

Eglwys Teilo Sant, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont: Dehongli Eglwys o'r Oesoedd Canol Diweddar

Ailgodi ac adnewyddu eglwys ganoloesol Teilo Sant o Llandeilo Tal-y-bont yw un o fentrau mwyaf uchelgeisiol Amgueddfa Werin Cymru hyd yma. Hon yw'r eglwys gyntaf o'i bath i'w symud i amgueddfa awyr agored yng ngwledydd Prydain. Ac yntau'n adeilad mor bwysig, rhoddwyd gyfle i ni hefyd gyflwyno dulliau newydd o ddehongli adeiladau i'r cyhoedd. Am y tro cyntaf, bydd y broses o ailgodi'r adeilad yn atyniad mawr ynddo'i hun, wrth i bobl allu edrych draw ar y gwaith yn mynd yn ei flaen o lwyfan uwchlaw'r safle. Gall yr Amgueddfa hefyd archwilio themâu newydd a chyffrous ar gyfer ymchwilio a dehongli. Eisoes, arweiniodd hyn at gydweithio rhwng gwahanol adrannau yn yr Amgueddfa. Credir i'r eglwys gael ei chodi yn ystod y 13eg ganrif ar safle eglwys gyn-Normanaid gynharach. Yn wreiddiol



Eglwys Teilo Sant, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont, yn ei safle gwreiddiol ym 1984
St Teilo's Church, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont, in situ in 1984

roedd yr eglwys ar lan afon Lluchwr yn Llandeilo Tal-y-bont ger Pontarddulais. Cefnwyd ar yr eglwys yn y 1960au, ac fe'i rhoddwyd ar restr henebion Cadw: Henebion Hanesyddol Cymru yn y 1980au. Wedi trafodaethau helaeth rhwng yr awdurdodau lleol a'r Eglwys yng Nghymru, daethpwyd i'r penderfyniad na ellid arbed yr eglwys yn ei safle presennol ac ym 1984 fe'i cynigiwyd i'r Amgueddfa. Flwyddyn yn ddiweddarach cafwyd caniatâd Cadw i ddatgymalu'r eglwys a'i hailgodi yn Sain Ffagan.

Ym 1985, dechreuwyd ar y gwaith llafurus o dynnu'r eglwys yn ddarnau. Fe gymerodd y gwaith lawer mwy o amser na'r disgwyl, gan i ni ddarganfod dwy gyfres bwysig o baentiadau mur yn dyddio o gyfnod cyn y Diwygiad Protestannaidd, ynghyd â dau gynllun diweddarach, nifer o destunau a phatrymau addurnol yma ac acw. Bu Adran Archeoleg Prifysgol Cymru, Caerdydd yn cofnodi'r holl nodweddion hyn, cyn y gwaith manwl o'u tynnu ac yna eu diogelu.

Mae'r broses o dynnu'r meini yn ddarnau yn debyg i ryw fath o archeoleg uwchlaw'r pridd. Wrth dynnu'r haenau o wyngalch a datgelu'r murluniau, daethpwyd o hyd i gliwiau anhepgor i ddyddiad yr adeilad gwreiddiol. Yn yr un ffordd, wrth dynnu haenau o wyngalch, rendr a chalch mortar oddi ar y muriau allanol, roedd y tîm yn gallu gweld unrhyw waith adnewyddu a wnaed yn ystod Oes Fictoria neu'n ddiweddarach. Trwy edrych ar y ffeithiau archeolegol a ddaeth i'r fei yn ystod y broses hon, yn ogystal â chanlyniadau gwaith cloddio archeolegol ar weddill y muriau o'r llawr i'r nenfwd, llwyddwyd i ddyddio datbygiad archeolegol yr adeilad cyfan yn fwy manwl. Mae'n debyg mai'r adeilad cyntaf y gwyddom amdano ar y safle oedd eglwys ddwy-gell, sef y prif gorff a'r gangell, yn dyddio o'r 13eg - 14eg ganrif. Roedd hwn yn batrwm

