovery of these illustrations tells a different story. The artists must have painted them to represent their lives and ceremonies and are sometimes almost photographic in their quality. It is a new opportunity for us to understand the daily lives of our ancients with truer insight. Please take more than a few seconds to adjust your focal depth with each illustration and see what you can discover from the examples shown.

PS the photo at the page header is of an actual figure of circa 7cm. which remains untouched in a deep niche about 5 minutes away from the main Arthurs Caves.



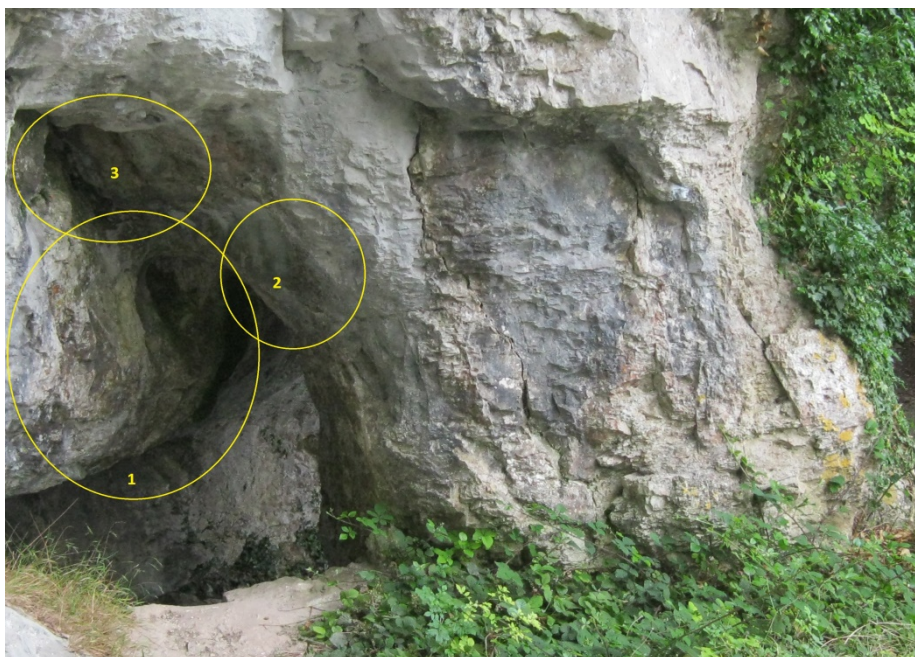
Note the backing rock which is covered in figuring. This niche also contains fabulous rock illustrations on other surfaces which you will see later. Without more excavation I was only able to capture the results from a pole-extended camera.

It is necessary to give a small explanation as to how these illustrations can be recovered. Let us imagine from a time of 10,000 + years ago, Palaeolithic communities had far

greater sophistication than we give them credit for. Let us accept they had the ability to memorialise their lives, beliefs and pageant in fabulous illustrated detail on the rock surfaces around them. Since then those illustrations would have been subject to weathering, deposits, damage, and general degradation. In caves, fissures, under overhangs etc. images would have been better preserved. (& who bothers by the way, to just photograph ordinary rock surfaces?) Accept also that the pigments used would have soaked into those surfaces

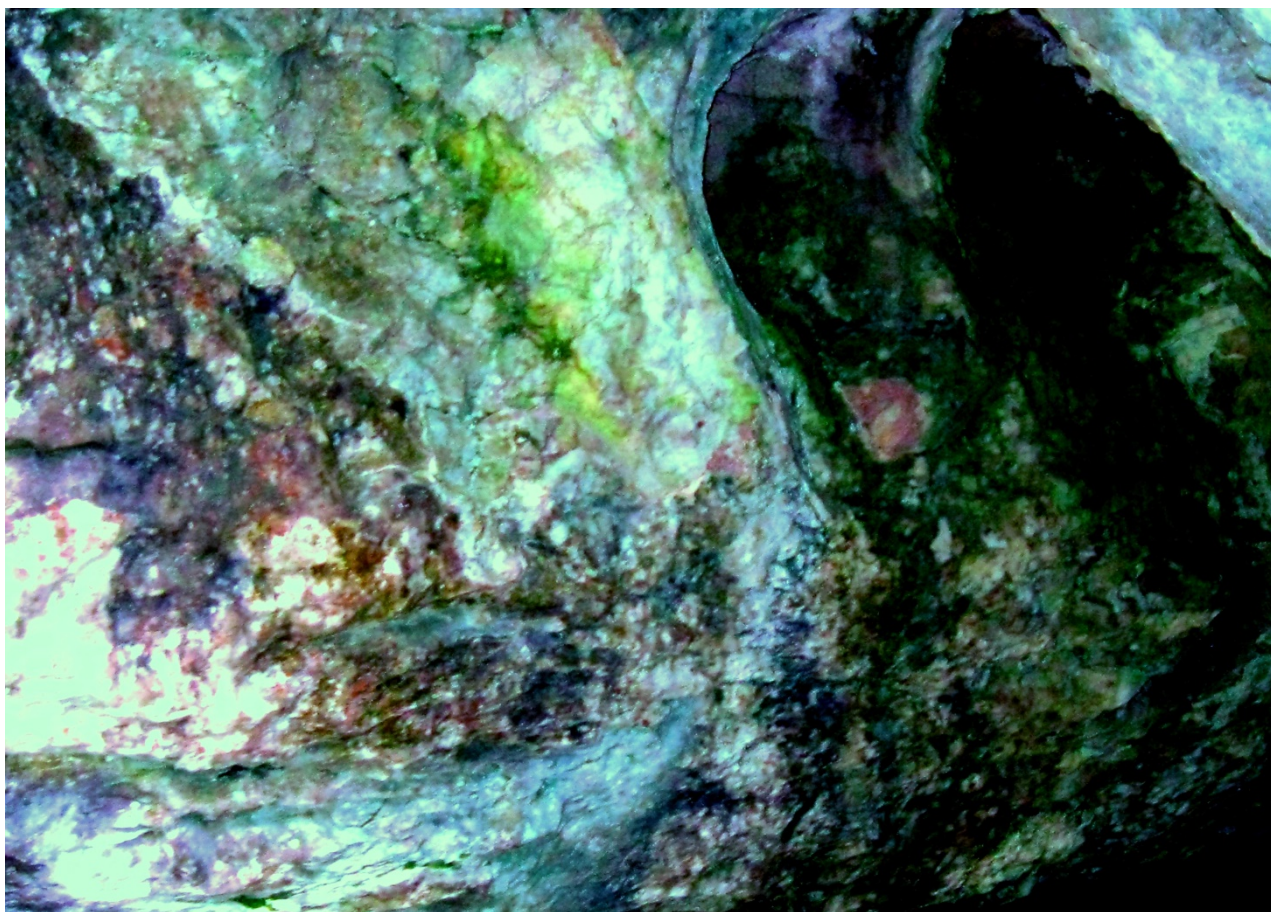
When we now capture a digital photograph of a rock surface, accounting for best light and weather, the camera flattens the image. Then just like those modern magic 3D pictures where it is possible to see a real image appear by altering eye focus - our eyes are able to join the dots of any damages on the rock surface to see where something deliberate may have been illustrated there... In conjunction with this, the HD target image can be processed through simply available image editing options. This gives infinite settings just like tuning a radio. Faded images are blinded and disguised by the predominant colours of the rock, but through analysis it is possible to bias the colours of any ancient image so it can be seen again. They may not be Rembrandt perfect but if time is taken to study them, especially copy/saved to your own computer for enlargement, the detail reveals so much more.

Let's go for some examples.. One of the first features we see on the path walk down to Arthurs Caves, is what I call the flying buttress, seen below



You will see there are three numbered circled areas...

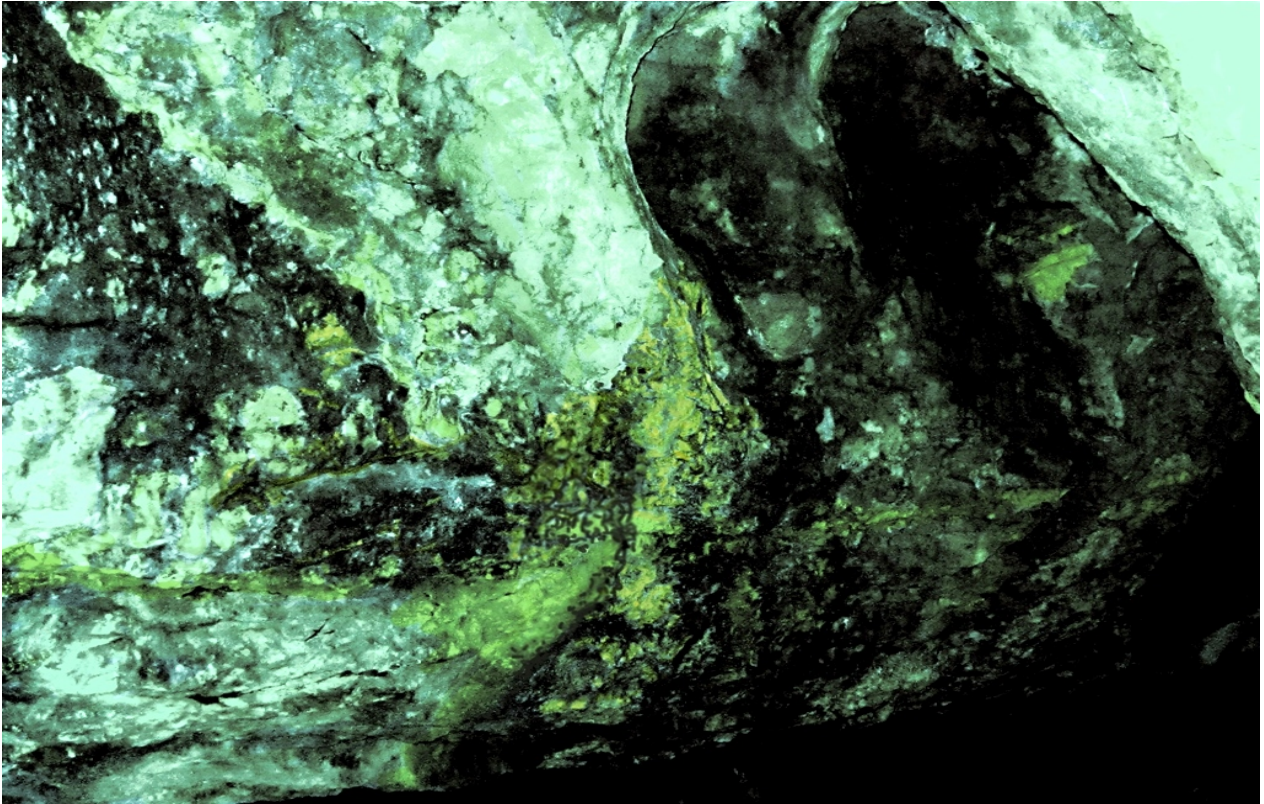
Incidentally after a decade of research in the area I have interpretations to offer for the whole extended system, but that will wait to a fully expanded publication of results. For now let us look at Number (1)



Along the lower part of the pic. at least 5 boats are lined up.
Figures are also lined in rows up the slope to the left as if charging down to embark.

This scene is on the left hand rock face as it reaches under the arch.
I have tried many times day and night to capture an image that isn't ruined by the over-exposure of light reflected from the open surface.
For sure the imaged scene extends much further.

If we assume in ancient times, the buttress could have been a staging gateway to the rest of this cave system. The image of boats tied up in a row would have been familiar. The river then would have flowed much closer to their doorstep than it does now... A second version of the same photo follows



And here is a wider third picture of the boats target area....



