

AMGUEDDFA CYMRU



Wales is...

Gallery Teaching Resource

museum.wales/learn/

In this gallery we explore the story of Wales from different perspectives. Amazing items from our collections, and the people connected with them, help us understand Wales's history. And you can share your own feelings and experiences too.

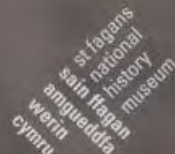
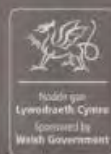
There is no one way to explore the gallery so be sure to match up the title of each page in this resource with the title on the specific display you are exploring.



Cymru... yn Sain Ffagan Amgueddfa Gwerin Cymru | Wales Is... at St Fagans Na...

Copy link
national
museum
wales
amgueddfa
cymru

Cymru...
Wales is...



Watch on YouTube



This gallery has a 360 tour available online free of charge. This means this resource can be used online rather than in-person.

The link to the 360 tour is below.

Oriel Cymru | Wales is...



POWERED BY



Matterport®

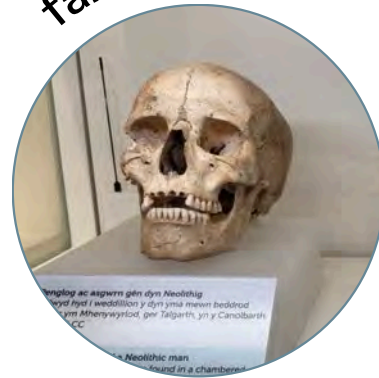
Select the display

Wales is...

2% Neanderthal



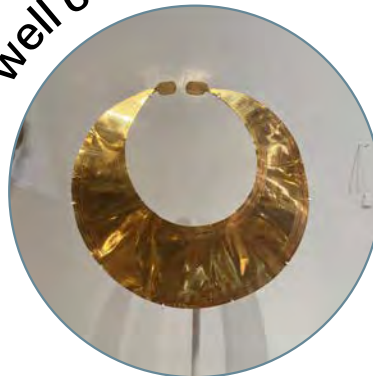
farmers



still speaking Welsh



well connected



Llywelyn and Glyndŵr



sacred places



not always welcoming



partly Roman



scarred by war



Welsh costume



drowned out

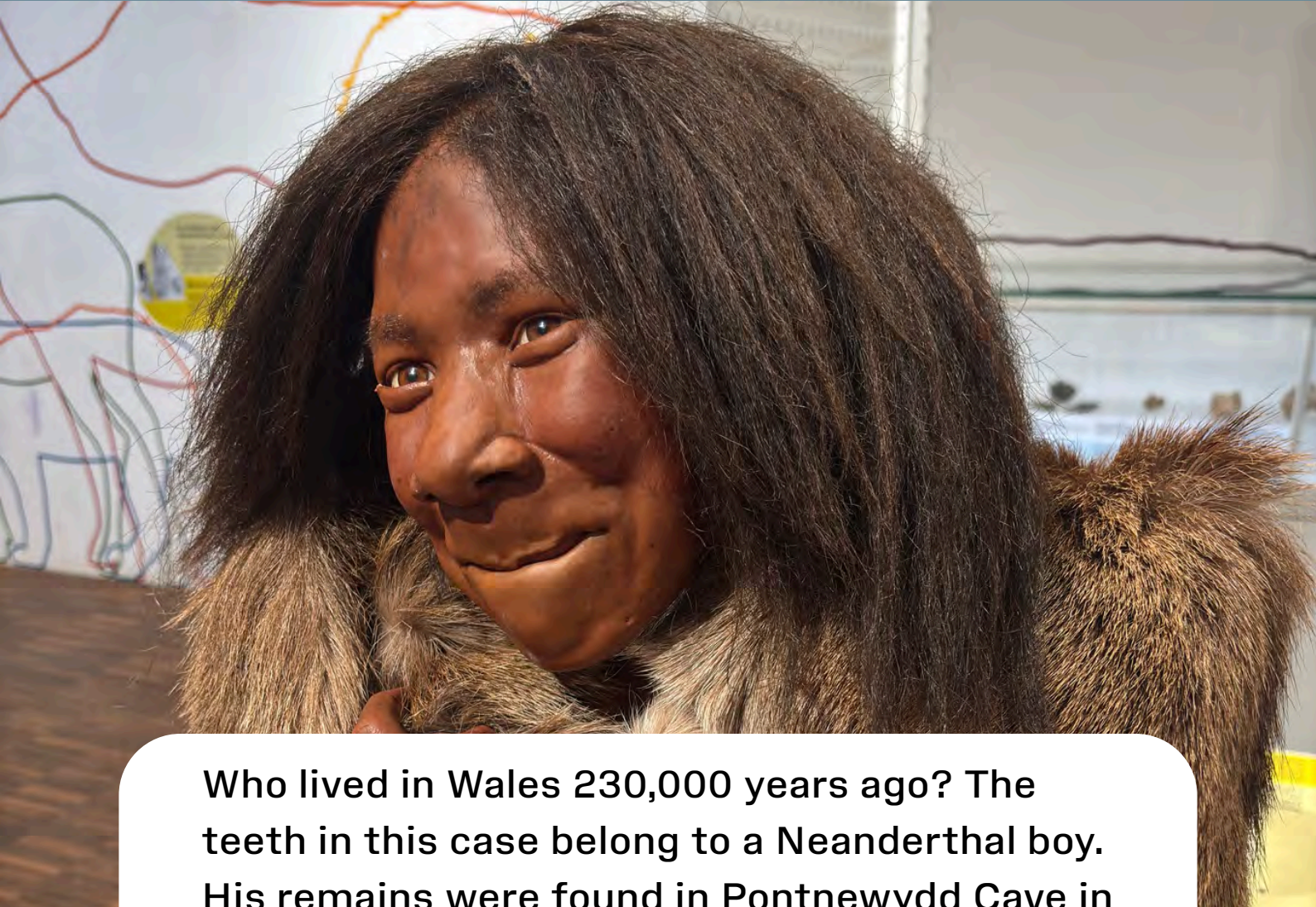


Wales is...