St Teilo's Church, Llandeilo Tal-y-bont: Interpreting a Late Medieval Church

The re-erection and refurbishment of the medieval church of St Teilo from Llandeilo Tal-y-bont is one of the Museum of Welsh Life's most ambitious projects to date. Not only does it represent the first church of its kind to be moved to a British open air museum, its importance as a building also serves as a catalyst for the introduction of new methods of interpreting buildings to the visiting public. For the first time, the rebuilding process itself will be a major attraction, viewed from a platform looking across the site. It will also enable the Museum to explore new and exciting themes of research and interpretation, and has already resulted in collaboration with different departments within NMGW. The church, which is believed to have been built during the 13th century on the site of an earlier

pre-Norman church, was originally situated close to the banks of the Afon Lluchwr at Llandeilo Tal-y-bont near Pontarddulais. Abandoned in the 1960s, it was scheduled as an Ancient Monument by Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments in the 1980s. Following lengthy discussions involving local authorities and the Church in Wales, it was decided that the already decaying church could not be saved *in situ*. It was therefore offered to the Museum in 1984. Permission was granted by Cadw in 1985 to dismantle the church and re-erect it at St Fagans.

In 1985, the careful process of dismantling the structure began. This was considerably lengthened by the discovery of two major series of pre-Reformation wall-paintings along with two later schemes, numerous texts and areas of decorative patterns, all of which were carefully recorded, removed and conserved by the Department of Archaeology at University of Wales, Cardiff.

The dismantling process can be regarded as a form of above-ground archaeology. The removal of layers of limewash to uncover the wall-paintings provided vital clues as to the date of the original structure. In the same way, the removal of layers of limewash, render and lime mortar from the exterior walls enabled the team to filter out any Victorian or later 'restorations'. Architectural facts gleaned from this process, together with the results of an archaeological excavation of the remaining exposed walls to ground level, refined the dating of the architectural development of the whole structure.

The first identifiable structure was probably a two-cell church consisting of a nave and chancel, thought to be 13th - 14th century in date, a pattern that was standard throughout Wales at this time. The next addition would

cyffredin ledled Cymru ar y pryd. Mae'n debyg mai'r ychwanegiad nesaf oedd capel y gogledd, a elwid yn Gapel Goronow, i gydnabod ei noddwr mae'n siŵr. Mae'n debyg y codwyd capel y de tua'r un adeg neu'n fuan wedyn; technegau adeiladu tebyg a ddefnyddiwyd i godi'r ddau. Credir bod y rhain yn dyddio o'r 14eg neu ddechrau'r 15fed ganrif, sy'n cyfateb i ddyddiad y murlun ar fur dwyreiniol capel y de. Daw'n amlwg felly bod yr eglwys, yn ystod y cyfnod hwn, ar ffurf croes. Amcangyfrifir mai ddiwedd y 15eg ganrif yr estynnwyd capel y de tua'r gorllewin i ffurfio ystlys. Yn lle'r hen fur deheuol daeth arcêd o ddau fwa, gyda dau arall yn arwain i'r ddau gapel. Y peth olaf i gael ei ychwanegu at yr eglwys oedd porth a arweiniai at ystlys y de.

Mae ymchwil pensaernïol ac archeolegol manwl fel hyn yn rhoi sylfaen gadarn ar gyfer ailgodi'r eglwys yn fanwl-gywir yn yr Amgueddfa. Fodd bynnag, mae angen llawer mwy cyn y daw'r eglwys unwaith eto'n adeilad perthnasol ac ystyrion fydd yn addysgu, hysbysu, diddori ac apelio at ymwelwyr ar bob lefel.

Mor gynnar â 1916, sefydlodd y Parchedig E. Tyrrell-Green y cysylltiad pwysig rhwng pensaernïaeth eglwysi yng Nghymru ac ymchwil hanesyddol, mewn papur o'r enw 'The Church Architecture of Wales' yn *Cofnodion Anrhydeddus Gymdeithas y Cymmrodorion*, 1916-17, tt. 52-119. Ysgrifennodd:

The study of Architecture would be a profitless employment unless constant reference is made to the beliefs, the customs, the feelings and the aspirations of the times and places where styles of Architecture arose while, on the other hand, the historian can never afford to neglect Architecture, for this is no mere pastime, but the record of the people's life and character in an abiding form, which cannot lie. Into their Architecture nations, in all ages, have put themselves; into their sacred Architecture they have put their best selves.