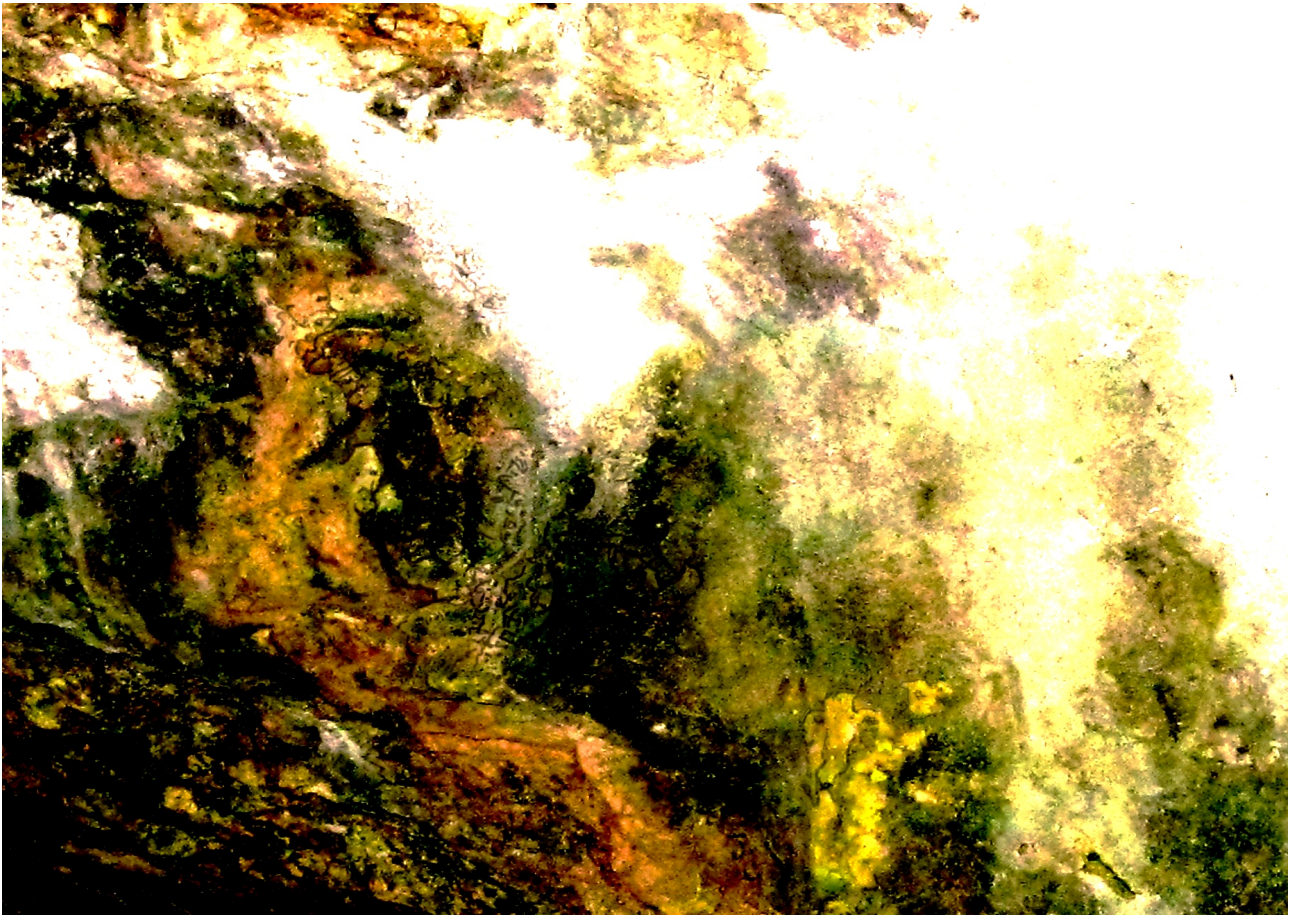
Let us move to Image 2 from above. As the buttress sweeps away from the rock, an area looks very smooth as if it was once polished... Take a look and get an idea of the important scene depicted by the artist all those years ago.



A little closer..

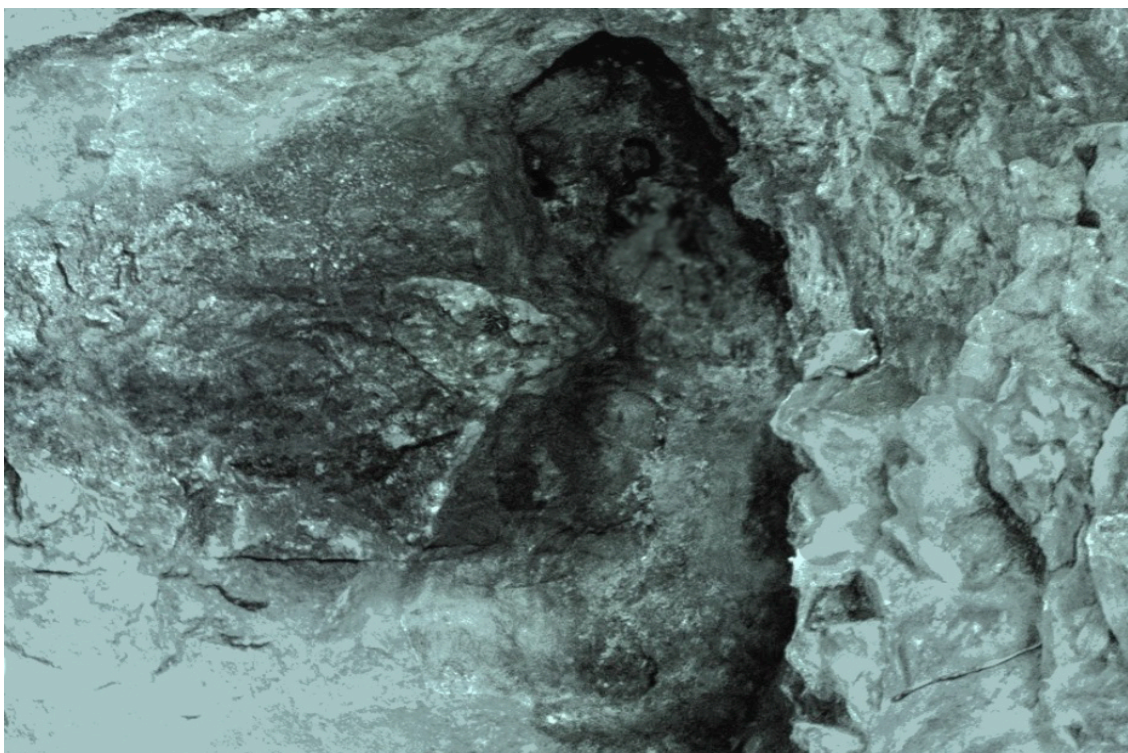


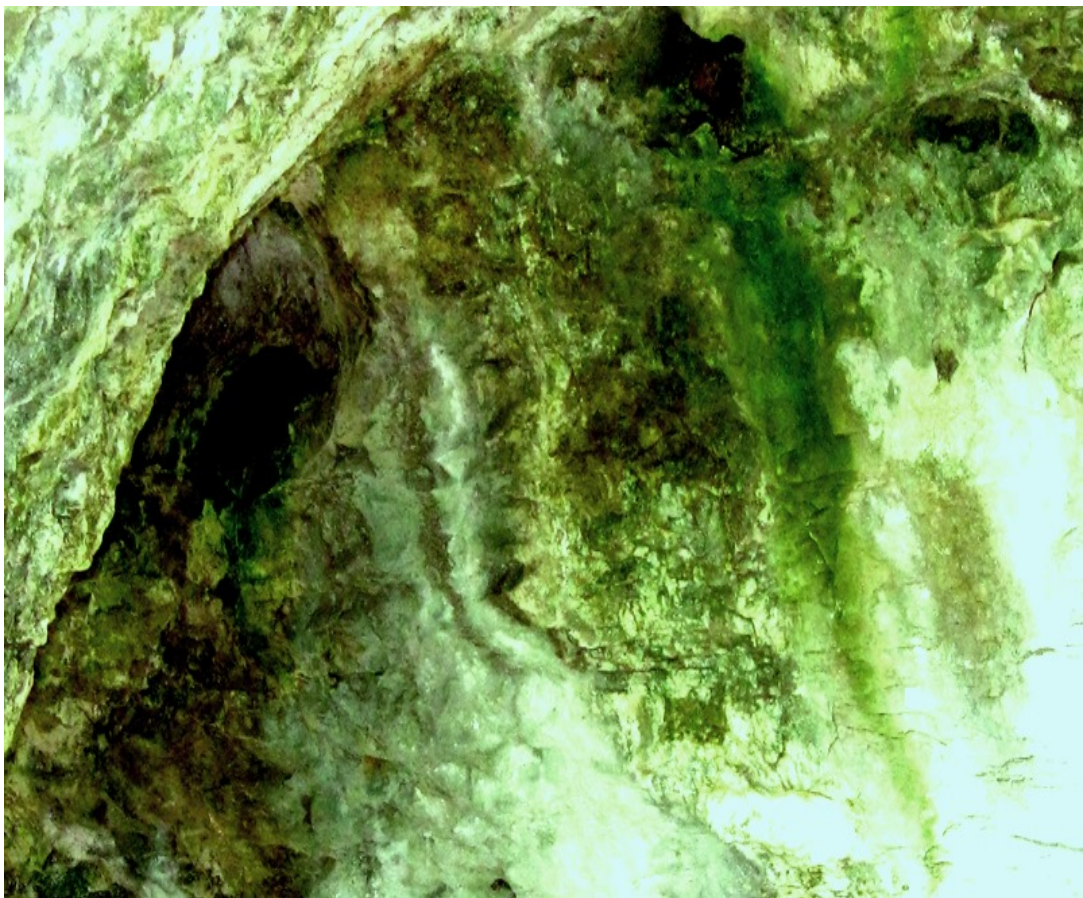
And one more view a little closer top left of the original



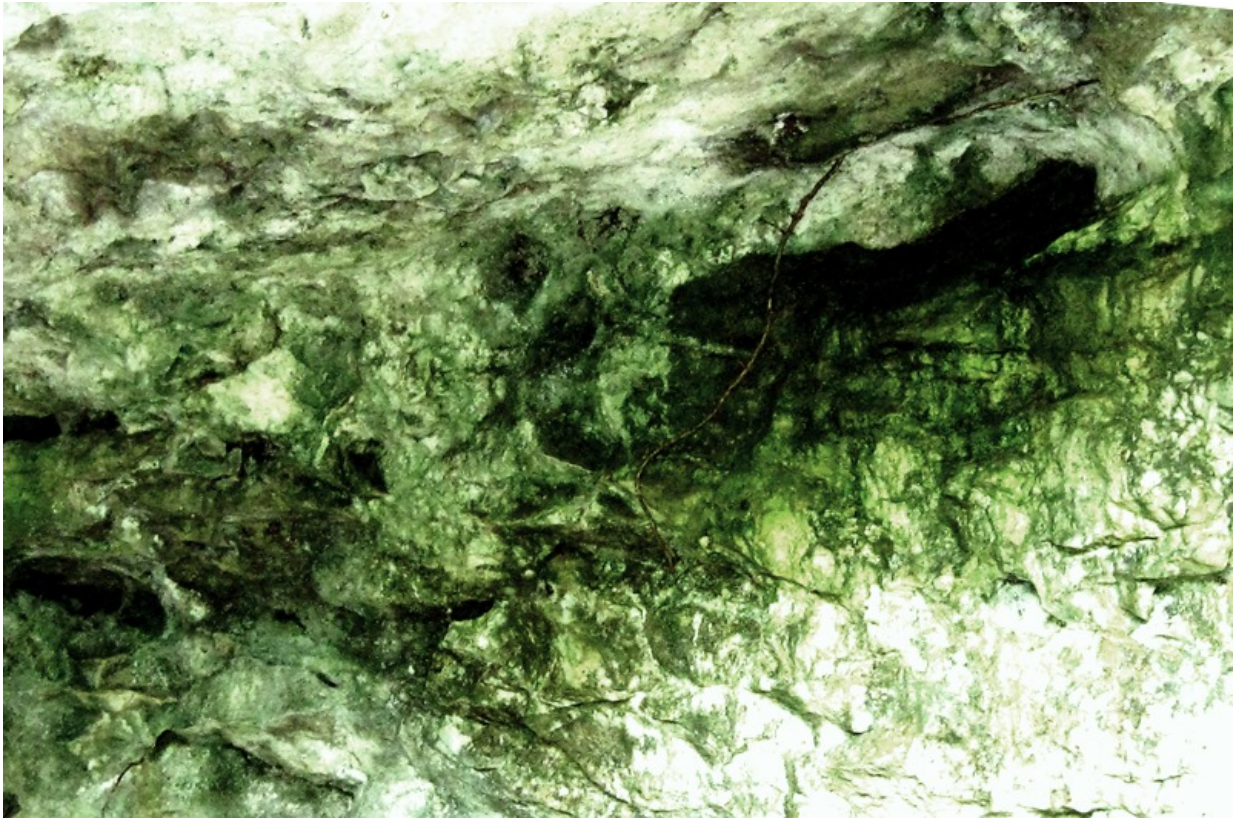
Moving now to the circled area marked 2 on the original above.

