

Dowsers out to prove themselves

by Geoff Ward

A new study aimed at proving how the ancient art of dowsing actually works and bringing it to the attention of a wider public is being launched under the aegis of the British Society of Dowsers.

Dowsers Adrian Incedon-Webber and Hugo Jenks announced their study at the British Society of Dowsers annual conference, held on the weekend of September 10-12 at the Royal College of Agriculture, Cirencester, Gloucestershire.

They will be working with medical electronics specialist and biophysicist Giovanni Orlando, and the investigation will last for at least a year and possibly two. It will focus on a study group of 10-12 people – a mixture of experienced dowsers, healers and non-dowsers – and, using brain and body scanning techniques, will measure their neuro-physiological responses as they wield rods and pendulums.

‘It’s not about why it works, but how,’ said Adrian, chairman of the BSD’s earth energies group. ‘We’re not trying to prove it to scientists - they are such a sceptical bunch anyway - but rather to bring in the public and perhaps stimulate interest among scientists. We want to find out where the dowsing response comes from. We know there’s a muscular response but we want to find out why it happens.’

Adrian says he has begun the study ‘probably out of curiosity more than anything else’. He added: ‘Many people really deserve to be able to dowse. People still tend to think of it as devil worship, something they shouldn’t be dealing with, but we want to bring it into people’s lives so they can benefit from it, and to try to take away the mystery and mystique from it.’



Adrian Incedon-Webber

Hugo received an award at the conference for an invention which links a dowsing rod to a laptop computer and a GPS receiver so that the patterns of energy lines it detects in the earth can be shown immediately on-screen. ‘It is still very much at the prototype stage,’ he said. ‘There are a number of further improvements that I would like to make, before I would feel comfortable with making it generally available.’

Various scientific studies of dowsing have been made since the 1940s, in New Zealand, the USA and Germany but, generally, they were inconclusive as to evidence for the efficacy of dowsing. Often, success rates at finding water, for example, were found to be no better than chance.

BSD director John Moss admitted that proving dowsing worked was 'a very thorny issue'. It just didn't seem to work under laboratory conditions. 'The over-riding requirement is that there has to be a real purpose,' he said. 'It's about a genuine need to get the information asked for. Scientists find that very difficult. They like repeatable results.' Some dowsers didn't care how it worked; others were obsessed with how it worked. 'Many are investigating what we're dealing with here,' said John. 'I think we're rediscovering a skill innate in human beings.'

John Moss