2% Neanderthal

Themes...

*Human origins and
evolution, Archaeology*



Who lived in Wales 230,000 years ago? The teeth in this case belong to a Neanderthal boy. His remains were found in Pontnewydd Cave in north-east Wales, along with the remains of other Neanderthals. These are the only fossils of Neanderthal teeth found on mainland UK.

The size and shape of the teeth tell us a lot about the remains. The fact that one of the teeth was a milk tooth and the wearing of the teeth tell us that they belonged to a boy around 8½ years old.

Neanderthals visited Wales over a very long time period before dying out around 30,000 years ago. Modern humans first settled in Wales around 34,000 years ago. Today we share around 2% of our DNA with Neanderthals, suggesting some interbreeding may have occurred.

Discussion...

- *Do you think there was interbreeding between Neanderthals and modern humans?*
- *Why do you think the Neanderthals died out?*
- *Would you have anything in common with a Neanderthal?*

Related resources...

*Lower Palaeolithic
Neanderthal molar*



Related resources...

*Lower Palaeolithic
stone levallois flake*



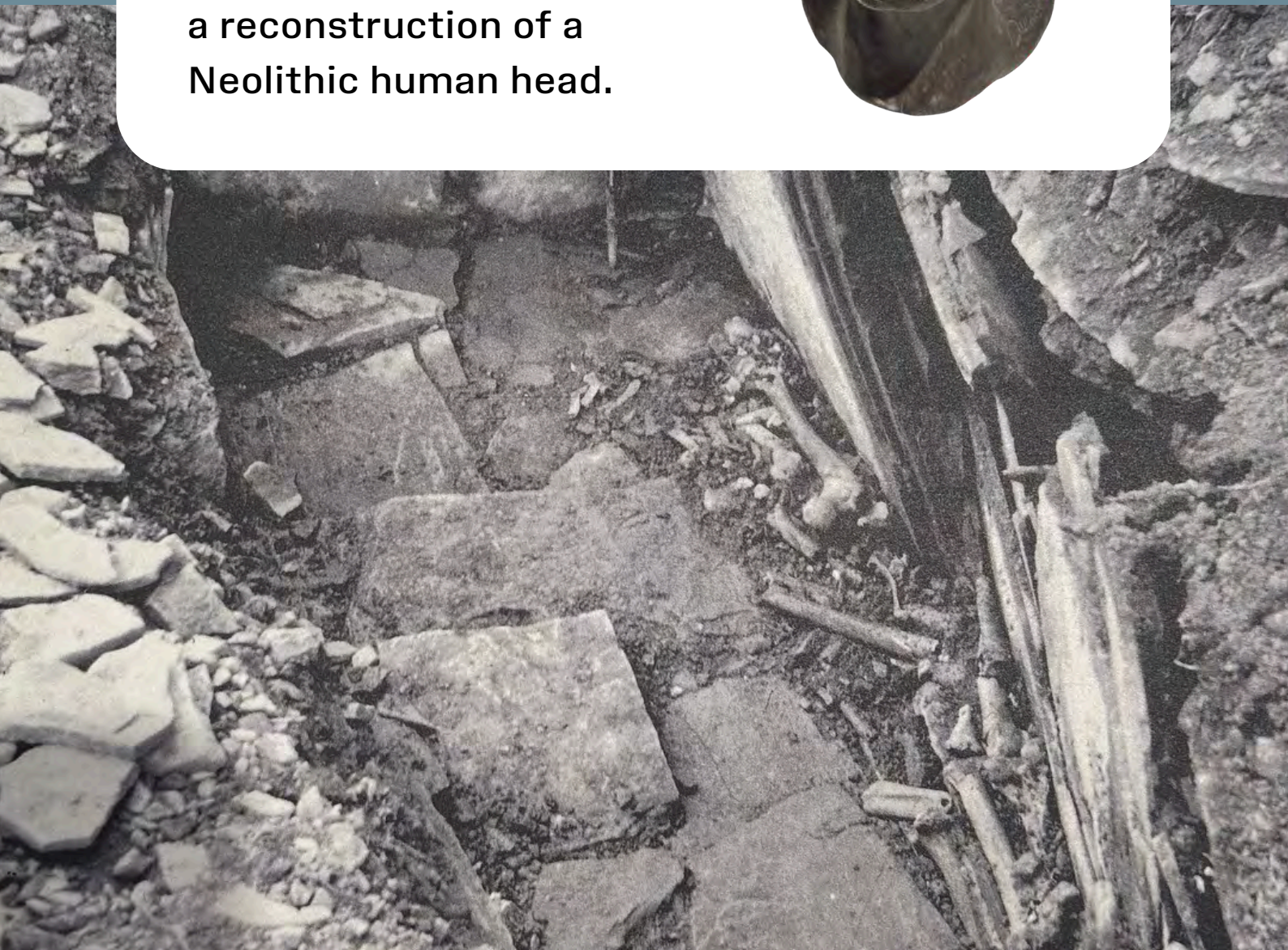
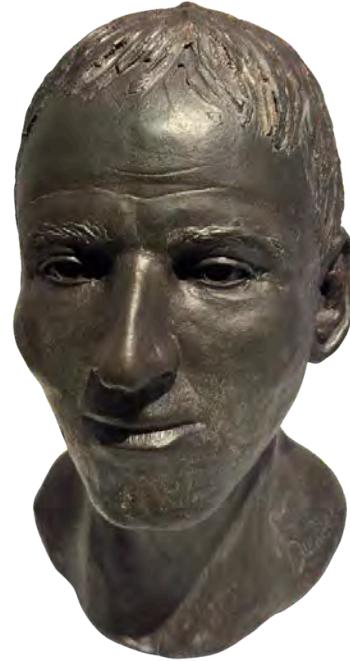
Wales is...

farmers

Themes...