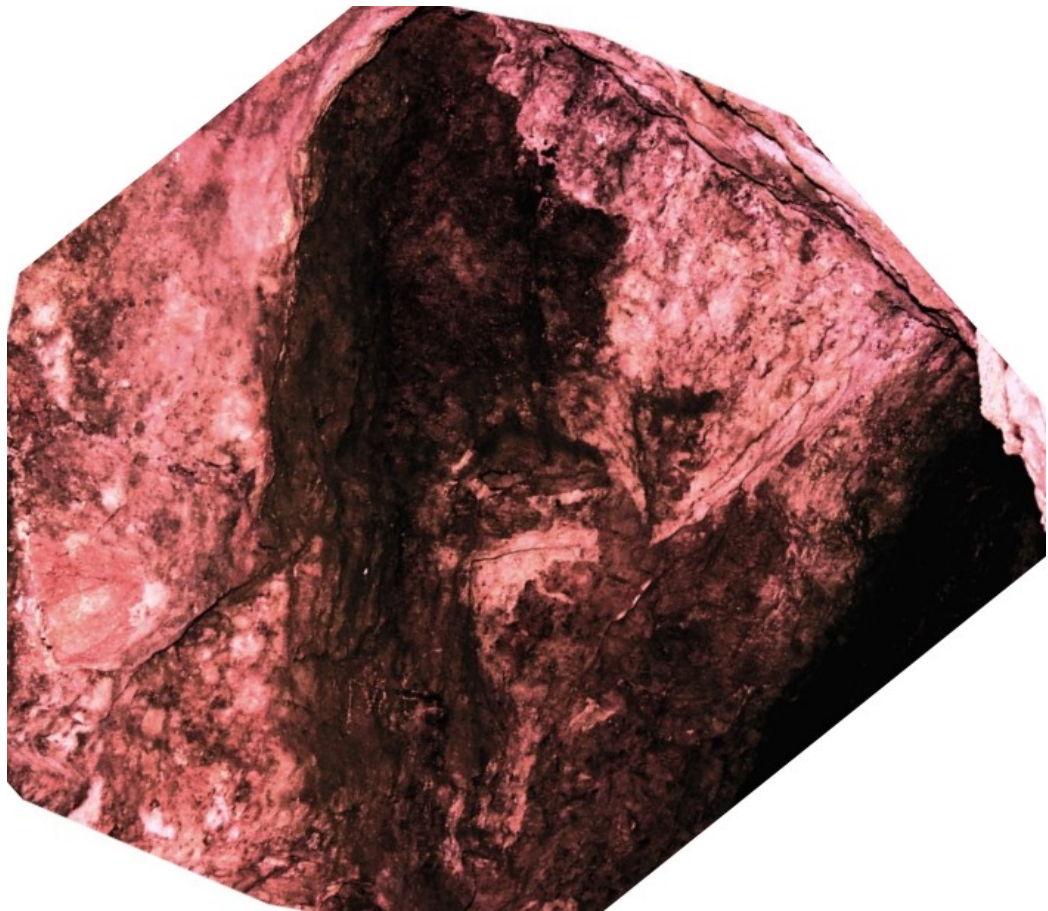
Beneath the buttress arch, the left hand wall is marked by hollows scalloped in the rock. They appear plain to the naked eye. After analysis we get these examples.

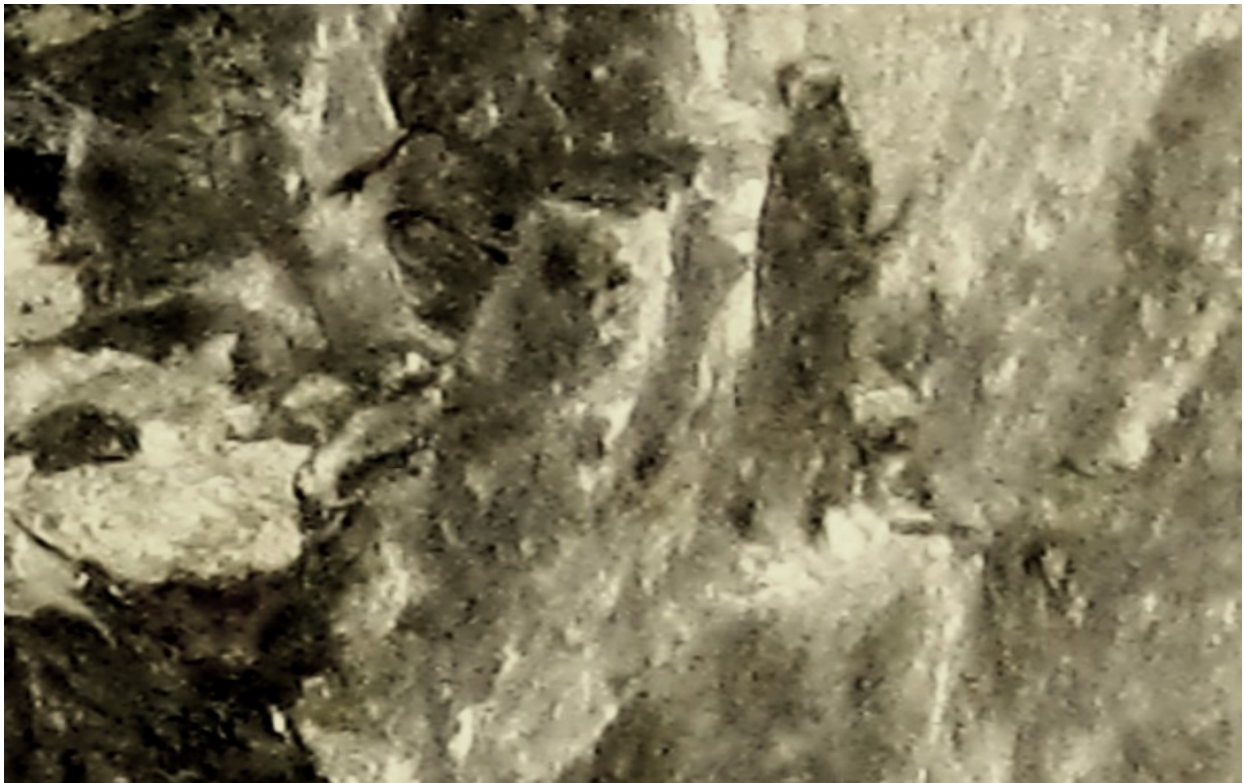




As we reach out further among the caves, cliffs, towers and tunnels, other faded scenes emerge...

