

Magor & Undy: Monks and Marshes

Severnside Heritage Trail Series



land & legends

MONMOUTHSHIRE'S CULTURAL HERITAGE
TREFTADAETH DDIWYLLIANNOL SIR FYNWY



Magor & Undy: Monks and Marshes

Monks

The sizeable remains of the 14th Century Procurator's House **A** still stands proudly in Magor. The Procurator, a man of some standing, was the legal representative of the monastery and it was his job to collect the rents and other dues, including tithes on behalf of the monastery. The CADW listed building is the only one of its kind in Wales.

St Mary's Church, Magor **B** stands above the fenland and the road to Aberwythel -



Procurator's House



Magor's long vanished port. It is known as "The Cathedral of the Moors" and was allegedly founded in the 7th Century by Cadwaladr Fendigais, last of the Welsh "Kings of Britain" at the time of the Saxon incursions, and declared a saint by Pope Sergius in 688.

The current St Mary's Church Undy **E** was built in the 12th and 13th Centuries, but is built on the foundations of an earlier 6th Century church, which was dedicated to St Gwyndaf and his wife Wyndaf, hence the pronunciations of Undy through the ages – Gwyndaf, Wyndaf, Gwyndi, Woundy, Wendy and Undy. The current bell in the turret, dated 1350 –80, was made by a Bristol firm and is

unique in style. It is 33 inches long with the inscription Virgi:Marie:Lavdes around the base. It was rehung in 1996 and is now electronically operated.

Legend has it that God and the Devil held a competition on top of Gray Hill to see who could throw a stone the furthest – the Devil's stone landed in Rogiet (the standing stone) and God's stone landed in the Estuary – Denny Island **C**. Gray Hill, the Standing Stone and Denny Island are all said to stand along a lay line.

Marshes

Magor Marsh Nature Reserve and Site of Special Scientific Interest **F** is the largest remnant



St Mary's Church, Magor



The bell at St Mary's Church, Undy

of traditionally managed fenland on the Gwent Levels. This site provides a glimpse of the ancient past, containing evidence of 10,000 years of human use. The present layout of the reens(ditches) here dates from about the fourteenth century

Look carefully and you might see otters, water rail, Cetti's Warbler and other warblers, reed bunting, snipe, kingfishers, rare dragonflies, diving beetles. This is a great bird watching area.

History has shaped the way the marsh looks today. The willows growing across the middle of the marsh are thought to have been planted by monks, not as

a hedgerow, but as a means of crossing the marsh. They laid willow branches and twigs to stop them sinking on their way from Lower Grange Farm to the Priory everyday. Over time this willow has sprouted to make the line of willows you see today.

Did you know...?

Stray animals used to be held at Undy Pound ①, the keeper of the pound or pinder, rounded up these animals and kept them secure until collected by their owners who would be charged a fee. Way back in time, felons committing serious crimes were sometimes confined here in the stocks or pillory. Often visiting preachers came and people would gather around the Stone Cross to hear 'the word of God'. The remains of the cross are still found in the Churchyard.

Fayres were also held at the pound; livestock was traded and the unemployed hired for work – usually for 3 year periods. The Pound was probably last used in the 1880's.

The remains of a roman building were found during the construction of a football pitch at Undy. A small quantity of pottery and bone has been retrieved from the building along with three coins from 320 – 350 AD. It is thought that the building represents an agricultural structure.

A roman coffin containing a skeleton, was unearthed while digging foundations for a new housing estate at Undy .The coffin is made of Bath Stone and the date of burial was during the latter half of the 3rd or 4th century.



Memorial Stone at Magor Church yard

For details of accommodation in the area visit
www.greenbeds.adventa.org.uk



This leaflet has been funded by adventa, Monmouthshire's LEADER+ rural development programme funded by the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund, the Welsh Assembly Government and Monmouthshire County Council. For more information visit **www.adventa.org.uk**



Content has been provided by the Heritage Sub-group of the Severnside Area Forum. The Severnside Area Forum exists to promote community action through representation and practical activity.

This group has received community development support through Rural Community Action. Rural Community Action is funded and facilitated by the Welsh Assembly Government. www.monmouthshire-rca.org.uk

Whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, adventa cannot accept any liability whatsoever for any loss or damage arising in any way from this publication. Nor can they be held liable for any loss, injury or damage sustained by anyone visiting or walking the trail.

Visit **www.monmouthshire.gov.uk** for more walks in the area.

Sources

Peter Cobb - A History of Magor Church, St Mary's Church Undy, Mabel Perry, Gwent Wildlife Trust, John Blackaby, National Museum Wales.

Acknowledgements

Magor with Undy Community Council






This walk may have limited access in certain places and therefore may not be suitable for the less mobile.

Busnesau / Businesses

- ① Golden Lion, Sgwâr Magwyr - **01633 880312**
The Golden Lion, Magor Square
- ① This Way Up, Sgwâr Magwyr - **01633 882525**
This Way Up, Magor Square (Coffee Shop)
- ① The Wheatsheaf, Y Sgwâr - **01633 880608**
The Wheatsheaf, The Square
- ② Canolfan Ymwelwyr Gwarchodfa
Natur Cors Magwyr - **01633 889048 / 01600 740358**
Magor Marsh Nature Reserve Visitor Centre

 Trail route

 Bus stop

Cludiant Cyhoeddus / Public Transport

Bysiau / Buses: **X14, X74**

Train / Train: **Gorsaf Cyffordd Twnnel Hafren**
Severn Tunnel Junction

Circular walk of **5km**

The walk takes approximately **2 hours**

Ordnance Survey maps: **OS Explorer EXP154**

Grid reference at start point: **425872**

Countryside Code. Please respect property and livestock when walking footpaths. Leave gates and property as you find them and dispose of rubbish appropriately. Take particular care to avoid road hazards. Thank you.

Rheolau Cefn Gwlad. Byddwch cystal â pharchu eiddo a da byw wrth gerdded ar lwybrau troed. Caewch gatiâu a gwaredwch ar ysbwriel yn briodol. Cymerwch ofal arbennig i osgoi perygl ar yr heol. Diolch.