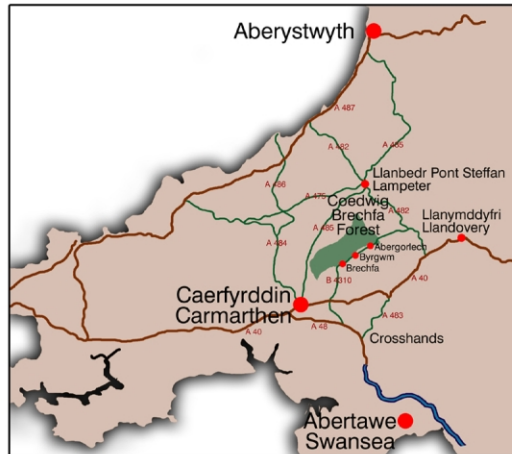


Religion

Ancient maps show that over a thousand sacred springs and holy wells once existed in Wales. Many were and still are associated with healing properties. Although rooted in the pagan heritage of guardian spirits, "ffynnon" as they are known, became associated with Christian beliefs and many were named after local saints.

Brechfa and the surrounding areas have their share of sacred springs, a ruined abbey, famous preachers, ancient parish churches and missionaries. In the sixth century, St. Teilo used Ffynnon Deilo to baptise his followers. The same spring provided water for the local inhabitants from the pre-historic times until 1950 when mains water was introduced.



Fforest Glyn Cothi Cultural Heritage Project

The Fforest Glyn Cothi Cultural Heritage Project set up by the Brechfa Forest and Llanllwni Mountain Tourism Cluster raises awareness of the traditional lifestyle of forest dwellers and the built and natural heritage sites within Brechfa Forest, Llanllwni Mountain and the communities which encircle them.

You can find information about famous local figures and about spiritual, religious and tourism sites in our literature and on our website:

www.roam-brechfaforest-llanllwnimountain.co.uk

Arianwyd gan / Funded by



Cronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig; Ewrop yn Buddsoddi mewn Ardaloedd Gwledig
The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe Investing in Rural Areas



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



St Teilo

The first known holy places were springs. Flowing water was sacred to the pre-Christian Celts as a source of life and a sign of blessing. Christians added it to their own symbolism, renaming springs after the Christian holy man or woman who first used its water to baptise his or her converts.

In Brechfa that person was St Teilo, one of the three great missionary bishops who brought the Christian Gospel to the people of the hills and valleys of West Wales and Brittany during the sixth century. In Brittany St Teilo is still regarded as the patron saint of horses and apple trees.

The Gospels of St Teilo are with the most beautiful of the illuminated Gospel-books produced in the eighth century. The manuscript includes marginal notes which contain some of the earliest examples of written Welsh including references to grants of land in Brechfa. One note tells us that Gelhi son of Arihtuid gave his best horse to a Cingal in exchange for the book, which he then presented 'to God and St Teilo'.

Tomos Glyn Cothi

The first Unitarian chapel in Wales, Cwm Cothi, was opened in 1792 by weaver and minister Thomas Evans (1766-1833), better known in Welsh history as 'Tomos Glyn Cothi'. He was in the habit of composing, singing and teaching others to sing songs in the Welch (sic) language. He was tried for sedition in 1802, and had to endure the humiliation of the stocks as well as two years in prison. He brought out an English- Welsh dictionary in 1809.

Captain Dan Jones

In early 1846 Captain Dan Jones, a missionary for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) began to preach in Llanybydder. He converted more than 80 people in this area.

Between 1840 and 1887 The Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-Day Saints brought 85,220 European converts to the Mormon settlements in America. The first batch of 249 Welsh emigrants, including those from Llanybydder, escorted by Jones, left Liverpool on the Buena Vista on 25 or 26 Feb 1849 to emigrate to Salt Lake City in the Rocky Mountains.

The Cambrian (16th February 1849) states: *'Amongst the group were many substantial farmers from the neighbourhoods of Brechfa and Llanybydder, Carmarthenshire; and although they were well to do, they disposed of their possessions to get to California, their New Jerusalem as they deemed it, where their fanaticism teaches them to believe that they will escape from the general destruction and conflagration that is shortly to envelop this earth.'*



Llanfihangel Rhos Y Corn Church © Caroline Evans