

Great Archaeological Sites in Blaenau Gwent



6. BEDWELLY PARK



Bedwellty Park stands in the middle of the town of Tredegar (SO 143 085), the sort of urban park that philanthropists began to sponsor during Victorian times to give the people living in increasingly large towns a pleasant green oasis in which they could relax and walk, as it has become again since restoration in 2010 – 2011.

But it didn't start out that way – it was originally part of the private grounds of Bedwellty House. The present house was built in 1825 by Samuel Homfrey, ironmaster of the Penydarren works in Merthyr Tydfil and the Tregar ironworks, to replace an earlier house he had bought from the Morgans of Tredegar Park in Newport. The park was laid out to provide it with a pleasant setting, and contained amenities such as a grotto, and the ice house that enabled the inhabitants to keep food fresh in the summer before the invention of refrigeration and even to enjoy ice cream. But the most unusual feature was the giant block of coal, said to have been the largest ever cut, that was mined in Tredegar at the Homfreys' Yard Level for the Great Exhibition held in London in 1851. Unfortunately, part of it broke away while it was being moved, and it was decided that it was too risky to send it to London.

By the middle of the 19th century Bedwellty House once again belonged to the Morgans of Tredegar Park, who allowed the manager of the Tredegar Iron and Coal Company to live there. It was at the beginning of the 20th century that the grounds of Bedwellty House were given to the Urban District Council and transformed into a public park for the people of Tredegar; a part had already been gifted to the town by Lord Tredegar as a site for the new cottage hospital. Whilst the basic landscaping remained as it always had been, the public amenities were improved with the installation of a bandstand in 1912 was funded by Bedwellty Park Athletic Club. The park had clearly become a centre for all sorts of recreation.



The entrance to Bedwellty House and Park is in Morgan Street, Tredegar (NP22 3XN). Maps: OS Landranger Series sheet 161, Explorer Series sheet outdoor Leisure 13.

Timeline (the asterisk indicate the time-span)



You can learn more about this site, and other similar archaeological sites in Wales, by going to <https://www.archwilio.org.uk/arch/>. Please read and observe the Conditions of Use. Bedwellty Park has the PRN (Primary Record Number) 06086g, the Great Exhibition lump of coal 04642g, the icehouse 04642g and the bandstand 08875g. You can search for other similar sites here too. You can contact us via social media or through the methods given at the bottom of the page.