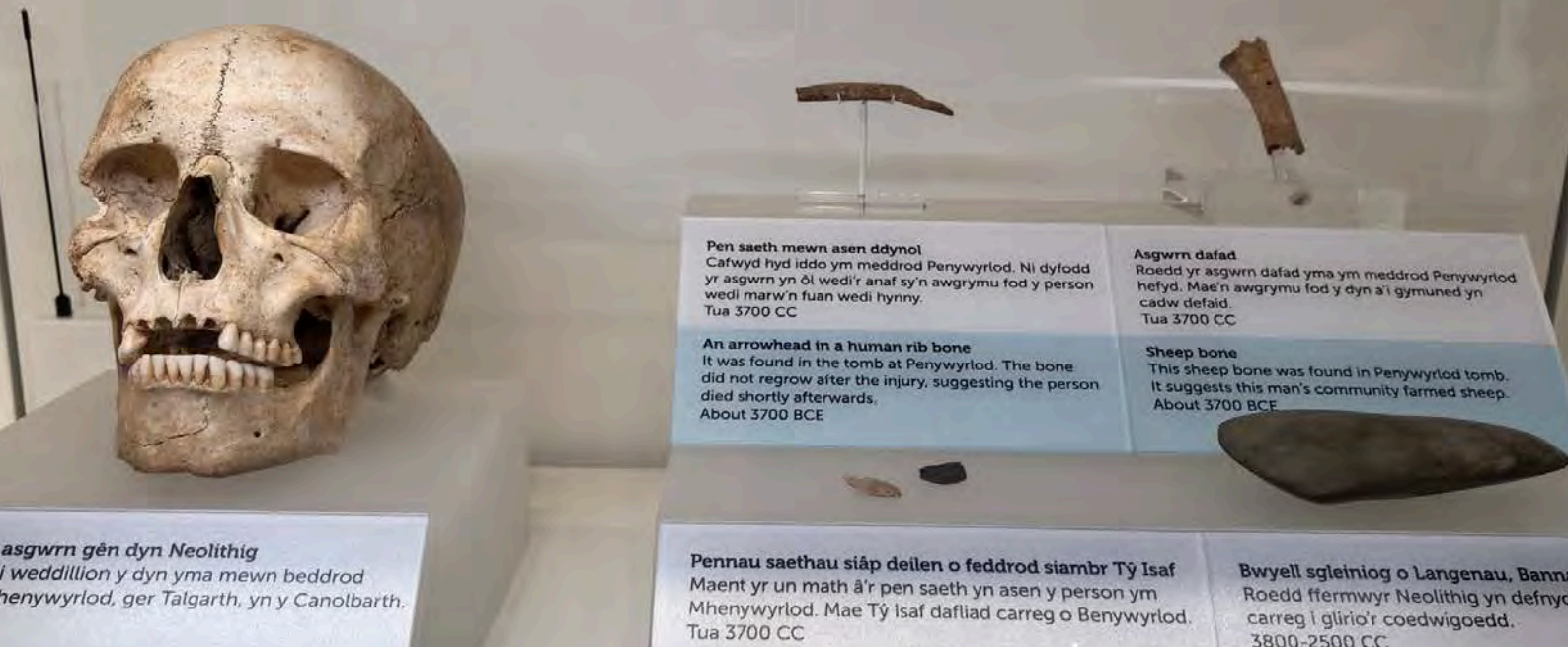
*Death, Beliefs, Community,
Agriculture, Archaeology*

Wales's history in sheep farming dates back to Early Neolithic farming communities. The remains of one of Wales's first farmers can be seen in this section, alongside a reconstruction of a Neolithic human head.



He lived around 5,700 years ago, when the wild woodland that once covered vast areas would have been cleared to create open land for rearing sheep. As well as changing the natural landscape of Wales by removing woodland, these communities also built large communal tombs, which can still be seen today.

The remains in this case were buried in a chambered tomb at Penywyrlod, near Talgarth in mid-Wales. He would have been buried here because he belonged to this place. His remains were mixed with bones of other community members, some of which show that life was not always peaceful. One of the people buried alongside our early farmer had an arrow tip lodged in their rib.



Asgwrn gŕn dyn Neolithig
/ weddillion y dyn yma mewn beddrod
henywyrlod, ger Talgarth, yn y Canolbarth.