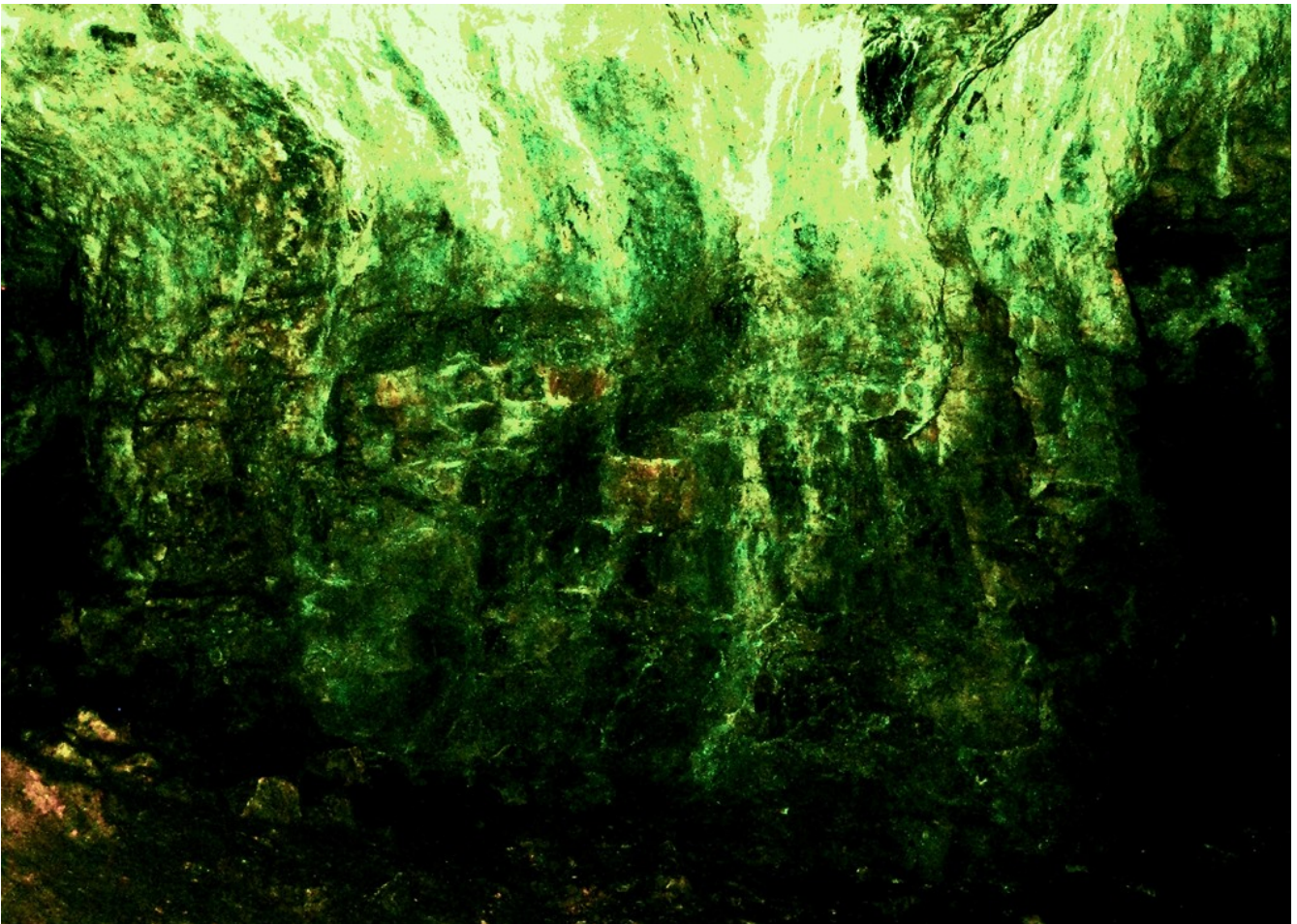


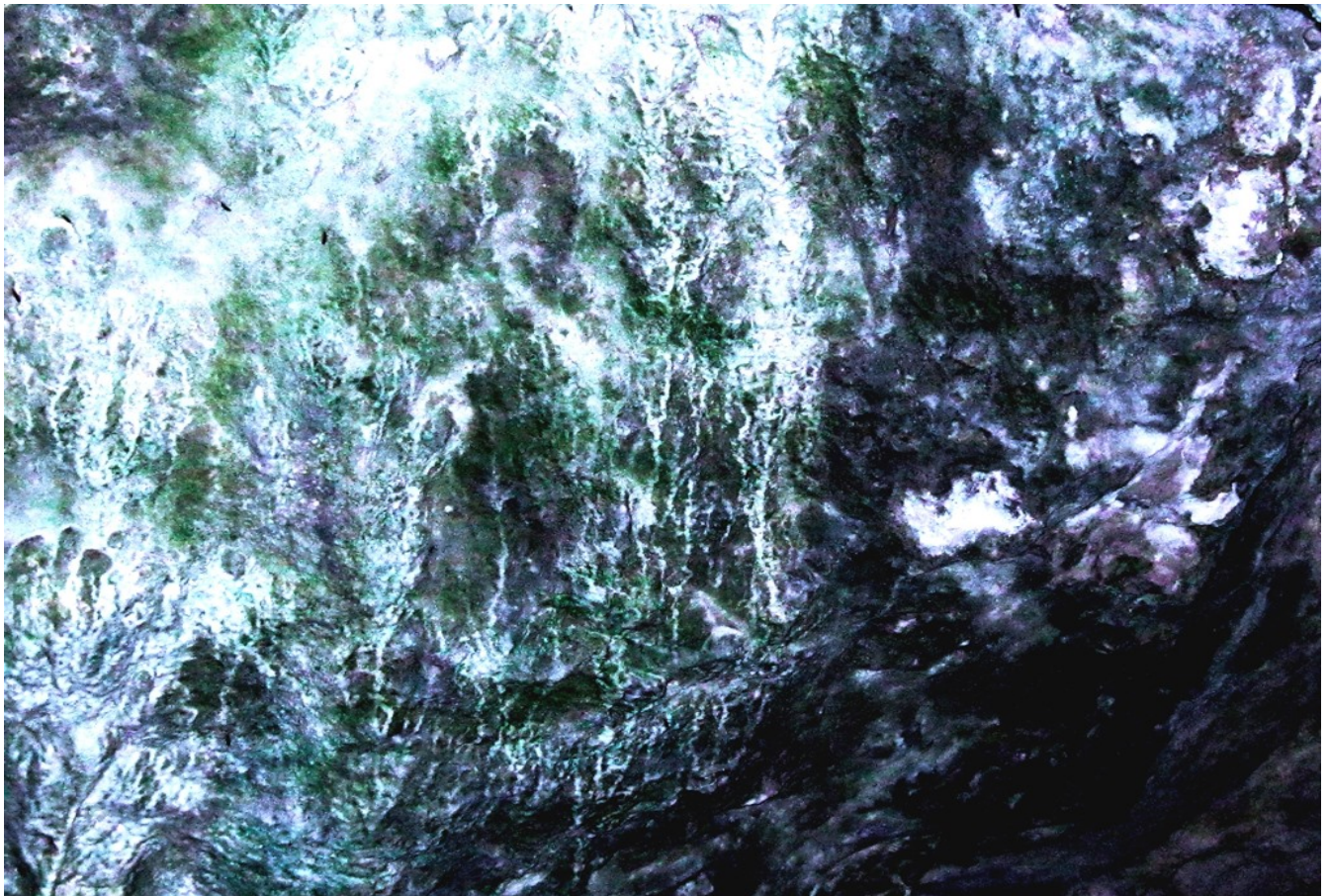




The one above deserves enlargement to boggle the mind at the fine detail.

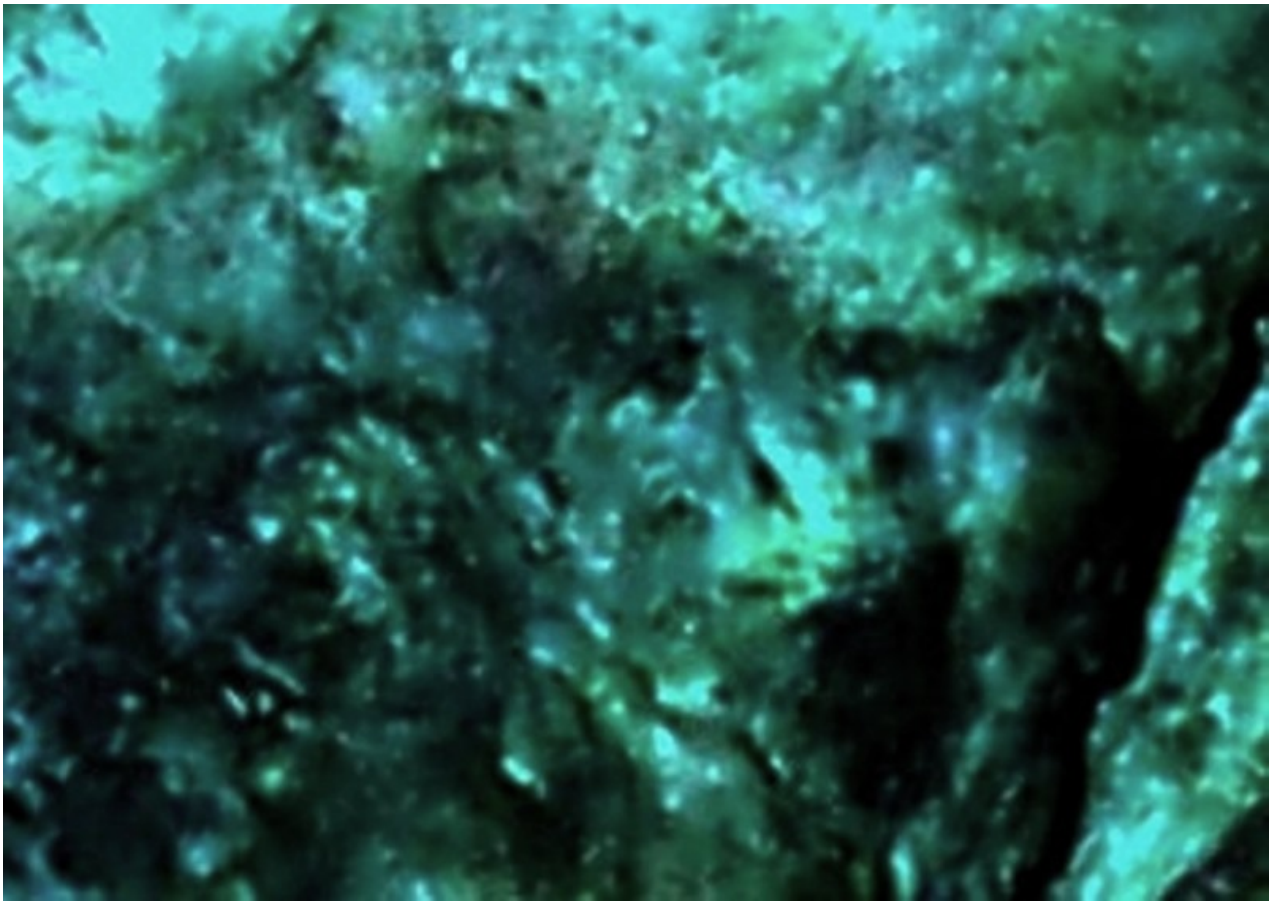






Behind the calcification will you see the boat in tempest and the figures in the water by the sinking boat?

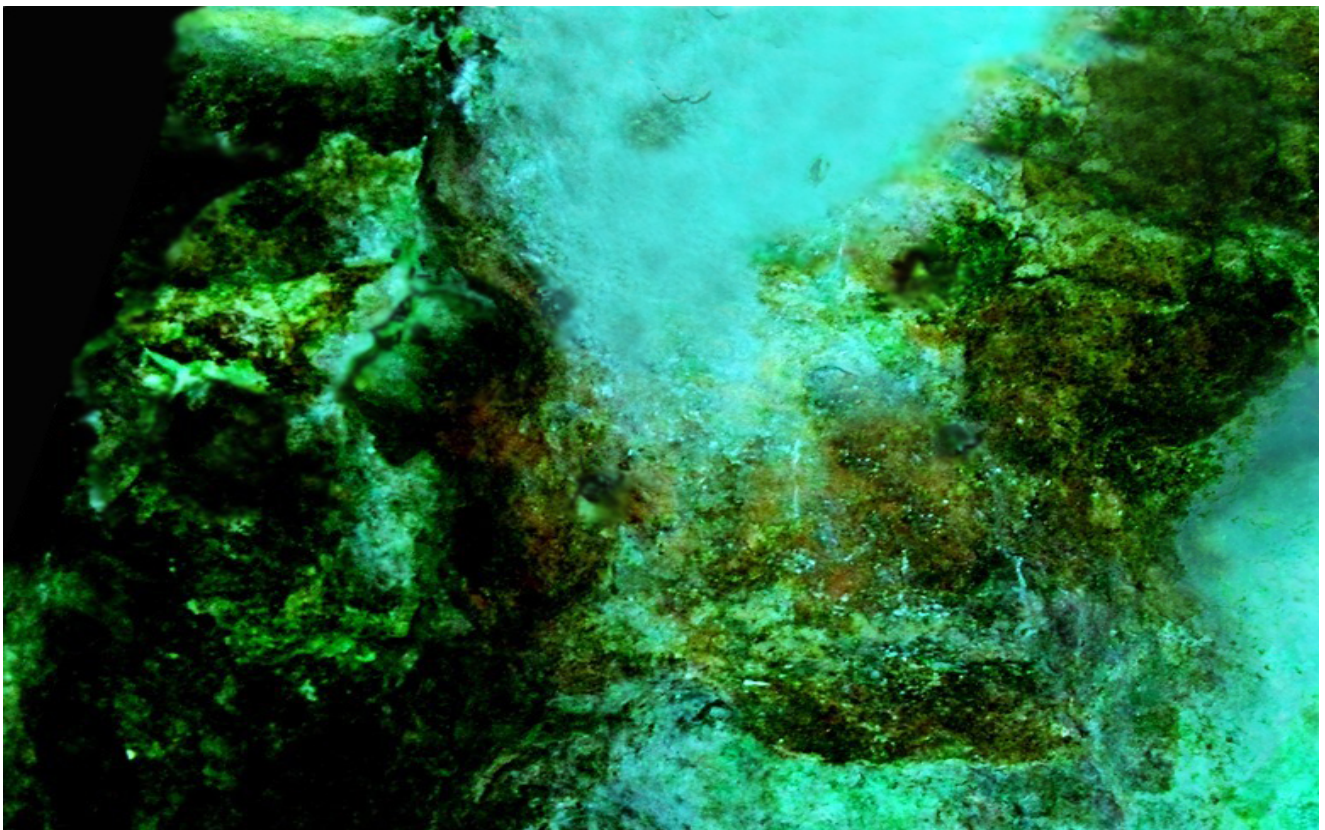
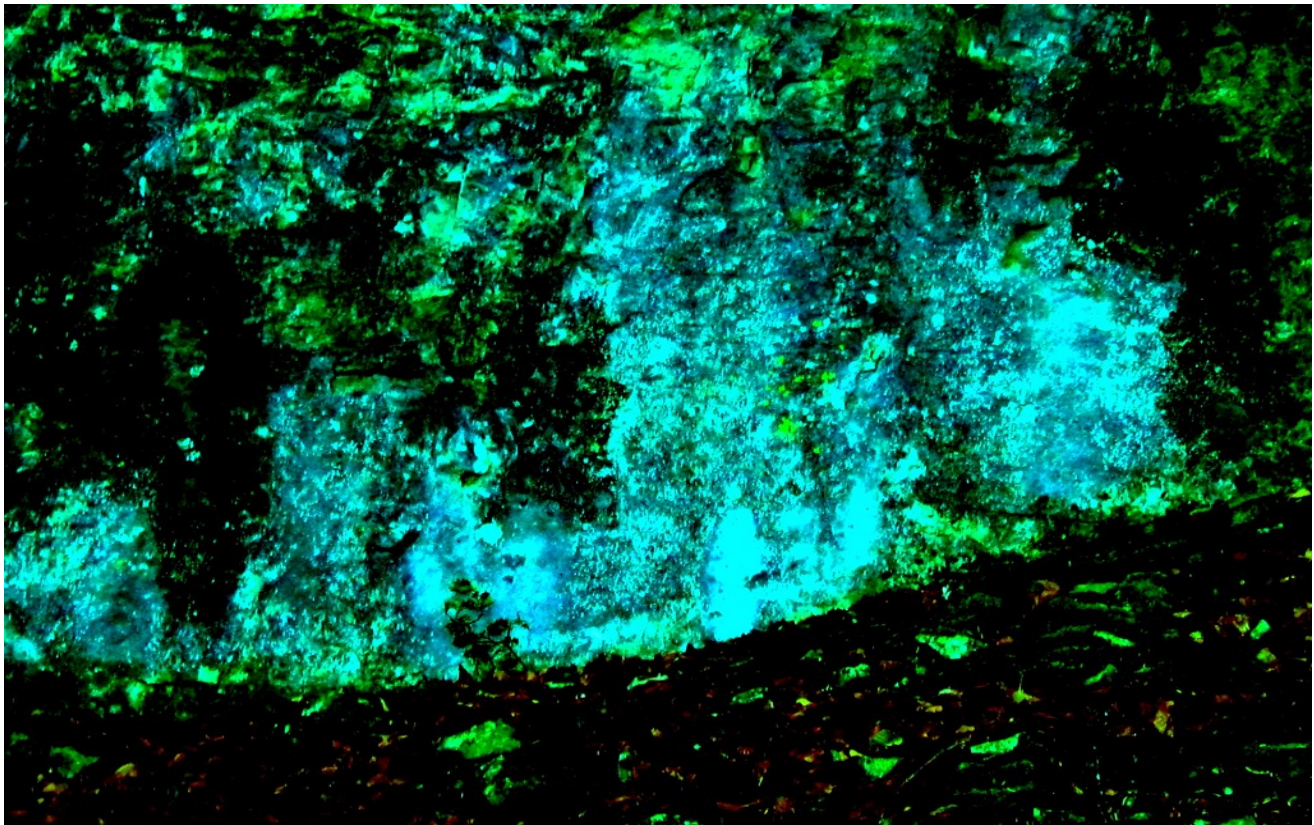






