

Cloddiadau **Meillionydd** 2010-11

Meillionydd Excavations 2010-11

Kate Waddington
Raimund Karl

With a short story written by
Alistair J.P. Sims
inspired by the excavations



FELINŪCHAF

Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

Cefnogwyd gan
Y Loteri Genedlaethol
Iwry Gronfa Dreftadaeth y Loteri



Research Context

This second excavation season at the double ringwork enclosure of Meillionydd, near Rhiw, is aiming to produce additional information on the nature of these hilltop monuments, which are largely confined to the Llŷn Peninsula. Despite having some of the best prehistoric settlements and hillforts in Wales, the archaeology of this area remains poorly understood. The emergence and development of monumental foci, such as the hillforts and ringworks, remain particularly enigmatic. Whilst displaying a large variety of forms, characteristics, size and chronological sequences, these monuments were the focus for extensive settlement and gathering practices. Their creation required substantial resources and considerable human labour, creating networks of debt and obligation between different groups, and thereby new communities. They also indicate that attachments to specific places became important in the first millennium BC.

North Wales is special, because early phases of hillfort construction occur already in the Late Bronze Age, such as on The Breiddin in Powys, Moel y Gaer Rhosemor in Clwyd and Castell Odo in Gwynedd. The latter belongs to a poorly understood group of monuments concentrated on the Llŷn Peninsula (see Figure 1), termed ‘weak double ringworks’. These are located on low hilltops and consist of two circular concentric banks with internal roundhouses. They are likely to have been occupied by several family groups, and it seems likely that they also were places where larger communities gathered seasonally, when specialised activities or events were carried out, such as artefact production, ceremony and feasting. The enclosures have parallels with the artefact-rich Late Bronze Age ringwork enclosures of eastern England, such as Mucking North Ring and Springfield Lyons. Furthermore, the curvilinear shapes of the enclosures are similar to other dated sites on the Llŷn and suggest that some may even have been initially occupied as early as the second millennium BC (e.g. Sarn

Cyd-destun yr Ymchwil

Nod yr ail dymor hwn o gloddio yn y lloc cylchfur dwbl ym Meillionydd, ger Y Rhiw, yw sicrhau gwybodaeth ychwanegol ynghylch natur yr henebion hyn ar ben brynïau. Mae'r rhain, i raddau helaeth, wedi eu cyfyngu i Benrhyn Llŷn. Er bod rhai o'r anheddau a bryngeyrydd cynhanesyddol gorau i'w cael yng Nghymru, eto mae llawer i'w ddeall eto am archaeoleg yn y maes hwn. Mae llawer o waith i'w wneud eto i ddarganfod sut yn union y daeth henebion, megis y bryngeyrydd a'r cylchfurïau, i fodolaeth a sut y gwnaethant ddatblygu. Er y gwelir amrywiaeth sylweddol yn yr henebion hyn o ran eu ffurfïau, nodweddion, maint a dilyniannau cronolegol, roeddent i gyd yn ganolbwynt anheddiad sylweddol ac arferion ymgasglu. Roedd angen adnoddau a llafur dynol sylweddol i'w creu; roedd hynny, yn ei dro, yn creu rhwydweithïau o ddyled a rhwymedigaethau rhwng gwahanol grwpïau, ac felly'n ffurfio cymunedau newydd. Maent yn dangos hefyd fod cysylltiadau â manau penodol wedi dod yn bwysig yn y mileniwm cyntaf CC.

Mae Gogledd Cymru'n arbennig, oherwydd roedd camau cynnar o adeiladu bryngeyrydd eisoes yn digwydd yn yr Oes Efydd Ddiweddar, megis yn Y Breiddin ym Mhowys, Moel y Gaer, Rhosemor yng Nghlwyd a Chastell Odo yng Ngwynedd. Perthyn yr olaf i grŵp o henebion sydd wedi'u crynhoi ar Benrhyn Llŷn (gweler Ffigur 1). Nid oes llawer o wybodaeth am y rhain ac fe'u gelwir yn 'gylchfurïau dwbl gwan'. Mae'r rhain wedi eu lleoli ar ben brynïau isel ac yn cynnwys dau glawdd consentrig crwn gyda thai crynion o'u mewn. Mae'n debygol bod nifer o grwpïau o deuluoedd yn byw ynddynt, ac mae'n ymddangos yn debygol hefyd eu bod yn fannau lle roedd cymunedau mwy yn ymgasglu'n dymhorol, pan oedd gweithgareddau neu ddigwyddiadau arbenigol yn digwydd, megis cynhyrchu arteffactau, dathlu seremonïau a gwledda. Mae tebygrwydd rhwng y llocïau hyn â'r llocïau cylchfur yr Oes Efydd Ddiweddar a