Pen saeth mewn asen ddynol
Cafwyd hyd iddo ym meddrod Penywyrlod. Ni dyfodd
yr asgwrn yn ôl wedi'r anaf sy'n awgrymu fod y person
wedi marw'n fuan wedi hynny.
Tua 3700 CC

An arrowhead in a human rib bone
It was found in the tomb at Penywyrlod. The bone
did not regrow after the injury, suggesting the person
died shortly afterwards.
About 3700 BCE

Asgwrn dafad
Roedd yr asgwrn dafad yma ym meddrod Penywyrlod
hefyd. Mae'n awgrymu fod y dyn a'i gymuned yn
cadw defaid.
Tua 3700 CC

Sheep bone
This sheep bone was found in Penywyrlod tomb.
It suggests this man's community farmed sheep.
About 3700 BCE

Pennau saethau siâp deilen o feddrod siambr Tŷ Isaf
Maent yr un math â'r pen saeth yn asen y person ym
Mhenywyrlod. Mae Tŷ Isaf daflad carreg o Benywyrlod.
Tua 3700 CC

Bwyell sgleiniog o Langenau, Bann
Roedd ffermwyr Neolithig yn defnyddio
carreg i glirio'r coedwigoedd.
3800-2500 CC



Penglog ac asgwrn gên dyn Neolithig
Cafwyd hyd i weddillion y dyn yma mewn beddrod
siambr ym Mhenywylod, ger Talgarth, yn y Canolbarth.
Tua 3700 CC

Skull and jawbone of a Neolithic man
The remains of this man were found in a chambered
tomb at Penywylod, near Talgarth in mid-Wales.
about 3700 BCE

Discussion...

- *Does Wales have a future in agriculture?*
- *Is Early Neolithic farming recognizable by today's standards?*
- *Would an Early Neolithic Farmer recognize their 'place' today?*
- *Why do we call him a farmer? What else could he be?*
- *Why do we think he belonged to this place?*
- *Can we take archaeological stories as completely accurate representations of prehistoric life?*

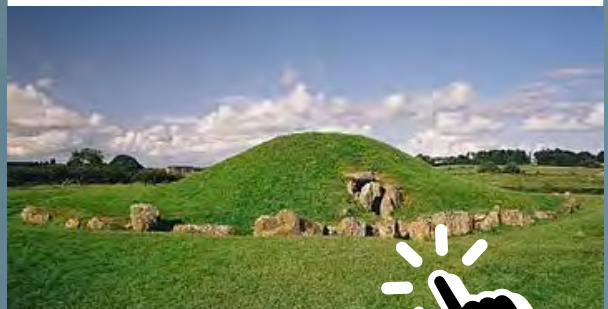
Also visit...

Bryn Eyr Iron Age Roundhouses



Related sessions...

The burial tombs of Stone Age Wales

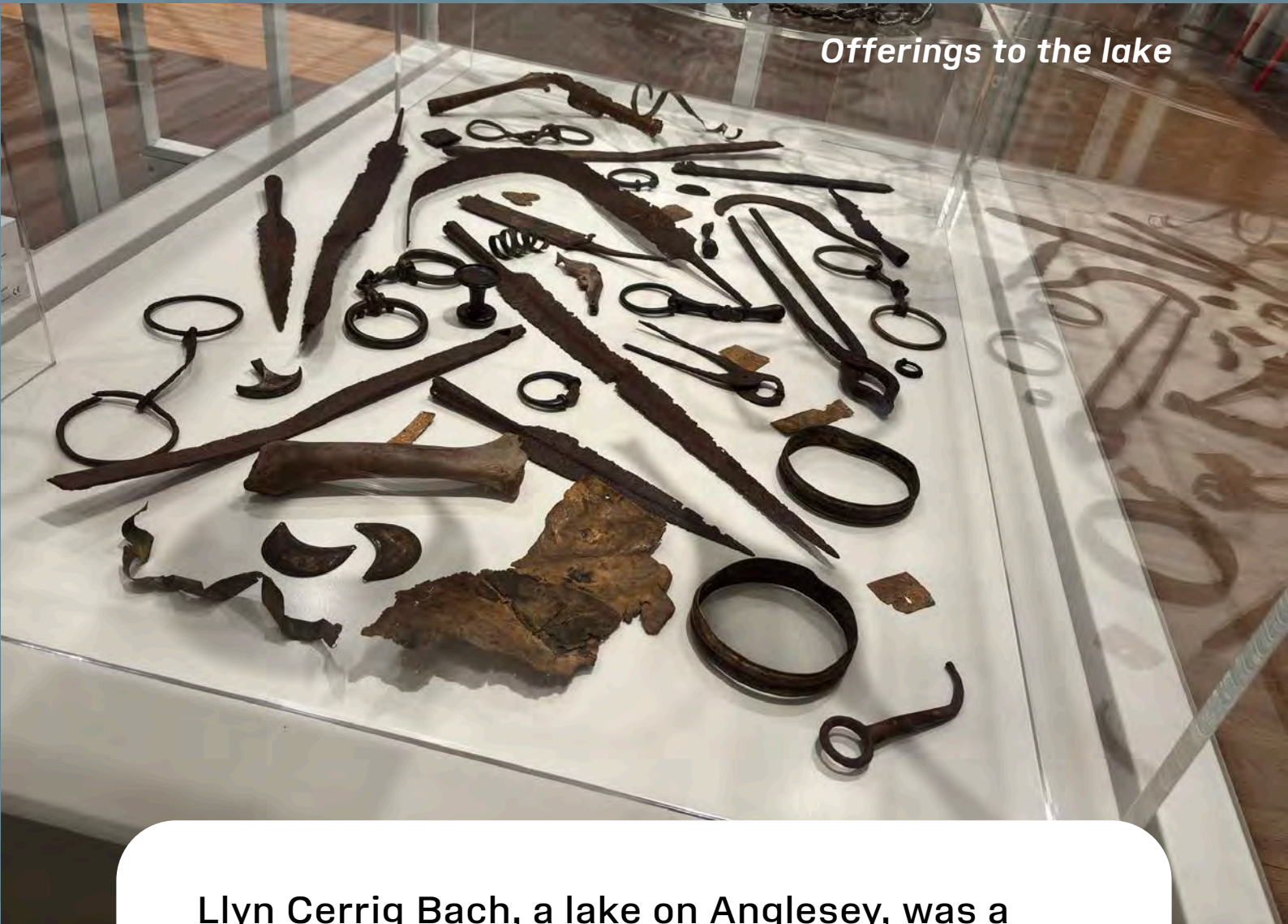


Wales is...

sacred places

Themes...
*Beliefs, Slavery,
Archaeology*

Offerings to the lake



Llyn Cerrig Bach, a lake on Anglesey, was a sacred place 2,000 years ago.

