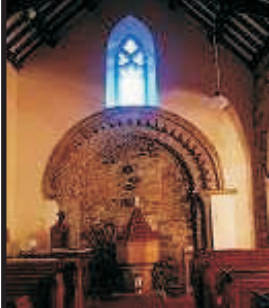




The Celtic Circle

- In The Footsteps Of Saints And Princes -

4. St. Beuno - Aberffraw



Introduction

By any standard the church of St. Beuno in Aberffraw is both hugely impressive and hugely important. Aberffraw having been the royal court, or 'Llys' of the Princes of Wales the church was an important part of the 'Maerdref' or estate. Originally established a religious cell by St. Beuno in the 7th century the first stone church was built here in the 12th century and a major part of that building lives on in the extraordinary carved stone arch set just inside its entrance. It is also fortunate to house a fine collection of stained glass.

A Visit

There is a parking area immediately in front of the gates that lead into the churchyard. The local council have provided well illustrated signage by the gates describing the church, the nearby royal court and their histories, well worth a read! Walking into the churchyard many of the older grave stones have now been laid flat for protection and it's worth lingering a moment to note some of the dates. The church wall to your right contains some 12th century masonry and leads to the modern porch, immediately in front of which is a simple, and striking, memorial to local people who have died serving in several conflicts.



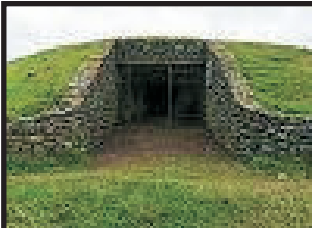
Entering the church the first thing you will notice it that it is split into two by a grand series of arches dating back to the 16th century. The character of each half is sufficiently different for this to almost feel like two separate churches, each with its own aisle. If you turn to your left on entering you will find fine medieval font framed by a wonderful 12th century arch (top left), carved with chevrons and animal heads it is believed to be the Chancel arch from the original stone church. This gem was actually discovered in 1840 during restoration work.

As well as some excellent stained glass the beautifully decorated pipes of the organ are worth seeing as are a superb pair of polished brass collecting shovels. Dated 1777 they are leaning against the wall next to the right hand altar. On a fine day the churchyard itself is well worth a stroll, the church has a rather exposed aspect which explains the modern render on the East wall, not its finest feature, but a necessary one. There are some fine views of the dunes outside the town as well as of the church itself. Worth noting the large finials at the top of the roof gables. Also the exterior window frames of the North side have some superb decorative carved heads.



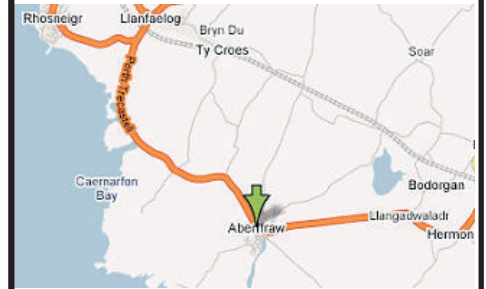
While you're in the area

Llys Llewelyn is a new community development with quality accommodation, cycle hire and local crafts for sale just off the A4080 in Aberffraw itself. The signboard at the church gate gives directions to the historic site of the royal court of the Princes nearby. Barclodiad y Gawres burial chamber is a short drive West. Famed for its ancient rock art it is one of the most important prehistoric monuments on Anglesey. Reached by a dramatic headland walk.



Aberffraw

Location



NGR: SH 353 688: Turn left off the A4080 into the village of Aberffraw. Turn left in front of the Post Office/village store, the church is immediately in front of you.

Access: The key is available from the Post Office/village store. Wheelchair access: Fairly easy, although the path to the door does slope upwards.

Service Times:

Local Amenities: Aberffraw has two well stocked and friendly village stores, one with a Post Office and free-to-use ATM. It also has a popular local pub, Y Goron- 'The Crown'. Cycle hire, a café, gift shop and accommodation available at the new Llys Llewelyn development in the village.