Penderfynwyd ailgodi ac adnewyddu'r eglwys yn yr Amgueddfa i edrych fel y byddai tua 1510-30. Gallwn ddangos sut y defnyddiwyd cliwiau pensaernïol o'r cyfnod hwn, a ddaeth i'r golwg wrth ddymchwel yr eglwys garreg wrth garreg, yn allwedd i ddeall yr hanes cymdeithasol, crefyddol a gwleidyddol a luniwyd ac a ddodrefnodd yr eglwys. Mae'n debyg mai yn ystod y cyfnod 1510-30 y codwyd yr estyniad i gapel y de - tua'r gorllewin i ffurfio ystlys y de - i ddal cynulleidfwa fwy mae'n debyg. Gellir dadlau i hyn ddigwydd law yn llaw â'r adferiad mawr yn economi Cymru, wedi dechrau cyfnod y Tuduriaid Cymreig ddiwedd y 15fed ganrif. Bryd hynny cafwyd cyfnod cymharol dawel wedi cyfnodau hir o ansefydlogrwydd gwleidyddol a chymdeithasol. Mae Glanmor Williams yn *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation*, t. 428, yn gweld cysylltiad rhwng datblygiadau pensaernïol a'r adferiad economaidd hwn, gan gyfeirio ato fel:

The urge to build and beautify ... there was hardly a church in Wales, in however remote or bare a parish, which could not boast some degree of reconstruction or refurbishing.

probably have been the north transept, known as the Gronow Chapel, presumably in recognition of its benefactor. The south transept was probably built at the same time or soon after; both are of similar masonry construction. It is thought that these date from the 14th or early 15th century, which corresponds to the dating of a wall-painting on the east wall of the south transept. It becomes apparent therefore that the church, at this time, was indeed cruciform. It is estimated that the extension of the south transept westwards to form an aisle occurred during the late 15th century, the old south wall being replaced by an arcade of two arches, with another two cutting in to both transepts. The final addition to the church was a porch leading to the south aisle.

Detailed architectural and archaeological research of this kind forms a sound basis for an accurate re-erection of the structure at the Museum. However, far more is needed before it can qualify as a relevant and meaningful exhibit that can educate, inform, entertain and appeal to visitors at all levels.

As early as 1916, the important link between church architecture in Wales and historical research was established by the Reverend E. Tyrrell-Green, in a paper entitled 'The Church Architecture of Wales', in the *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1916-17, pp. 52-119. He wrote:

The study of Architecture would be a profitless employment unless constant reference is made to the beliefs, the customs, the feelings and the aspirations of the times and places where styles of Architecture arose, while, on the other hand, the historian can never afford to neglect Architecture, for this is no mere pastime, but the record of a people's life and character in an abiding form, which cannot lie. Into their Architecture nations, in all ages, have put themselves; into their sacred Architecture they have put their best selves.

It has been decided to rebuild and refurbish the church as it would have appeared circa 1510-30. It is possible to illustrate how we can use the architectural clues from this period, found during the dismantling process, as keys to understanding the social, religious and political framework within which the church was constructed and furnished. The period 1510-30 follows closely the extension of the south transept westwards to form the south aisle, presumably to accommodate a larger congregation. It can be argued that this fits in well with the greater economic recovery in Wales after the onset of the Welsh Tudor dynasty in the late 15th century, which brought with it a period of relative calm after long stretches of political and social unrest. Glanmor Williams in *The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation*, p 428, links architectural development to this economic recovery, and refers to it as:

The urge to build and beautify ... there was hardly a church in Wales, in however remote or bare a parish, which could not boast some degree of reconstruction or refurbishing.



