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Strata Florida

Last updated: 24 November 2005

Find out more about the natural history of Strata Florida in Ceredigion where you can see the remains of a once thriving Cistercian Abbey.



Location: 1m SE of Pontrhydfendigaid
Grid ref: SN 746657
Contact: CADW 01974 831261
Access: Open from 1 April - 30 September between 10am and 5pm. The site is unstaffed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Admission charges apply. At all other times the site is unstaffed but open from 10am until 4pm and entrance is free.
Facilities: Parking, toilet and shop

The site of a 12th century Cistercian Abbey, Strata Florida is situated in the hills above the Ceredigion town of Tregaron and has been shaped by both human and natural influences.

As the Ice Age ended, the retreating glacier widened the valley and left behind ridges known as moraines. Over the last 12,000 years, Tregaron Bog (Cors Caron) has formed in the lake created by one of the moraines and within the bog, scientists have found pollen evidence to help them piece together the site's dynamic history.

Extensive clearance and cultivation of the mixed woodland covering the slopes began in the Bronze Age, spread to the valley floor in the Iron Age and was more or less complete by the end of Roman times. Following the Roman departure, the forest began to regenerate until the Cistercians arrived in the 12th Century and reinstated the clearing.

These monks grazed their numerous sheep on the uplands, converting land that had previously been used for cattle and arable crops. They also made use of other natural resources such as mines and quarries in the mountain, peat and iron in the boglands and power generated by the rivers and streams.

The ruinous remains of the Abbey they founded are visible thanks to 19th century excavations. After the dissolution of the monastery in 1539, the land passed into the hands of the landed gentry who used intensive methods to farm the now arable land.

Since the 19th century, the land has been used extensively for cattle and sheep, and more recently for timber planted by the Forestry Commission.

It is thought that one of the great Welsh poets **Dafydd ap Gwilym** was buried in the grounds of the abbey.



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your comments

Dilys Davies Carmarthen

I would like to know is there a list of the people who have been buried in Ystrad Fflur, if there is how would i be able to obtain it, thank you....

Mon Apr 5 20:51:50 2010

Idrissa Kamara

This site is really amazing and good to have a brief visit. am delighted as every body who once visited this site was and is

Thu Oct 22 20:00:17 2009

David L. Bell, Canton, Texas

Question for Donald Rees of Ynysybwl: Do you mind sharing some of your family tree information? My mother was a Reese/Rhys, and we were told by a geneologist at the University of South Carolina (USA) that our lineage is that of Rhys ap Tewdwr Mawr. Thanks.

Mon Jun 29 09:36:37 2009

Ed Jones

I was wondering, is there a list of people burried in the strata Florida parish? My grgr grand parents were married and burried here! I think Possibly someone might have access to these records ! Thanks and god bless

Sun Feb 15 19:07:23 2009

Richard Curtin

I visited in 1991 and photographed the Yew tree on David William's grave. I assumed the tree was planted in 1380 as engraved on the stone. Am I correct?

Mon Jul 14 16:59:33 2008

Machynleth

lol Been learning it in history in penglais

Wed Apr 9 10:02:23 2008

Maria Calderon, Univeristy of Wales, Lampeter

I'm at the university and have done modules for two years at Strata Florida. We are looking not just at the Abbey but at the surround area in hopes to get a better understanding of monastic life. It really is beautiful there and even if you are not interested in religion or archeology it is definitely worth a visit.

Mon Dec 17 08:14:01 2007

Rebecca Smith from Lampeter

Our archaeology department has been excavating here since 2004, and we have been excavating the inner precinct to the abbey. Next year we open the excavation to volunteers, so people should get invloved!

Tue Jun 19 09:57:04 2007

Hannah Timbol

I go to Lampeter University, and did my "project" module there, the BBC did a pilot film of us, but if it's already been on TV I missed it.

Fri Nov 10 09:57:23 2006

Melvyn & Eve Twitchett, Bwlchllan

The Strata Florida Monks used to pass over our stream at Rhyd-y-Groes (Cross Ford) which is how the name came

about. Upon one of their pilgrimages to the coast, one of the monks died near the ford. His spirit remains at Rhyd-y-Groes.
Tue May 2 09:24:52 2006

Fred Stedman-Jones, Cheshire

Llyn Morgan's description of the allegorical painting at Old Abbey Farm is of great interest to me, I have studied it there on several occasions. I have also researched what little is known about it. I would be most grateful to learn of any sources for the claim that it is by John Dyer.

Tue Feb 21 18:56:27 2006

Robert Stedman Thomas from France

Being a descendent of the Stedman family I have visited the Abbey and house twice now thanks to Lynn Morgan the mystery of the wall painting is now solved when I first saw it I felt a sense of horror but I now realise what the painting means it is ok and I will visit the house again.

Tue Feb 21 18:02:48 2006

Lynn Morgan, Llandysul

The painting on the panelling in Old Abbey Farm, Strata Florida is by the poet and artist John Dyer. The picture invites the viewer to decide between good and evil. The painting is of a Youth, standing on a box, being tempted by a semi-naked woman on the right with a bearded face and asses ears, holding a pleasant mask in front of her face. She has a cello lying by her side. Two bearded figures to the left, one of which has a bible. The scroll under the feet of the youth was read by G E Evans as 'When virtue and vice, Youth doth woo tis hard to say Which way he'll go.' The panelling and painting are 18th century. The farmhouse was the gentry home of the 18th century Stedman family.

Wed Nov 30 10:33:26 2005

lance cole, Lampeter

Our university is studying here at the moment with ongoing reasearch into the area and abbey itself as well as the excavations. a great site and well worth a days walk.

Mon Aug 15 18:56:34 2005

D. Moran, Liverpool

This site was our playground as children. We were evacuated in the nearby village of Bont. We visit frequently, it has good memories for us.

Mon Jun 27 11:38:00 2005

Donald Rees from Ynysybwl

My great great grandfather is buried there. Their smallholding was nearby. Lots of my other ancestors buried there as well.

Fri Apr 1 02:28:32 2005

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