Over hundreds of years, people cast their treasured possessions into its waters. Weapons, chariot parts, tools and cauldrons were offered up to their gods and spirits. Roman historians tell us that Anglesey at this time was a stronghold of Druid priests.

The Iron Age objects on display were found at the bottom of Llyn Cerrig Bach. Over 150 objects were discovered as RAF Valley airbase was being extended for American bombers during the Second World War. One of the objects that led to the discovery was a Roman slave-chain. Thinking that it was junk, the workers used the slave-chain to drag the vehicles out of the bog!

When archaeologist Sir Cyril Fox at the National Museum was contacted, he realised the importance of Llyn Cerrig Bach as an ancient sacred place.



Iron slave or chain-gang

Crescentic-shaped plaque of bronze



Discussion...

- *Can we trust Roman written accounts of the druids?*
- *Who do you think made these offerings?*
- *How have religious practices changed since the Iron Age?*
- *Do we still put offerings into water?*
- *What place is special to you?*
- *How would it feel to wear the slave chain?*
- *Can we judge ancient societies for having slaves?*
- *How did the Museum decide which objects to display out the 150 found in the lake?*

Also visit...

St Teilo's Church



Related resources...

Iron Age Wales



Wales is...

not always welcoming

Themes...

*Wales and immigration,
invasions of Wales, industry
and trade, archaeology*

Human remains from Llanbedr-goch, Anglesey



These are the bones of a man aged 25-35 and a boy aged 9-14 years old. They were found buried outside Llanbedrgoch in Anglesey. They date back to around the year 900.

Llanbedrgoch was an important trading post at a time when Vikings were raiding Anglesey. It was thought that the bodies were those of native Welsh people, but recent scientific analysis suggests they were Vikings. The bodies were thrown on top of each other, raising questions about how they died and who buried them. There is evidence of injuries that happened at the time of death, which raises even more questions.

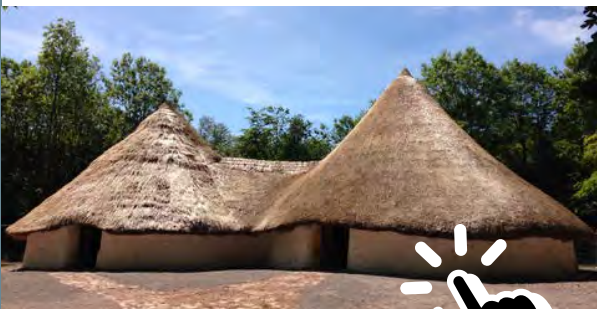
A number of burials have been discovered outside the trading centre at Llanbedrgoch. What does this tell us about relations between the native Welsh people and the Vikings?

Discussion...

- *Are Welsh people more welcoming today?*
- *What do you think happened to these individuals?*
- *Is it ever ok to use violence?*
- *How important is trade in Wales today?*

Also visit...

Bryn Eyr Iron Age Roundhouses



Related sessions...

Celts (Virtual Workshop)



Wales is...

partly Roman

Themes...

*Invasions of Wales, Welsh
Identity, Archaeology*

It took over 30,000 Roman troops to conquer Wales. From accounts written by the Romans, we know that some native tribes strongly resisted the Roman invaders. Others seem to have given in more quickly and welcomed the advantages that the Romans brought with them.

Roman written accounts are the beginnings of Welsh history. Our first glimpse of the tribes that existed here are through Roman eyes.



103 silver coins

The objects in this case include money, an army standard, a writing tablet and a bronze cup imported from Italy. The hoard of native and Roman objects shows the two different cultures coming together.

Discussion...

- *Can we trust Roman written accounts of the native tribes?*
- *How much did life change for the average native person after the Roman conquest?*
- *What aspects of modern Wales started during the Roman period?*

Related resource...

Roman Mythology



Related sessions...

Roman Bootcamp (Virtual Workshop)



Wales is...