Next comes two intriguing photos taken at night then analysed... Let your eyes adjust to the flash of light bluish colour in these pics. If you study carefully you will see they actually depict a detailed procession of people



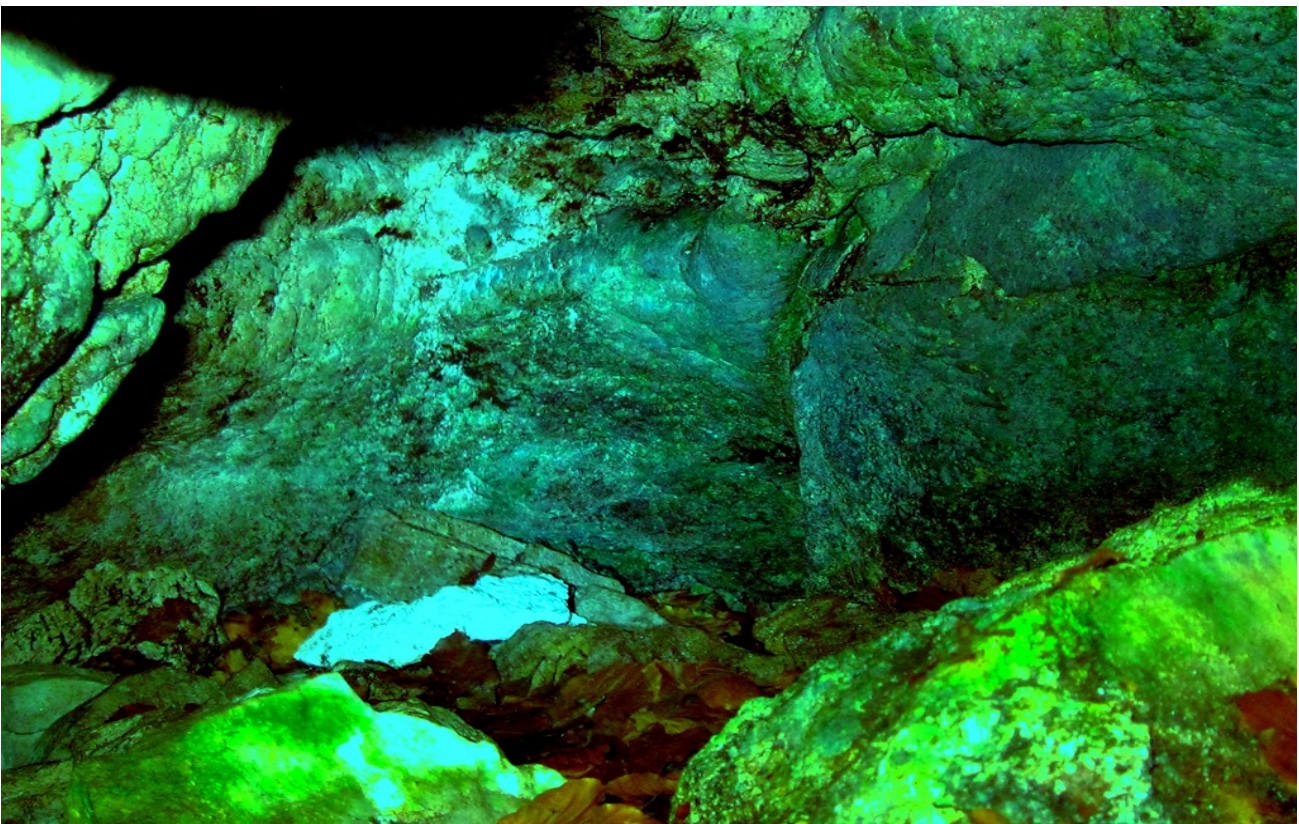


Remember at the start of this presentation I showed the figure I found deep in a niche close to Arthurs Caves. It is not possible to enter the fissure without more excavation. However I managed to get into the entrance far enough, and with the use of a camera pole extension I made another discovery that will take all of your eye training to get the best from the results.....

First a pic in the raw... The area of rock is probably only 15 x 12 inches.

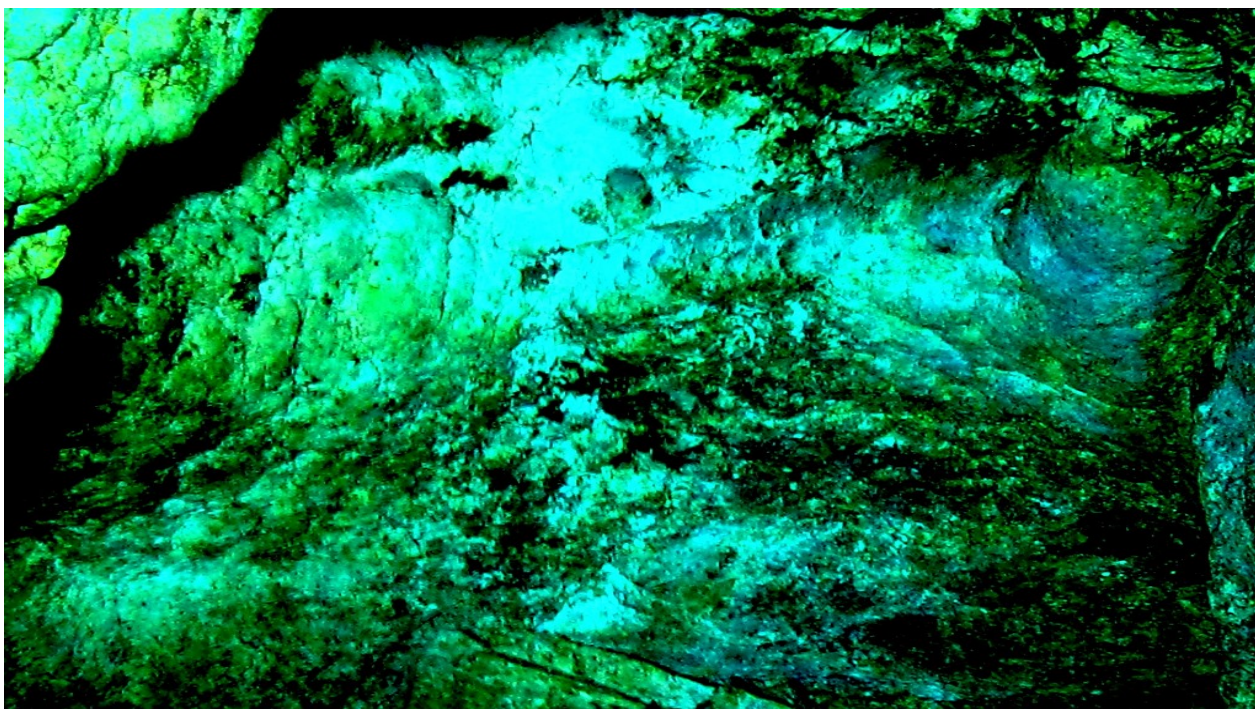


Then the same pic after finding an optimum analysis setting.....



At this stage, even after recognising there may be an illustration there, a final determination can only be made after examination down to pixel level.

I have the benefit of having examined this target through multiple analysis settings, and in great close-up. I am able therefore to be confident of the description I will give from this third photo, and I'll ask you to try and visual the astonishing scene for yourselves.



Partially delineated from single pixel size next, we are presented with a fabulous scene. At face value it looks like tumultuous sea smashing against background cliffs. However look much deeper and we find the sea is skilfully made up of creatures in a Smorgasbord of action. The (sea) rises in the centre, but it is formed from creatures crashing against each other from opposing sides.

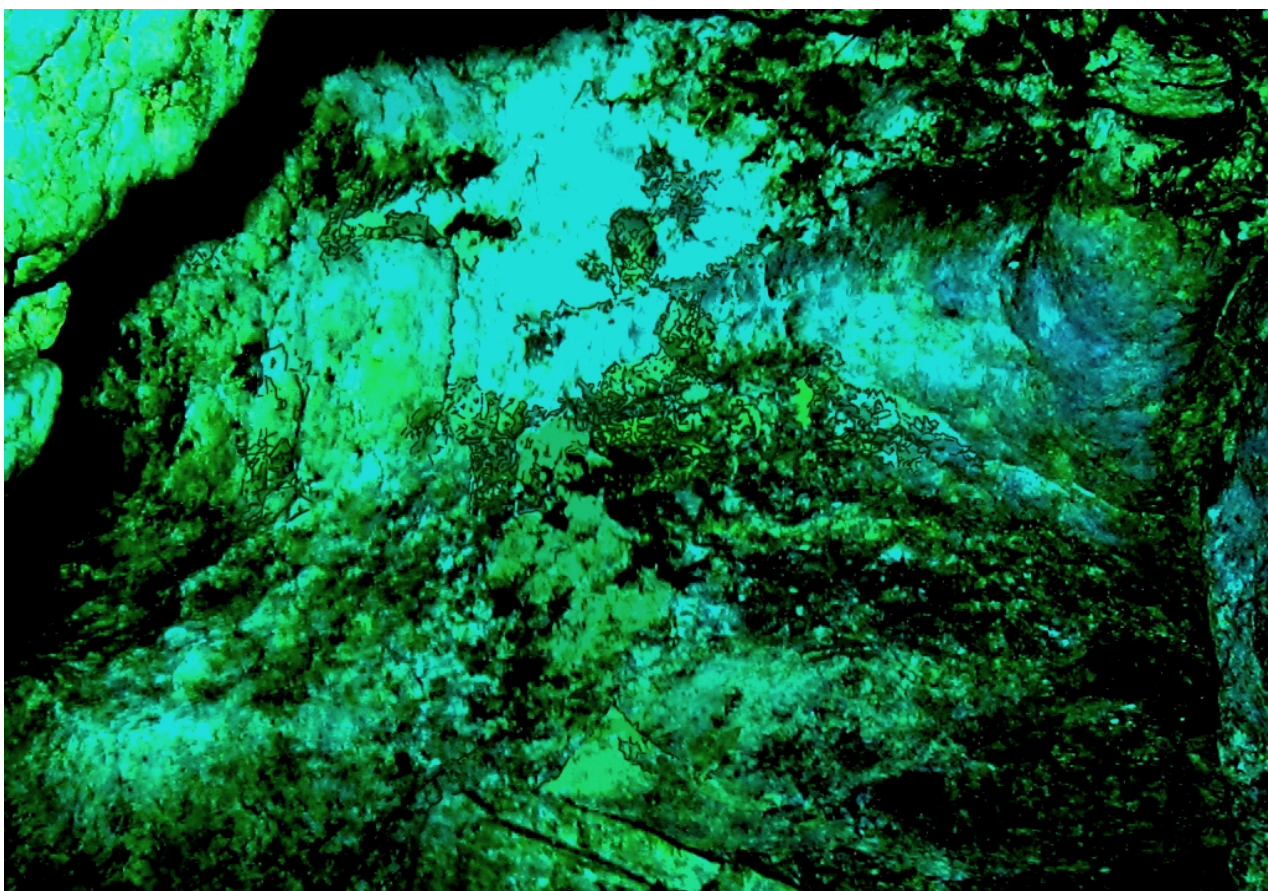
In the foreground we see a part of an obvious boat hull. It is much harder without enlargement to discern middle centre, the peak of action is a stack of crewed overladen smaller vessels.