Ffenestr garreg fyllinog o'r Oesoedd Canol a ddaeth i'r amlwg o dan haenau o wyngalch a rendr yn ystod y broses o ddatymalu'r eglwys
Stone mullioned medieval window uncovered from beneath layers of lime wash and render during the dismantling process

Cafwyd cliwiau oddi mewn i'r eglwys hefyd, a gellir defnyddio'r rhain i lunio darlun o'r ffordd yr oedd pobl yn addoli yn ystod y cyfnod hyd at 1530. Y cliw cyntaf, a'r pwysicaf oll, yw'r murluniau o'r cyfnod cyn y Diwygiad Protestannaidd a oedd yn gorwedd o dan y gwyngalch - dyma ffynhonnell wreiddiol sy'n cael ei chadw yn yr Amgueddfa ei hun. Mae'r lluniau yn dangos gwahanol themâu o fywyd Crist: Gwatwar Crist; y Croeshoelio; y Crist Marw; ynghyd â llawer o seintiau, gan gynnwys Santes Catrin a Sant Cristoffer. Yr ail gliw yw'r groglen a'r llofft. Ceir tystiolaeth o'r rhain ar ffurf tyllau a cherrig corbel yng ngwaith carreg y bwa yn y gangell. Byddai'r murluniau, y groglen a'r llofft wedi'u paentio'n llachar. Dyma sut y disgrifiodd Siôn Cent, y bardd o'r Oesoedd Canol, sut y byddai paentiwr yn paentio delweddau o'r fath:

*A phaentiwr delw a phwyntel,
Yn paentiaw delwau lawer,
A llu o saint â lliw sêr.'*

'Beibl y werin dlawd' yw disgrifiad Glanmor Williams o'r murluniau. Cawsant eu paentio i ddehongli golygfeydd beiblaidd i gynulleidfa anllythrennog. Eu pwrpas hefyd oedd ceisio ennyn arswyd, ofn ac uffudd-dod, er mwyn atgoffa pobl yn gyson mai anochel oedd marwolaeth, Barn Ddwyfol a Dialedd. Mae'n bwysig cofio na allai pob offeiriad siarad Cymraeg, ac nad oedd gweddiau a darlenniadau Lladin yn ddim mwy nag ailadrodd mecanyddol i lawer o'r gynulleidfa. Mewn ambell i fan, felly, mae'n debyg mai murluniau fel y rhai a geir yn Teilo Sant oedd yr unig ffordd o gyfleu unrhyw neges grefyddol o gwbl. Medrai un diwygiwr crefyddol brwd ddatgan, hyd yn oed, mewn llythyr ar drothwy'r Diwygiad Protestannaidd yng Nghymru, 'nad oedd un [o'r Clerigwyr] ... yn pregethu gair Duw yn ddiwyll, a phrin yr un yn frwd o'i blaid', ac mae'n mynd ati i gollfarnu ardal de Cymru am ei 'drygioni mawr, y trethi twyllodrus, y byw anhrefnus ac eilunaddoli paganaidd.' Eto, os nad oedd y gynulleidfa yn deall neges y pregethau, mae'n rhaid fod effaith y paentiadau, cyfriniaeth y groglen, ailadrodd yr offeren, a'u hofn o rym y clerigwyr yn ddigon i wneud iddynt fynychu'r eglwys.

Trwy edrych yn fras ar y ddwy nodwedd uchod, y naill o du allan a'r llall o du mewn yr eglwys, mae'n bosibl amgyffred hyd a lled y dehongli a'r ymchwil y gall yr Amgueddfa ei gyflawni yn y dyfodol. Fodd bynnag, ni all adeilad fodoli mewn gwagle! Er y bydd yr eglwys yn cael ei hailgodi a'i hadnewyddu yn arddull 1510-30, mae gennym dystiolaeth o'i ffurf bensaernïol gynharach. Cofnodwyd nodweddion pensaernïol diweddarach hefyd, ynghyd â murluniau a murdestunau ar y muriau o'r cyfnodau ar ôl y Diwygiad Protestannaidd.

Mae'n bwysig cofio i'r eglwys gael ei defnyddio fel addoldy hyd at y 1960au. Mae atgofion y gymuned a fu'n addoli yno yn parhau yn gryf a bywiog hyd heddiw a gallant

Internally too, clues were found during the dismantling of the church that can be used to illuminate the nature of worship during the period up to 1530. First, and most important, are the pre-Reformation wall-paintings discovered under the post-Reformation limewash - primary source material stored at the Museum itself. These depict various themes from the life of Christ: the Mocking of Christ; the Crucifixion; the Dead Christ; along with many saints, including St Catherine and St Christopher. Second are the rood screen and loft, evidence for which was found in the form of holes and corbel stones in the masonry work of the chancel arch. Both wall-paintings, rood screen and loft would have been brightly painted. Siôn Cent, a medieval poet, described a painter painting images of this kind:

*A phaentiwr delw a phwyntel,
Yn paentiaw delwau lawer,
A llu o saint â lliw sêr.'*

(‘a painter of images with his brush painting many images and a host of saints with the colour of stars’).