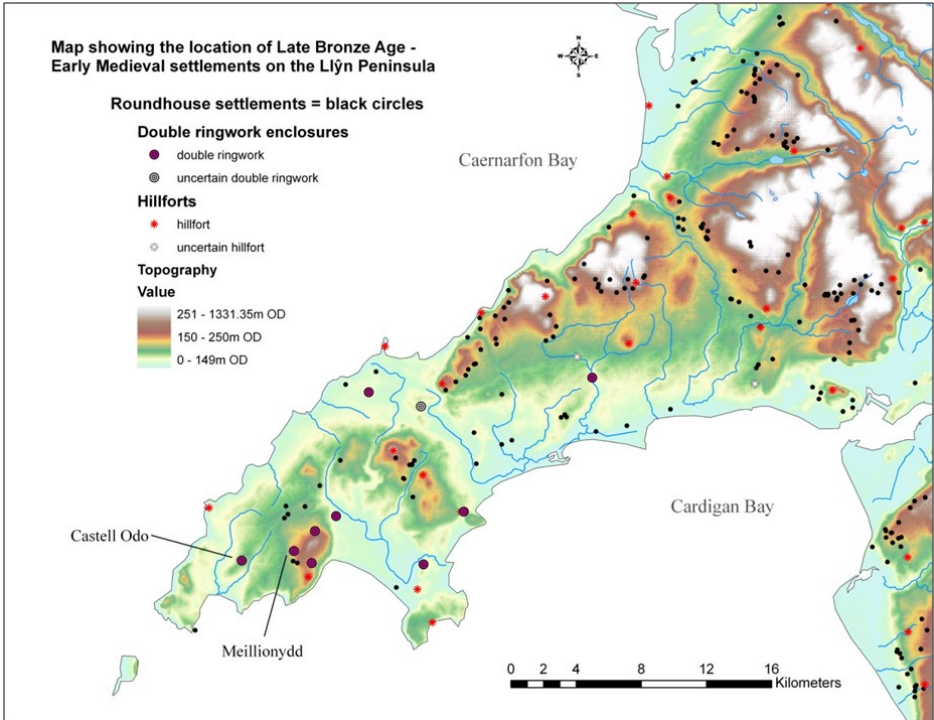


Figure 1 Map of the Llŷn Peninsula, showing the location of sites mentioned in the text as well as the location of all other later prehistoric hillfort and settlement sites.

Ffigur 1 Map o Benrhyn Llŷn, yn dangos lleoliad safleoedd a nodir yn y testun, yn ogystal â lleoliad holl safleoedd bryngeyrydd ac anheddau cynhanesyddol eraill diweddarach.



Reconstruction drawing of Mucking North Ring, Essex (Parker Pearson 2005, fig. 106).

Dyluniad yn ail-greu Mucking North Ring, Essex (Parker Pearson 2005, fig. 106).

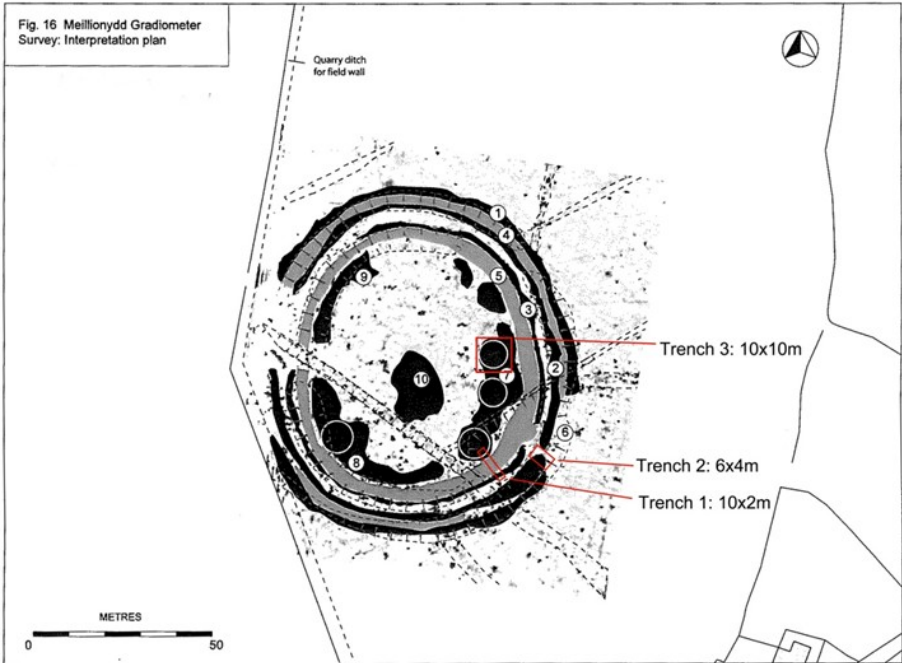


Figure 2 Interpretive plan of the geophysical survey of Meillionydd, Rhiw, showing the position of the trial trenches opened in 2010 (adapted from Smith and Hopewell 2007, Figure 10).