Higher, behind them the apparent cliff face is fragmented into either lookout towers or on the right hand side a cliff top plateau... A reptilian/alien looking figure peers from the centre but is accompanied by other more theriomorphic figures. A mass of these can be seen also viewing the scene of confusion below them.

The whole composition is astonishing for the skill used. This is only one of hundreds of equal or better quality I have found along the high cliffs of the River Wye Gorge but it throws a rock at the mainstream view we have been fed on the nature of our ancestry so far.....

Here is the final partially delineated and adjusted version.....

Remember with any of these pictures you can copy/paste them to your own laptop and examine them properly with greater enlargement.



The extended illustration on the right of the main pic had to be analysed separately...



After that..... I left the best for to last!

The Tower and The Tunnel

From the length of time I have spent exploring the cliff sides I can say for sure that very few of the river tow-path explorers bother to inspect the slopes. In fairness outside of winter it is very difficult to penetrate the foliage. However along the tow-path section indicated on my header map there is a real discovery missed by all. In one place set well back from the river there is a megalithic rock tower thrusting up from between the cliffs. At the front it appears to be supported by an equally huge wide buttress of solid rock. It can also be observed immediately beneath this feature, the sloped bank appears to have been hollowed out in a giant bowl shape in line with the width of the supporting buttress and for circa 40ft. towards the river bank. It is easy to speculate back to Palaeolithic times and suppose that river levels would have been nearer to where the bowl shaped ground ends in a rough platform area... ie It would have been ideal as a boat berth.

At the top of the ground profile as it butts to the rock a small tunnel entrance starts dead centred to the buttress and the tower. However the tunnel starts almost 5 feet from the ground leading up to it. Ancient steps were laid to form a small semi-circular platform at the tunnel entrance.

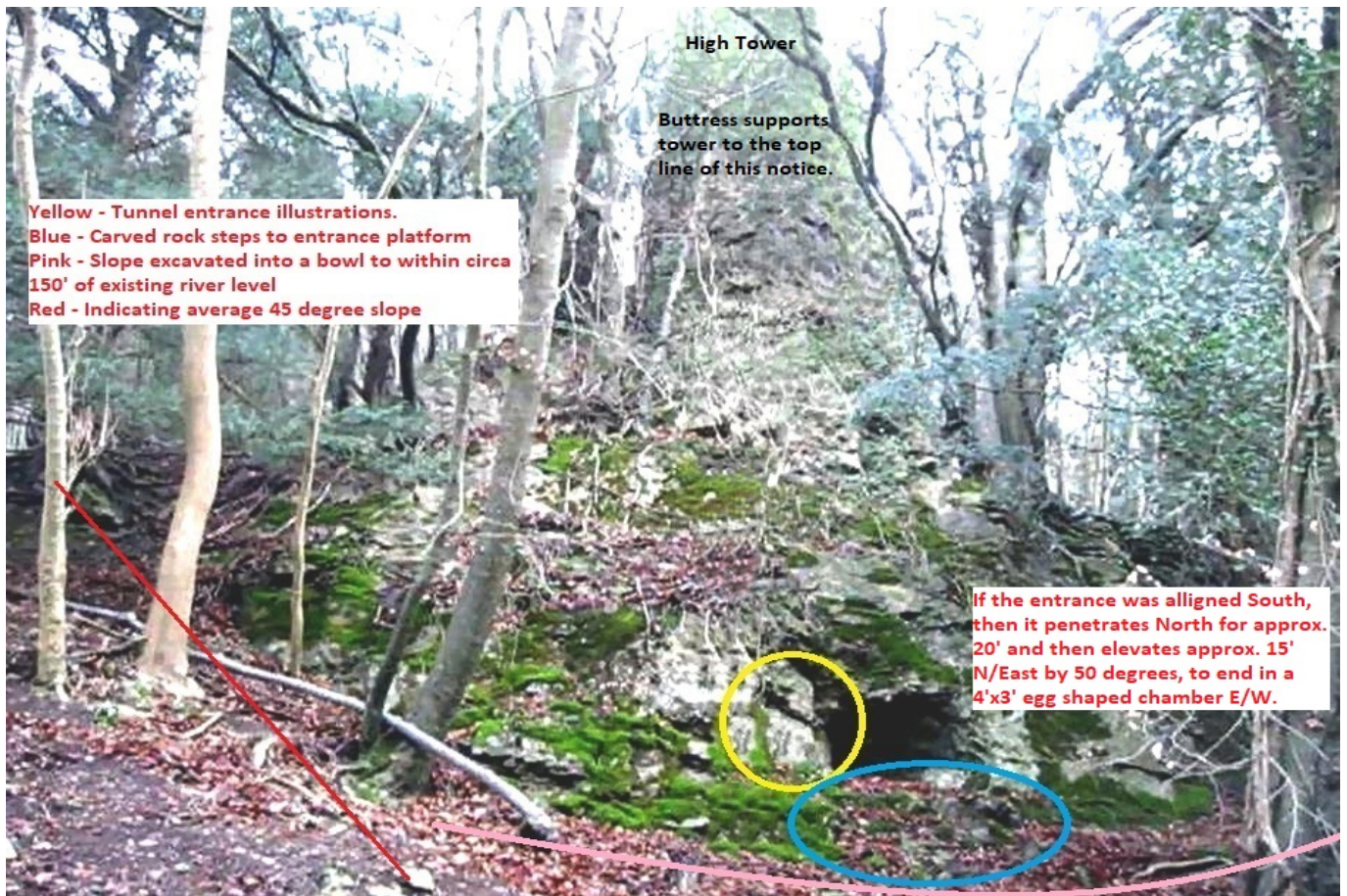
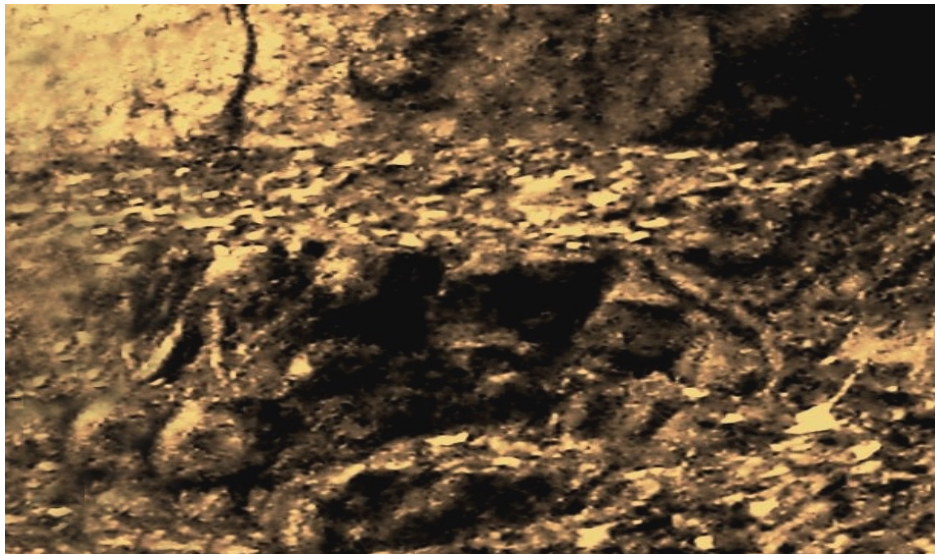
I have observed that the rows of steps were created by retaining rocks which had been carved into animal and humanoid heads. They still hold the earth back to give easier access to the tunnel entrance.

Now the tunnel:: If we assume for now that the whole feature is aligned North/South, then the tunnel runs horizontal into the buttress for a distance of approximately 20 ft. it then veers right and rises for approx. 15 ft. on a North East / South West axis. At the of the rising level the tunnel emerges into an ovoid chamber approximately 4 ft. x 3 ft.

Analysis of photographs from the tunnel shows just within the entrance that a miniature throne has been carved with one arm rest as a snake and the other as a bovine. Furthermore, within the tunnel, all the walls feature carving and illustrations again, almost impossible to see by the naked eye.

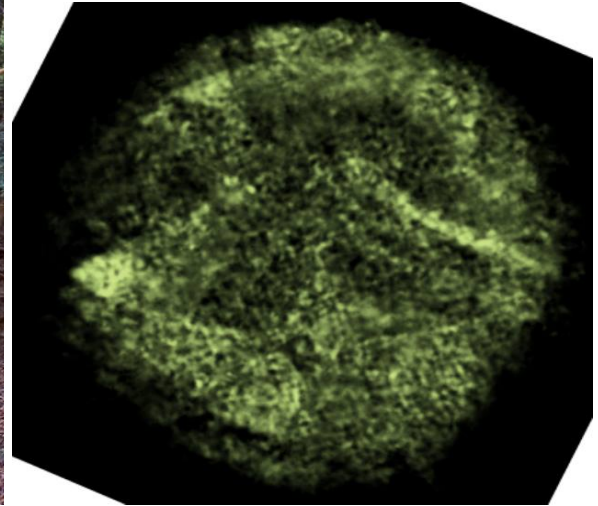
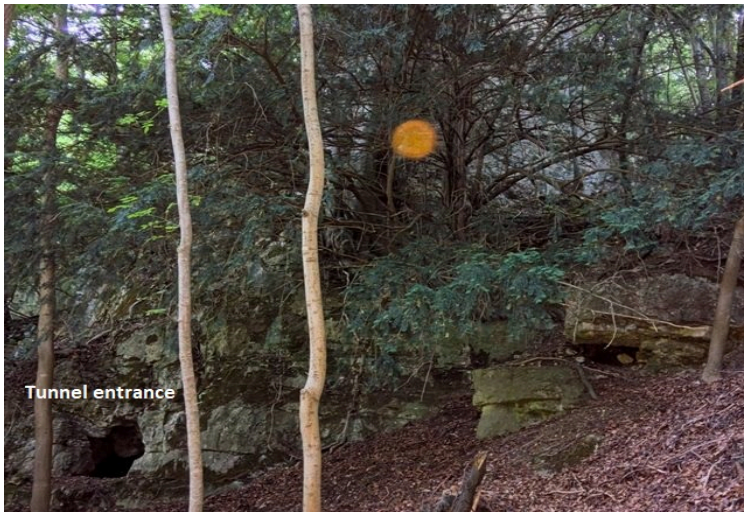
The exterior rock faces of the Tower and Buttress are covered in features including a seeming identification placard, a carved rebated 3 ft. band of carvings around the tower, random other relief carvings and illustrations.

Finally for now, set higher up the steep slopes there is another approximately 30 ft. smooth cliff face running for approx.. 150 ft. It appears like a prepared rock canvas and has spectacular illustrations which are still under analysis.
 First below is a picture showing some step remains below the tunnel entrance....