still speaking Welsh

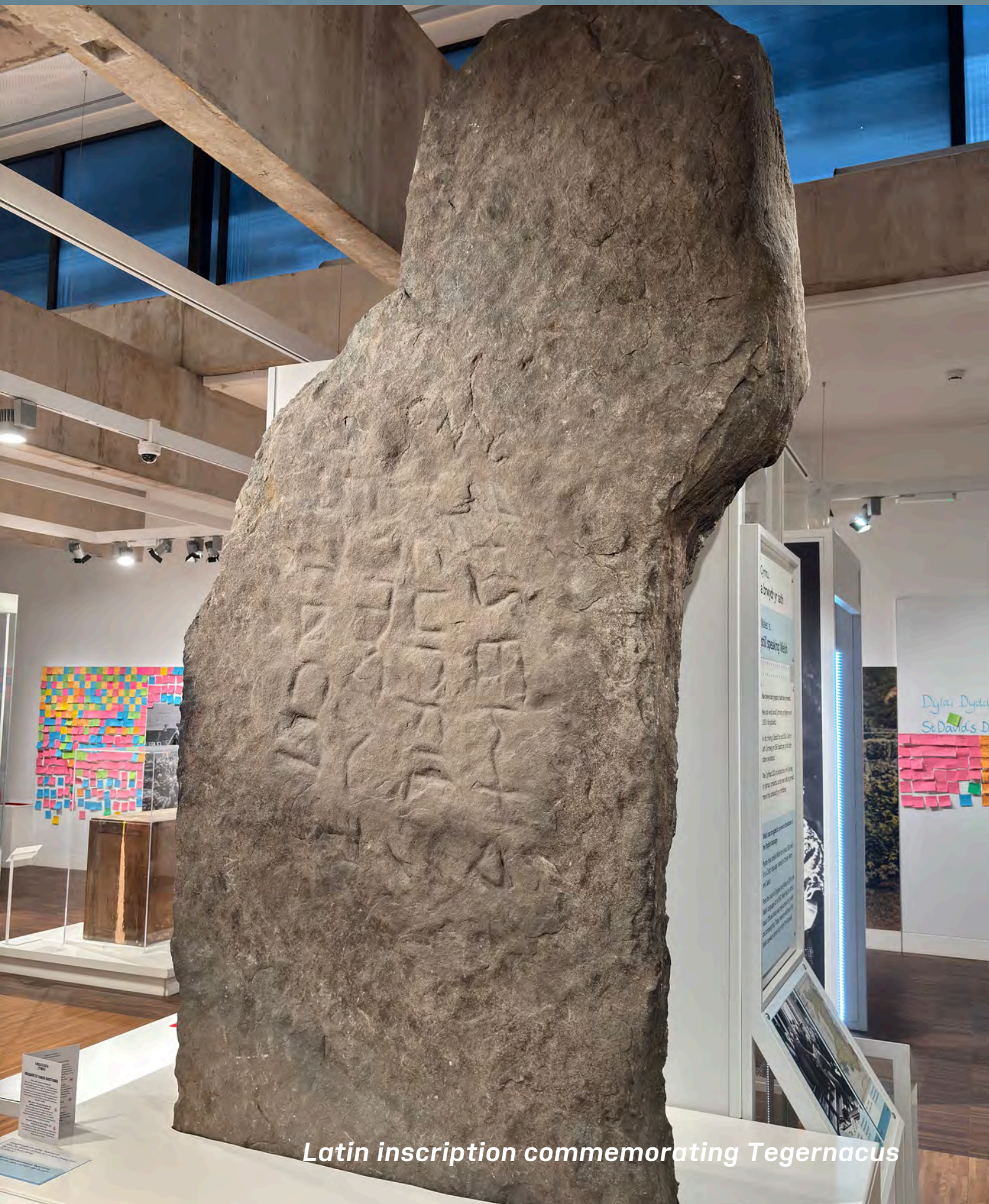
Themes...

Welsh Identity, Independent

Wales, Protest

A Celtic language, Welsh is related to Cornish, Breton and Gaelic. In the shadow of the English language Welsh has struggled to survive, despite people having spoken the language for at least 1,500 years. However, between the union of England and Wales in 1536 and the Welsh Language Act of 1967, the Welsh Language had no official status. Ultimately, official status was achieved by protest and campaigning.

Latin inscription commemorating Tegneracus



Latin inscription commemorating Tegernacus

Wales is...

still speaking Welsh

Themes...

*Welsh Identity, Independent
Wales, Protest*

Denim jacket

It was fashionable to decorate clothes with symbols as a form of campaigning in the 1970s. An example of this is the shirt in the case for this section which is decorated with the symbol for the Welsh-language movements Cymdeithas yr Iaith and Adfer. Despite the success of such campaigns and movements there are still things that Welsh speakers cannot do in their preferred first language.

The Census of 2011 showed that on the whole the number of Welsh speakers has continued to decrease. Despite this, there are some areas, such as Cardiff, where the language is on the rise.

Discussion...

- *Should all Welsh people be able to speak Welsh?*
- *Should learning Welsh in schools in Wales be compulsory?*
- *Should all schools in Wales be bilingual?*
- *Is there value in speaking Welsh?*
- *Do you have to speak Welsh to be considered Welsh?*
- *Are other Celtic languages in a similar situation to the Welsh language?*
- *Why do you think the number of Welsh speakers in Cardiff has increased where other areas have seen a decrease?*

Also visit...

Maestir School



Related resources...

eBook: Victorian School in Wales



Wales is...

well connected

Themes...

*Industry and Trade,
Technology, Transport, Wealth
and Poverty, Archaeology*



The Capel Isaf Hoard

Today, innovations travel via airwaves and airways. In the Bronze Age, it was the sea that connected communities across Europe.

Ships travelled along the Atlantic coastlines from Spain to Ireland. They enabled people to exchange metals, new technologies and ideas. Nowhere is this illustrated better than through gold and how it was shaped and shared as a prized new metal.

The objects in the case are high-status items from the Bronze Age made from gold and bronze.

The Caergwrle Bowl has a rare representation of a Bronze Age ship. We think the zig-zags around the base are waves and the long triangles are oars. The eye symbol protected sailors. The circles are the shields of its heroic voyager.

It speaks of connections: shale from Dorset, tin from Cornwall and gold from Ireland or Wales. It was placed beside the River Alun, which flows towards the Irish Sea.



The Caergwrle Bowl



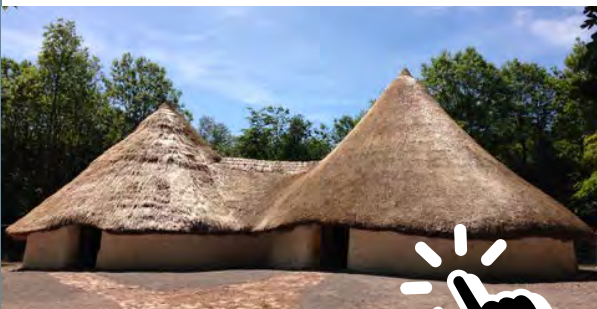
The Llanllyfni Lunula

Discussion...