Ffigur 2 Cynllun deongliadol o'r arolwg geoffisegol ym Meillionydd, Rhiw, yn dangos safle'r traeniau arbrofol a agorwyd yn 2010 (addaswyd o Smith a Hopewell 2007, Ffigur 10).



Meillionydd
2010:
Trench 1
Traen 1

Mellteyrn).

The double ringwork enclosures offer a unique and as yet largely untapped resource for studying the origins of settlement monumentality in the Late Bronze Age and Earliest Iron Age (c. 1000 – 600 BC). Despite the presence of ten double ringwork sites on the Llŷn Peninsula, only one has been excavated prior to this project – Castell Odo. This site produced a rare and important assemblage of ceramics dating to c. ninth to seventh centuries BC, which were largely deposited within a dark earth artefact-rich deposit (or midden). This was sealed beneath the earlier Iron Age bank (the latter feature was constructed c. sixth – fifth centuries BC; Figure 2) and was defined by a palisade boundary with internal timber roundhouses. It is possible that a similar sequence of activity may be present at Meillionydd.

Meillionydd was previously the focus of geophysical survey work by George Smith and Dave Hopewell, Gwynedd Archaeological Trust. As well as confirming the presence of a circular double enclosure, about 105m by 85m, with an entrance to the east, the survey was notable for the strength of magnetic anomalies encountered (indicates occupation practices). The inner rampart is partly defined by a band of intense activity that includes a number of roundhouses (Figure 2).

The excavations at Meillionydd are aiming to test whether the site has Late Bronze Age origins and is associated with occupation deposits, similar to those recovered from Castell Odo, as well as to:

- gather data on the construction and phasing of the enclosure boundaries;
- assess the sequence of occupation practices within the interior of the enclosure;
- produce dateable materials and provide a chronological sequence

geir yn nwyrain Lloegr ac sy'n cynnwys llawer o arteffactau, megis Mucking North Ring a Springfield Lyons. Ymhellach, mae siapiau cromlinog y llociau yn debyg i safleoedd eraill yn Llŷn sydd wedi cael eu dyddio ac efallai fod pobl wedi ymsefydlu mewn rhai ohonynt mor fuan â'r ail fileniwm CC (e.e. Sarn Mellteyrn). Mae'r llociau cylchfur dwbl yn rhoi cyfle unigryw i astudio dechreuadau aneddiadau yn yr Oes Efydd Ddiweddar a'r Oes Haearn Gynharaf (c. 1000 – 600 CC). Er bod deg safle cylchfur dwbl ar Benrhyn Llŷn, dim ond un oedd wedi cael ei gloddio cyn y project hwn – sef Castell Odo. Rhoddodd y safle hwn gasgliad prin a phwysig o cerameg yn dyddio o'r nawfed i'r seithfed ganrif CC. Roedd y rhain wedi eu gadael i raddau helaeth mewn dyddodiad o bridd tywyll (neu domen sbwriel) gyfoethog o ran arteffactau. Seliwyd hwn o dan y clawdd Oes Haearn Ddiweddarach (adeiladwyd y nodwedd ddiwethaf tua'r chweched – bumed ganrif CC; Ffigur 2) ac fe'i diffiniwyd gan derfyn palisâd gyda thai crynion pren o'i fewn. Mae'n bosibl bod dilyniant tebyg o weithgaredd i'w gael ym Meillionydd.

Cynhaliwyd arolwg geoffisegol a gwaith cloddio o'r blaen ym Meillionydd gan George Smith a Dave Hopewell, Ymddiriedolaeth Archeolegol Gwynedd. Yn ogystal â chadarnhau presenoldeb lloc crwn dwbl, tua 105m wrth 85m, gyda mynedfa i'r dwyrain, un o brif nodweddion yr arolwg oedd cryfder yr anomaleddau magnetig a welwyd (a oedd yn dangos arferion anheddu). Diffinnir y rhagfur mewnol yn rhannol gan fand o weithgaredd dwys sy'n cynnwys nifer o dai crynion (Ffigur 2).

