

## RATHMICHAEL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



### GOSSAN STONES

The peaty uplands at Paddock Hill, near the village Laragh and close the route of The Wicklow Way, are 364 metres above sea level and offers a magnificent unspoiled panoramic view to hill walkers. There are several boulders and rocks scattered around the landscape but two of these, known as Gossan Stones, are regarded as prehistoric monuments with special significance at the time of sunrise during the autumn equinox and sunset during the spring equinox on 22 September and 22 March respectively.

The Stones are approximately 1-metre-high and there is a gap of 1.75 metres between them on a perfectly aligned north-south axis.

It has been discovered that at sunrise on 22<sup>nd</sup> September, the day of the Autumn Equinox, that when one looks directly due east the sun rises above the sea through the centre of a U-shaped defile in the distance over Devil's Glen the pair of Gossan Stones act as a portal that perfectly frames the sun rising. The River Vartry winds its way to the coast at Wicklow through the Glen having yielded millions of litres of potable water from Roundwood Reservoir to the citizens of Dublin since 1863 - an iconic example of the successful and efficient creation of an extremely critical water supply resource in the Victorian era.

A similar phenomenon occurs looking due west thorough the portal at sunset during the Spring equinox on 20<sup>th</sup> March. As the sun dips beneath a V-shaped dip in the Brockagh Mountains it is located mid-point between the pair of stones."