- *How would people trade goods without money?*
- *How did people display their wealth before gold was used?*
- *Why do you think these high-value objects were buried in the ground?*
- *What is the most valued object you own?*
- *How are goods transported to Wales now?*
- *What are the advantages and disadvantages of importing goods from around the world?*
- *What goods are exported from Wales today?*

Also visit...

Bryn Eyr Iron Age Roundhouses



Also visit...

Tudor Merchant's House



Wales is...

Llywelyn and Glyndŵr

Themes...

Independent Wales, Welsh Identity, Monarchy, War, Beliefs, Wealth and Poverty, Archaeology

Llywelyn Fawr is to many the greatest of the Welsh princes. He was born about 1173. Through war and diplomacy, he dominated Wales from 1194 to 1240.

In 1283 all of Wales came under English rule after the conquest of Edward I. In 1301 Edward's son, Edward of Caernarvon, was declared the Prince of Wales. This started the tradition of the English monarch's male heir having the title of Prince of Wales.



*Gold noble
of Henry IV*

Owain Glyndŵr was born about 1359 in a Wales ruled by the English. He led a national rebellion to regain Welsh independence. He was the last Welshman to be called the Prince of Wales.

The objects in these cases show weapons, money, religious items and royal seals. One of the highlights is the carved head of a royal figure that is believed to be the face of Llywelyn Fawr.



Copy of First Seal of Henry IV



Darnau arian o oes Llywelyn
Ceiniogau arian, hanmer dimelau a ffyrtingau o
Llan-faes, Ynys Môn.
1200au-1300au

Coins from the time of Llywelyn
Silver pennies, cut halfpennies and farthings from
Llan-faes, Anglesey.
1200s-1300s

Crowned head

Discussion...

- *Would the day-to-day life of people in medieval Wales have been affected by who ruled over them?*
- *Would people in medieval Wales have supported these wars?*
- *Would people in medieval Wales have cared if the Prince of Wales was Welsh?*
- *Should the Prince of Wales be Welsh?*
- *Should the current royal family keep the position of Prince of Wales?*
- *Should there be a royal family, and who should pay for it?*
- *Should Wales be independent?*

Also visit...

*Llys Llywelyn –
Medieval Court*



Related resources...

Age of the Princes



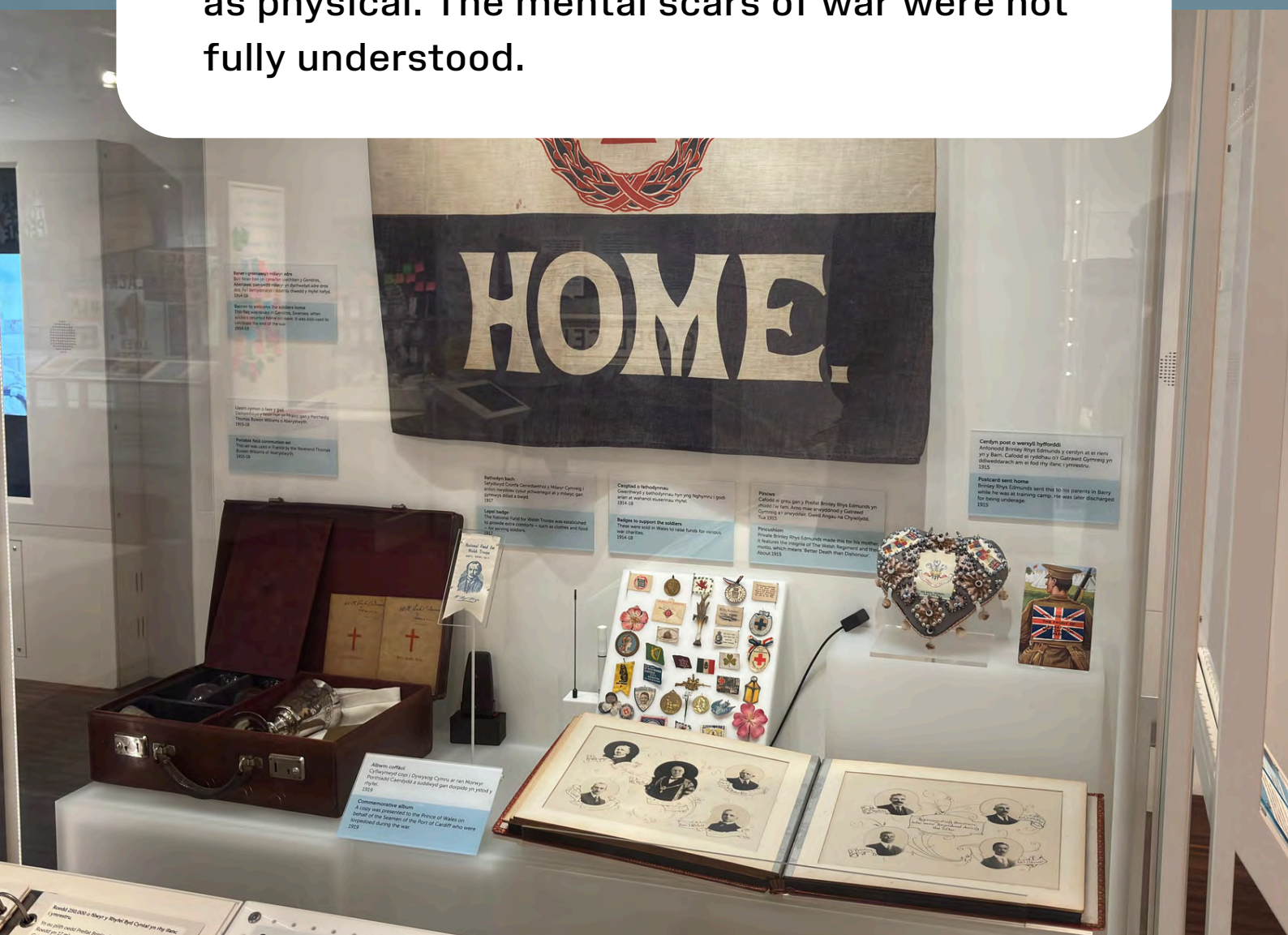
Wales is...

scarred by war

Themes...