Wall-paintings such as these are described by Glanmor Williams as ‘the poor man’s Bible’, designed to interpret scenes from the Bible to an illiterate congregation, but also crafted to instil a sense of awe, fear and obedience, to constantly remind of the inevitability of death, of the Divine Judgement and Retribution. It is important to consider that not all priests could speak Welsh, and that Latin prayers and readings were sometimes nothing more than mechanical repetition for the congregation. In some cases therefore, wall-paintings such as the ones found in St Teilo must have been the only means of

communicating any religious message at all. An enthusi-astic religious reformer was even able to state in a letter on the eve of the Reformation in Wales that ‘not one [of the Clergy] ... sincerely preacheth God’s word, nor scarce any that heartily favoureth it’, and continues to condemn the south Wales area for its ‘enormous vices, the fraudulent exactions, the misordered living and heathen idolatry.’ Yet, even if the congregation did not understand the messages of the sermons, the impact of the paintings, the mysticism of the rood screen, the repetition of the mass, and fear surrounding the power of the clergy must have been enough to keep them going to church.

From just a brief examination of these two features, found both externally and internally whilst dismantling the church, it is possible to realise the future scope of interpretation and research that can be achieved by the Museum. However, a building cannot exist in a void! Although the church will be re-erected and refurbished to its 1510-30 appearance, we do have evidence of its earlier architectural form. Later architectural features, post-Reformation wall-paintings and wall texts have also been recorded.



Murlun o Santes Catrin, yn ei safle gwreiddiol, a ddargan-fuwyd ar fur dwyreiniol transept y de. Mae'n debyg y'i paentiwyd tua 1400

Wall-painting of St Catherine, 'in situ', found on the east wall of the south transept, believed to have been painted c.1400

Amgueddfa

ddarparu tystiolaeth lafar bwysig ar gyfer archif sain a fideo yr Amgueddfa. Mae dirywiad yr eglwys fel addoldy o'r 1960au ymlaen hefyd yn gyfnod pwysig yn ei hanes. Tueddwn feddwl bod y murluniau sy'n dyddio o'r cyfnod cyn y Diwygiad Protestannaidd yn bwysicach na hanes cyfoes yr eglwys. Mewn gwirionedd, mae ffactorau fel y newid ym mhatrwm poblogaeth Pontarddulais; adeiladu gwell eglwysi a chapeli yn yr ardal; diffyg hygyrchedd cynyddol yr eglwys fel adeilad cymunedol, ynghyd â fandaliaeth gyson, yr un mor ddilys fel adlewyrchiad o hanes cymdeithasol, crefyddol a gwleidyddol heddiw ag yw'r murluniau o grefydd, cymdeithas a gwleidyddiaeth cyn y Diwygiad Protestannaidd. Dim ond un cam arall yn ei hanes yw ailgodi'r eglwys yn Amgueddfa Werin Cymru, a bydd croeso yr un mor frwd i ymwelwyr yr 21ain ganrif ag yr oedd i bererinion yr Oesoedd Canol!

*Sioned Wyn Hughes, Curadur Cynorthwyol,
- Adeiladau Hanesyddol a Masnach, Amgueddfa Werin Cymru*

It is also important to remember that the church was used as a religious building right until the 1960s. The community which used to worship in the church still has strong and important memories of its time there as a congregation. This will provide important oral history evidence that will be kept in the Museum's audio-visual archive. The church's eventual demise as a religious building from the 1960s is also an important record of its history. The changing population and settlement patterns at Pontarddulais and the development of other larger churches, coupled with St Teilo's increasing inaccessibility as a community building and the frequent acts of vandalism, are as valid a reflection of social, religious and political history as are the pre-Reformation wall-paintings. The re-erection of the church at the Museum of Welsh Life is but another phase in its history where visitors in the 21st century will be just as valued as its medieval pilgrims!

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