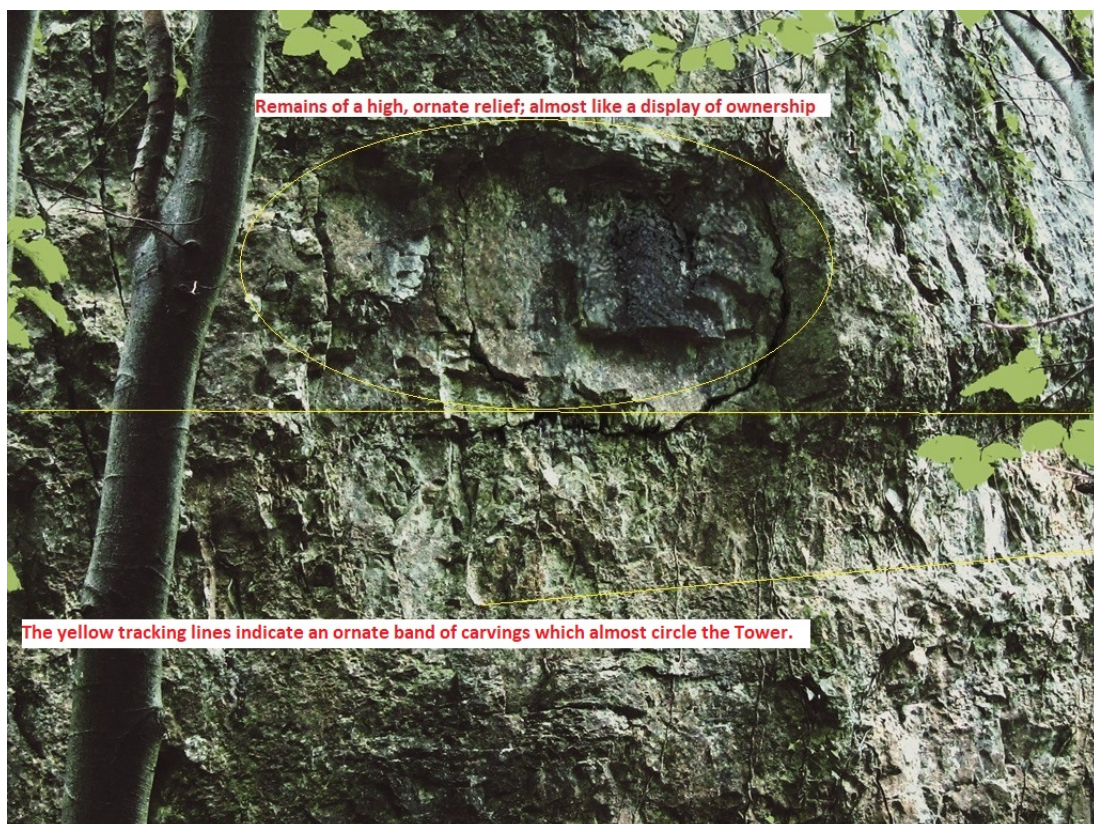


The separate cliff can be seen through the trees above the top of the red line.

It may be interesting to record that I first saw the entire feature as I climbed up over the banked earth on the right of the bowled earth below the tunnel entrance. I snapped my first picture and noticed later it had captured a strange orange light-orb. I put the orb under digital analysis. The picture below is the result. It appears to be imprinted with it's own 3D picture of a boat!



Showing below, the apparent ID plaque high on the side of the tower and carved band.



The picture below shows a closer view of the plaque, but to appreciate the detail it would definitely need to be enlarged considerably.



The top section of the tower. Just above the lower centre you may be able to see the rock has a little blue tint. This is where the plaque is situated.



The pic below shows the small throne inside the tunnel



Here is another picture of the tunnel entrance also showing the remains of the steps...

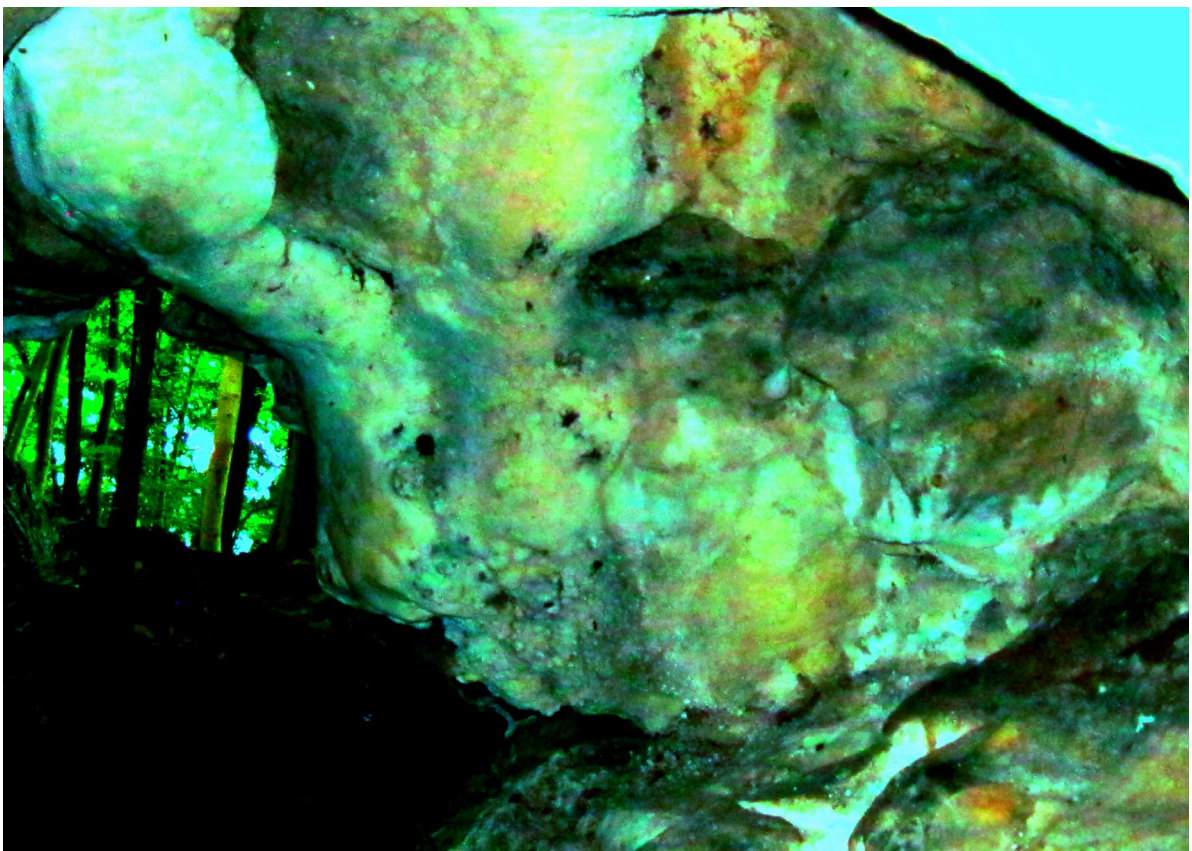
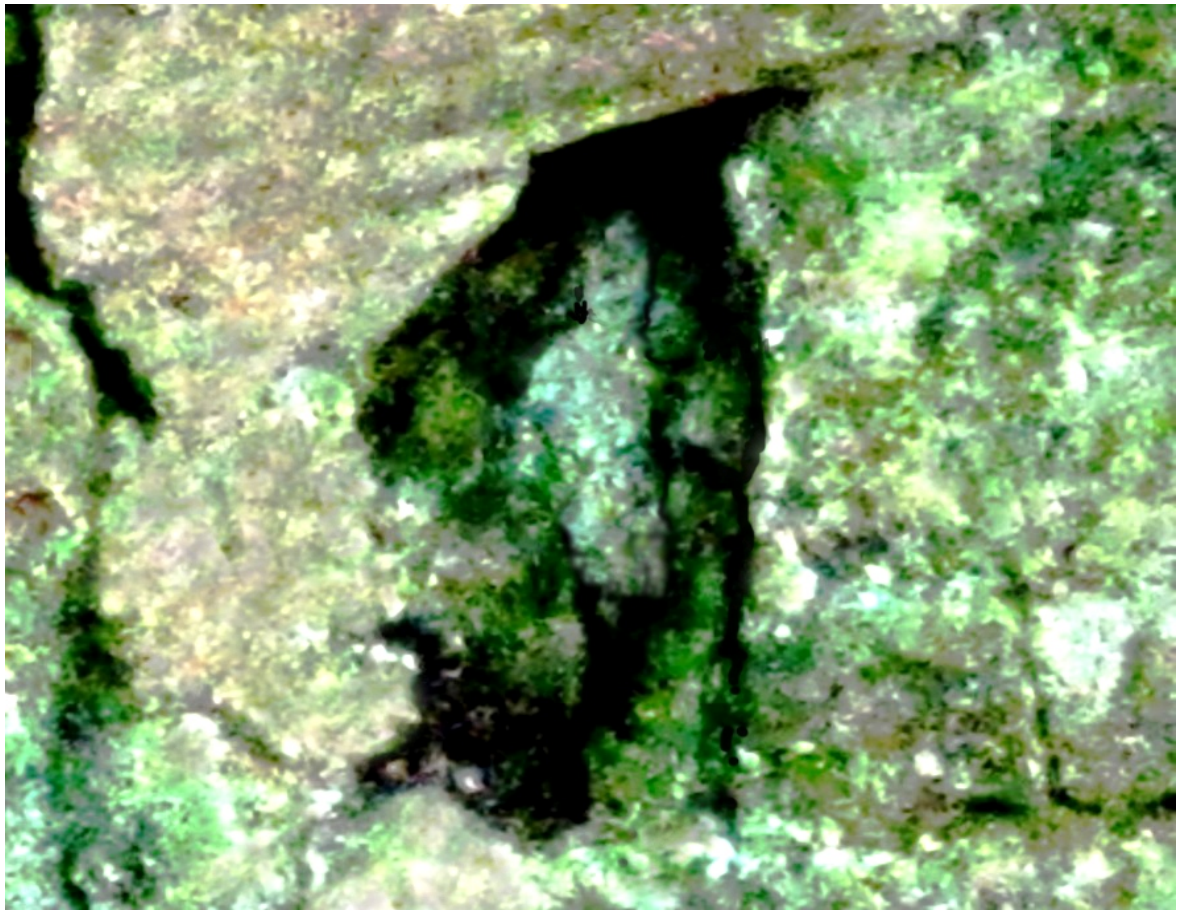




