

St Fagans National History Museum





Background information

St Fagans National History Museum first opened to the public in 1948. The Museum stands in the grounds of St Fagans Castle, a late 16th-century manor house. The manor house, along with a parcel of land, was donated to the people of Wales by the Earl of Plymouth in 1946.

Today the Museum consists of over 100 acres of land and a collection of over 40 original historic buildings. These buildings have been moved to St Fagans and rebuilt stone by stone in order to show how the people of Wales lived at different periods in history.

The formal grounds of St Fagans Castle, including a rose garden and an Italianate garden, still make up part of the Museum.

What will I find there?

The 40 historic buildings onsite include a Victorian schoolhouse, a church, a chapel, farmhouses and cottages as well as many others. Each one is furnished to represent a moment in time

Four of the historic buildings at St Fagans are brought to life by demonstrating craftsmen. We have a blacksmith, a weaver, a miller and a clogmaker, each of whom demonstrate their traditional crafts to visitors.

Alongside the historic buildings new indoor galleries are currently under construction. These galleries will tell the story of Wales from its earliest people, around 250,000 years ago, to the present day.

One of the farmhouses at St Fagans is Llwyn-yr-Eos, which is still a working farm. The Museum keeps rare breed native livestock, and our farmers can be seen completing daily farming tasks. Gardeners can also be seen tending the gardens and grounds.

What stories do we tell?

St Fagans tells the story of everyday life for the people of Wales through re-erected buildings from the Iron Age, around 2,000 years ago, to the present day. Some of the stories we tell include:

Rural Life:

The re-erected farmhouses and cottages include a working farm as well as historic buildings ranging from farms to farmhands' cottages. Each one tells the story of rural life in different parts of Wales at different times. We also have a Victorian schoolhouse from rural west Wales, which tells the story of education in rural Wales at the beginning of the 20th century.



Urbanisation:

The rapid urbanisation of south Wales is also addressed by a number of the historic buildings at St Fagans.

- The Rhyd-y-Car cottages were originally built in Merthyr in around 1800 by the Richard Crawshay for the workers in his iron works. There are 6 cottages, each showing a different time in history between 1805 and 1985.
- The Workmen's Institute from Oakdale was built in 1916 for the workers at Tredegar Iron and Coal Company and paid for by the workers themselves.
- Gwalia Stores are from Ogmore Vale. Originally built in 1880, Gwalia Stores shows how shopping habits changed to meet the needs of increasing urbanisation.



Crafts:

Alongside the agricultural team, who can be seen undertaking the daily tasks of running a farm, we also have 4 demonstrating craftsmen:

- a blacksmith working in an 18th-century smithy from Powys
- a weaver working in an 18th-century woollen mill from Powys
- a miller working in a mid-19th-century flour mill from Cardiganshire
- a clogmaker working in a clogmaker's workshop from Pembrokeshire.

Religion:

Compare the two religious buildings at St Fagans:

- Eglwys Sant Teilo – a church from near Pontarddulais shown as a pre-reformation Catholic Church in the early 16th century
- Capel Penrhiw – a non-conformist Unitarian chapel from Dre-fach Felindre, west Wales. built originally in 1777



For more information please follow this link
www.museumwales.ac.uk/stfagans/learning