War, Mental Health
Well-being, Beliefs

An estimated 272,000 Welshmen fought in the First World War and 32,000 lost their lives. Almost every village, town and parish had its list of war dead. Wales lost a generation of young men. For those who came home from the trenches, life would never be the same again. Their injuries were psychological as well as physical. The mental scars of war were not fully understood.





Pincushion

The Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) scheme trained volunteers in basic nursing skills. They were needed at auxiliary hospitals to help wounded soldiers returning from the front line. The first VAD detachment in Wales was formed at St Fagans. One of the cases shows items and photos from the hospital at St Fagans and includes objects made by a recovering soldier. During the War, communities raised funds to support the troops. They sent parcels of food, cigarettes and socks to the trenches. 'Welcome Home' events were organized for soldiers on leave.

Wales is...

scarred by war

Themes...

War, Mental Health
Well-being, Beliefs

On the front line, army chaplains or padres became father figures to young soldiers. They comforted and guided them through the horrors of war. Objects from both the front line and home front can also be seen here.



Discussion...

- *Is war ever justified?*
- *How would people's experience during the War affect their mental health?*
- *Auxiliary nurses were mostly volunteers and not paid, was this fair?*
- *How does making objects help with a soldier's recovery?*
- *How would a soldier feel receiving a package from home?*
- *In what way did society change after the War?*
- *What role would religion have played in the lives of a front line soldier?*

Also visit...

Newbridge War Memorial



Related resources...

Homefront: Wales in World War 2



Wales is...

Welsh costume

Themes...

*Human origins and
evolution, Archaeology*



*Souvenir
china*

The Welsh costume is not what it might appear. While it looks traditional, it was actually created to promote Wales in Victorian times. Based on the dress of women in rural Wales the Welsh costume is put together from traditional elements such as brethyn (traditional cloth). The Welsh costume is seen as a classic symbol of Wales and was used to market Wales to tourists traveling to the country on the railways.

The image of the Welsh Lady was popularised on postcards and was even a feature of china souvenirs. The use of the Welsh Lady and the Welsh costume was an attempt to portray Wales as a welcoming and wholesome place. Nowadays, the Welsh costume is worn to celebrate St David's Day on 1 March.



Discussion...

- *What are the stereotypical symbols of Wales today?*
- *Is wearing these to a rugby match a bad thing for Wales?*
- *How real is this costume?*
- *Is the Welsh dress still held in as high a regard today as it was in Victorian times?*
- *Is the Welsh dress a true representation of Welsh identity?*

Also visit...

Esgair Moel Woollen Mill



Related sessions...

Welsh National Dress (FAQ)



Wales is... drowned out

Themes...

Ownership of resources, Wales's
power in Parliament, Protest

In 1965 Capel Celyn, in the Tryweryn Valley near Bala, was drowned to provide a new reservoir to supply drinking water to Liverpool. The name sign in the case would have been seen on the way in to Capel Celyn, before the reservoir was created. This sign, alongside the chapel china, was given to the Museum when people left the village.

People were forced to leave their homes, and a community was separated. In total, 800 acres of land including twelve farms, the village school, post office and chapel were destroyed to make way for the reservoir.



CAPEL CELYN

We realise the hurt of 40 years
ago when Tryweryn Valley was
transformed into a reservoir...
We apologise and hope that the

Wrth fynd i'r ysgol bob dydd, dwi'n
cofio gweld y gwasanaeth

The motion for the reservoir was passed by the British Government of the day despite strong opposition in Wales. Most Welsh MPs opposed the Bill, while the people of Wales conducted protests against the destruction of Capel Celyn. Protests included demonstrations in Liverpool, and using explosives to damage the dam that would block the valley, when it was being built.

They can
apology
doing what
for the peo
are left.

Betty Wainwright
in 2003. Her family
from Capel Celyn.



*We realise the hurt of 40 years
ago when Tryweryn Valley was
transformed into a reservoir.*



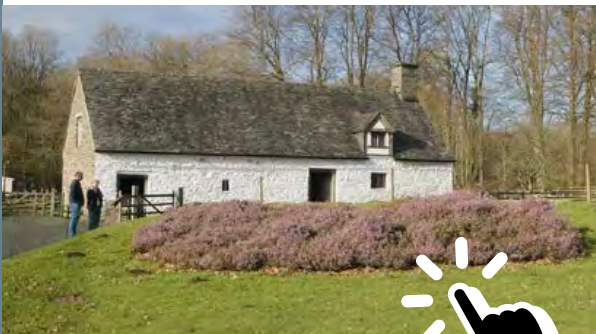
Tryweryn has become an iconic symbol in Wales and to some represents the lack of power in Wales.

Discussion...

- *Should Welsh water be used by English cities?*
- *Is Wales profiting from its natural resources?*
- *How would you feel if you had to leave your home?*
- *Has Wales got a strong enough voice in parliament today?*
- *Were lessons learnt from the drowning of Capel Celyn?*

Also visit...

Cilewent Farmhouse



Related resources...

Campaigning and Protest



AMGUEDDFA CYMRU

More Gallery Teaching Resources...



museum.wales/learn/