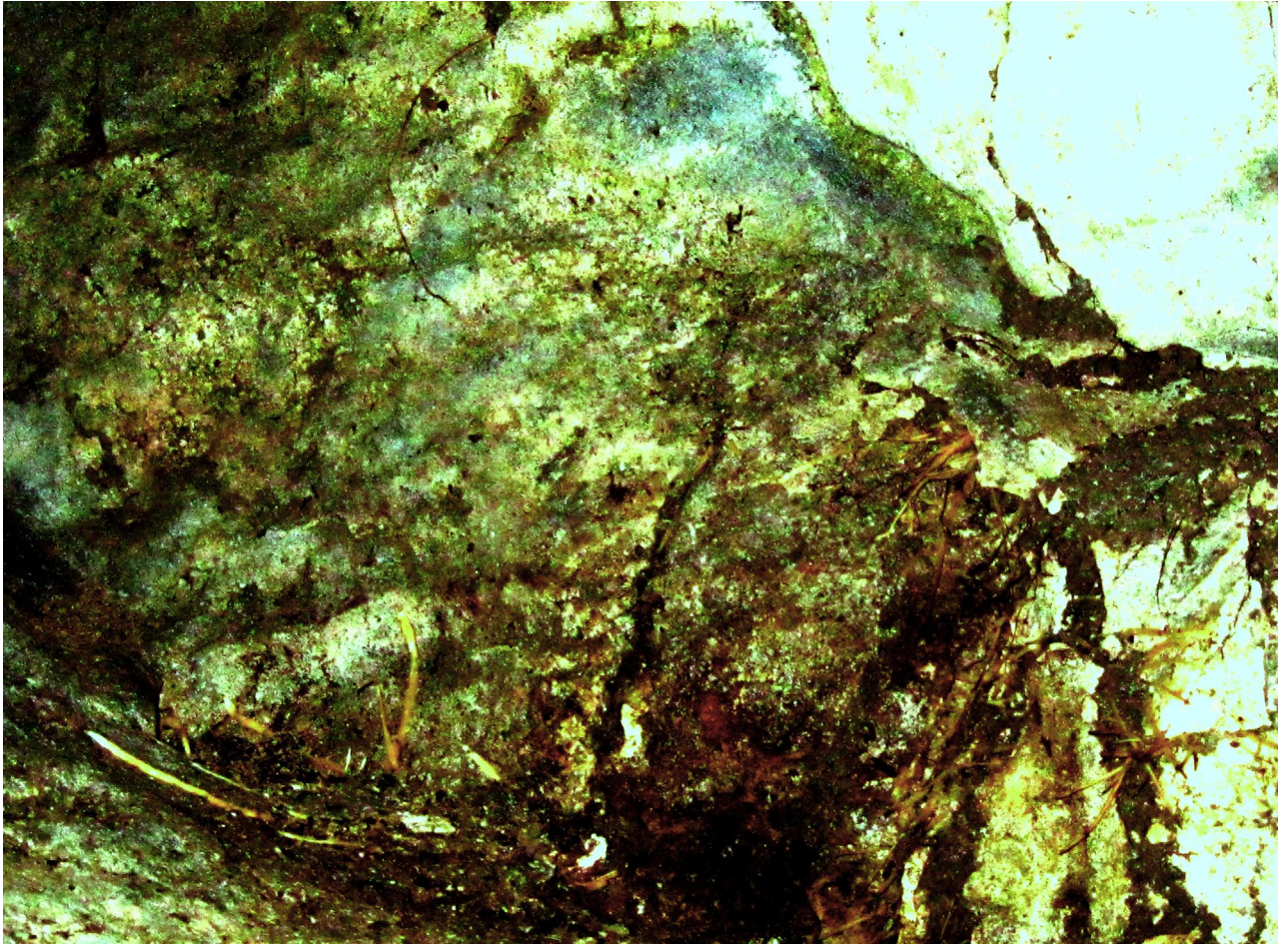
Plenty of pigment showing under analysis which meant many illustrations to discover. Some more examples follow... Just inside the entrance I caught sight of a tiny flaw in the rock. Check the next two pics. The final figure is no more than two inches in height.



Now look closer.....

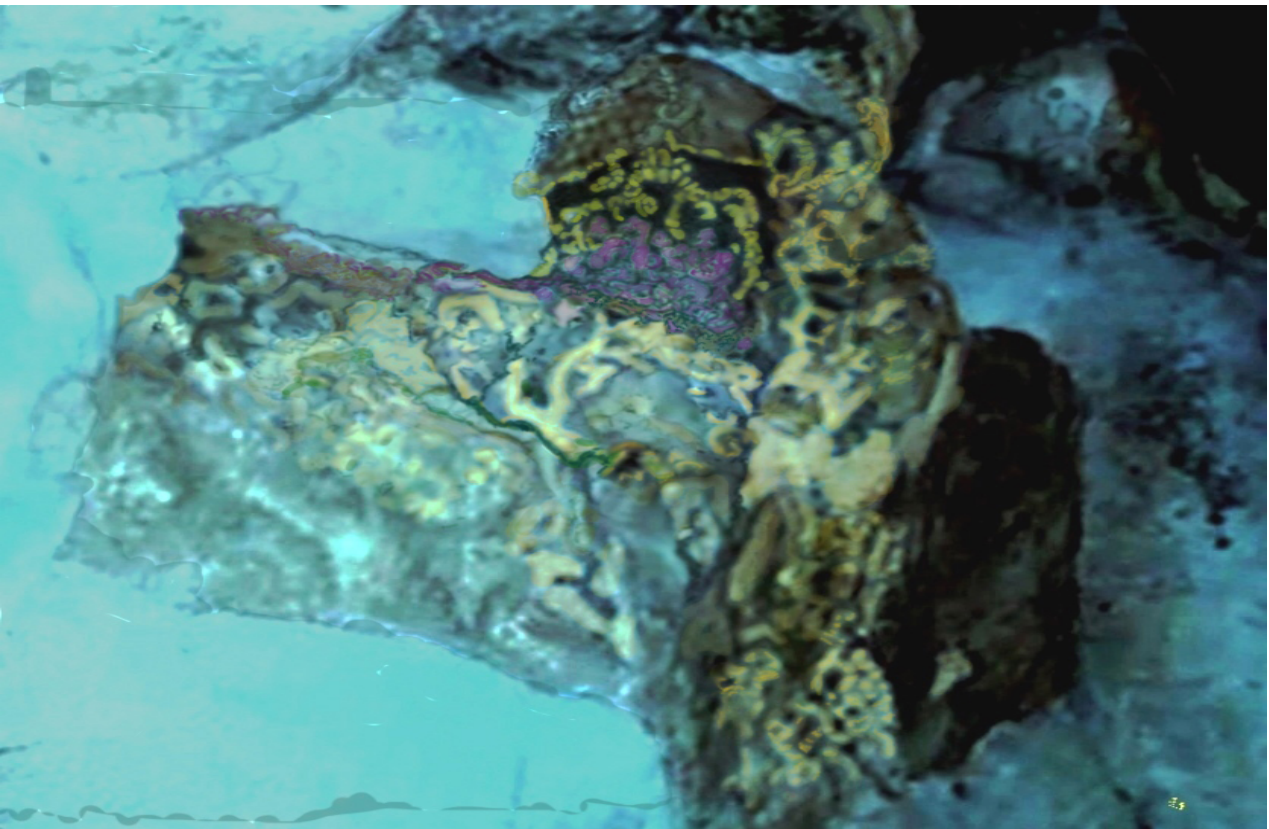


From inside looking out





Look closely and see the boat tucked on top, with its stern like a bed headrest.



There is still the Ace Card to come. To the left of the tunnel entrance the rock is large.



I saw this rock may have surviving images on/in its surface. I tried many times and failed to capture a photograph which showed the whole surface with even light.

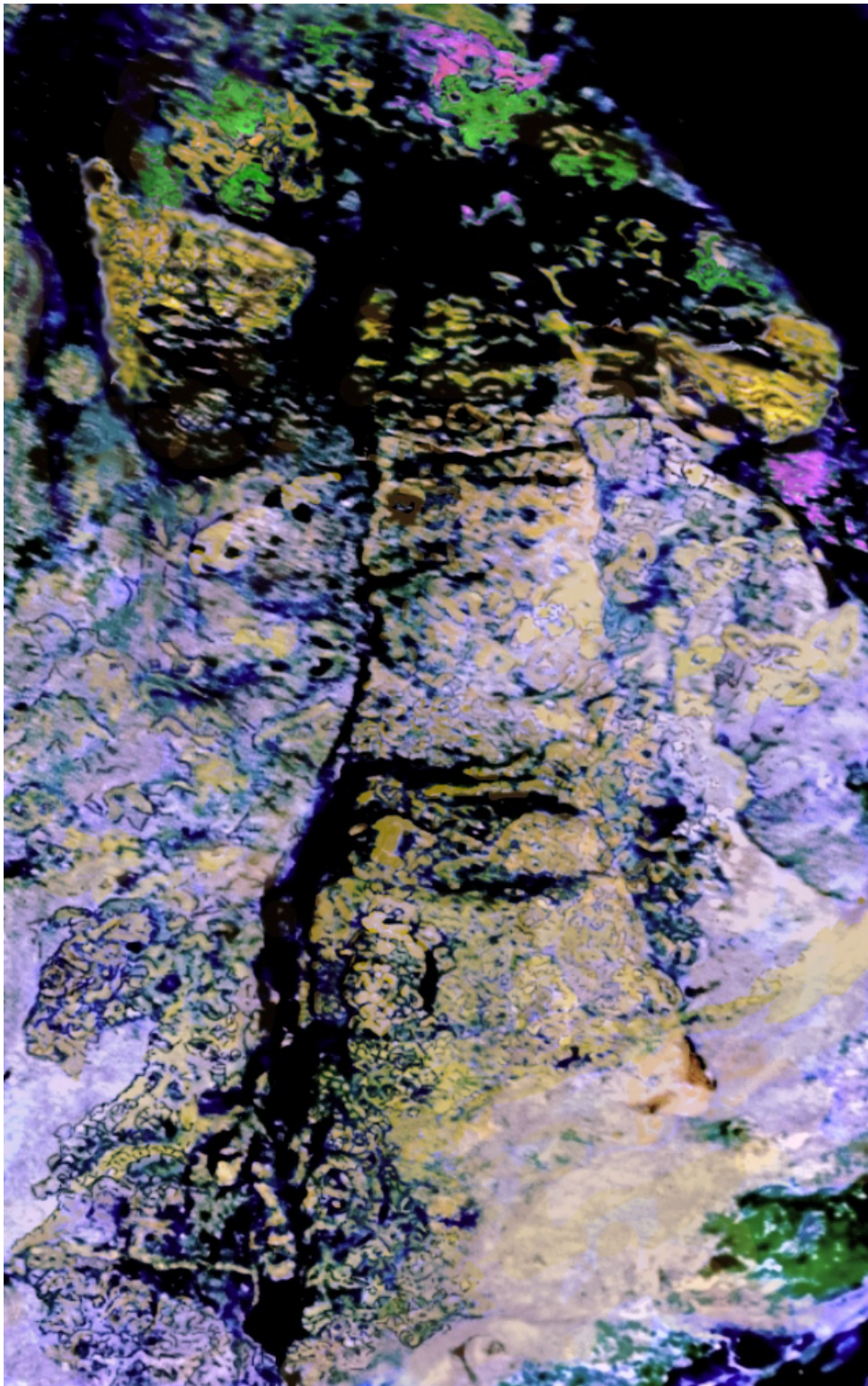
So I decided I would split this picture and analyse each side separately (and maybe splice them together later again.)

From the result on the left first, I was so amazed at the detail of what was there I spent hours on end, delineating and shading the picture to recover an optimum result. See it below, but once again take the picture to your own large screen and enlarge it to see the crazy detail...



Boats and figures, crammed with action.... But then I analysed the over exposed right hand side and got the absolute shock of my life.....

From 10,000 + years ago.... From the eyes of the artist, living and breathing in that ancient community, with skill and purpose, had illustrated the exact rock tower, the buttress, the cliff, the tunnel, the illustrations, the carvings on the right hand side of the entrance rock..... and then strangely, a group of characters featured as the crew of a boat balancing on top of the tower !!



The whole rock illustration (The colour palate difference reflects the separated analysis)



You need to know of one more revelation

I tried many times alone to get to the top of the tower but alone, even my old rock climbing skills failed me. So for now, I found the nearest highest tree and climbed to the top, pulling my long camera extension pole with me. With the camera and using binoculars I believe I have identified that the top of the tower has been carved into the shape of a crewed boat. Wow!!

The tower by the way is situated within an important loop in the course of the River Wye within the deepest part of the gorge. It would have made a perfect lookout post... The whole site holds many other profound secrets as part of the extended system. So many questions wait to be answered. I believe from further research, the tower / buttress is penetrated elsewhere with at least one tunnel. I already have target locations.

The purpose of the strange tunnel and the ovoid chamber also poses many questions. I am aware of much more than I have been able to include with this small introduction to the fabulous ancient archaeology of the Wye Valley and readers will have to wait for perhaps official interest, or more directly from me in due course... .

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[Look Facebook for](#) ::: Richard Gabriel along with the circular White Tiger Logo.

Blessings to all who show interest.
Richard June 2022

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