Nod y cloddiadau ym Meillionydd yw profi a yw dechreuadau'r safle'n perthyn i'r Oes Efydd Ddiweddar ac yn gysylltiedig â dyddodion anheddu, tebyg i'r rhai a gafwyd o Gastell Odo, yn ogystal â:

- chasglu data ar adeiladu terfynau'r lloc a'r gwahanol gamau

for this site, as well as other double ringwork enclosures in the area.

Results of the 2010 excavations (Season 1), Bangor University

The first season of excavations at Meillionydd was carried out by Bangor University in July 2010. The excavations confirmed the presence of earth and stone banks and revealed that the banks were accompanied by quarry hollows. Within the enclosure there was evidence for a lengthy sequence of occupation which possibly spans most of the first millennium BC, indicated by multiple sequences of timber and stone roundhouses which were built on the same locations. The magnetic readings encountered in the geophysics appear to be associated with occupation activities in the form of roundhouses, and also spreads of burnt stone which are associated with abandonment activities, when the ramparts were slighted and the buildings infilled with rubble and burnt stone (possibly in the later Iron Age period, between the 4th – 1st centuries BC).

Trench 1

Trench 1 examined a narrow slot through the inner bank and ditch/quarry hollow in the south-eastern part of the enclosure. The sequence of roundhouses at the north-western end of the trench consisted of a complex of postholes and gullies, indicating one or two timber structures, which were followed by the construction of a stone-walled roundhouse, c. 5m in diameter. The inner bank, situated to the east, was partially set within a shallow linear trench which contained an alignment of deliberately placed large boulders. The sequence at the south-east end is represented by a series of boundary ditches. The settlement was first enclosed by a narrow U-shaped ditch. This was later truncated by the creation of a shallow, wide flat-bottomed quarry hollow, located immediately in front of the outer bank in Trench 2 (and presumably associated with its construction). The rubble fills of the

adeiladu;

- asesu dilyniant arferion anheddu y tu mewn i'r lloc;
- cynhyrchu deunyddiau y gellir eu dyddio a darparu dilyniant cronolegol ar gyfer y safle hwn, yn ogystal â llociau cylchfur dwbl eraill yn yr ardal.

Canlyniadau cloddiadau 2010 (Tymor 1), Prifysgol Bangor

Cafodd y tymor cyntaf o gloddiadau ym Meillionydd ei wneud gan Brifysgol Bangor yng Ngorffennaf 2010. Cadarnhaodd y cloddiadau bresenoldeb cloddiau pridd a cherrig a dangoswyd bod pantiau cloddio ger y cloddiau. O fewn y lloc roedd tystiolaeth o ddilyniant maith o anheddu, a oedd mae'n bosibl yn rhychwantu'r rhan fwyaf o'r mileniwm cyntaf CC. Dangoswyd hyn gan ddilyniannau lluosog o dai crynion pren a cherrig a adeiladwyd yn yr un manau. Mae'n ymddangos bod y darlenniadau magnetig a welir yn yr arolwg geoffisegol yn gysylltiedig â gweithgareddau anheddu ar ffurf tai crynion, ond hefyd ceir cerrig llosg sy'n gysylltiedig â gweithgareddau gadael y safle, pan dynnwyd y rhagfuriau i lawr a llenwi'r adeiladau â rwbel a cherrig llosg (efallai yng nghyfnod yr Oes Haearn Ddiweddarach, rhwng y bedwaredd i'r ganrif gyntaf CC).

Traen 1

Roedd Traen 1 yn archwilio slot cul drwy'r clawdd mewnol a'r ffos/pant cloddio yn rhan dde-ddwyreiniol y lloc. Roedd y dilyniant o dai crynion ym mhen gogledd-orllewinol y draen yn cynnwys nifer o dyllau pyst a rhigolau, a oedd yn dynodi un neu ddau o adeileddau pren, a ddilynwyd gan adeiladu tŷ crwn gyda waliau cerrig, tua 5m mewn diamedr. Roedd y clawdd mewnol, wedi'i leoli i'r dwyrain, wedi'i osod yn rhannol o fewn traen llinol fas a oedd yn cynnwys aliniad o gerrig mawr wedi'u gosod yn fwriadol. Cynrychiolir y dilyniant yn y pen de-ddwyreiniol gan gyfres o ffosydd terfyn.

N130
E512

All phases - projected roundhouses

N130
E528

N124
E512

N124
E528

N118
E512

N118
E528

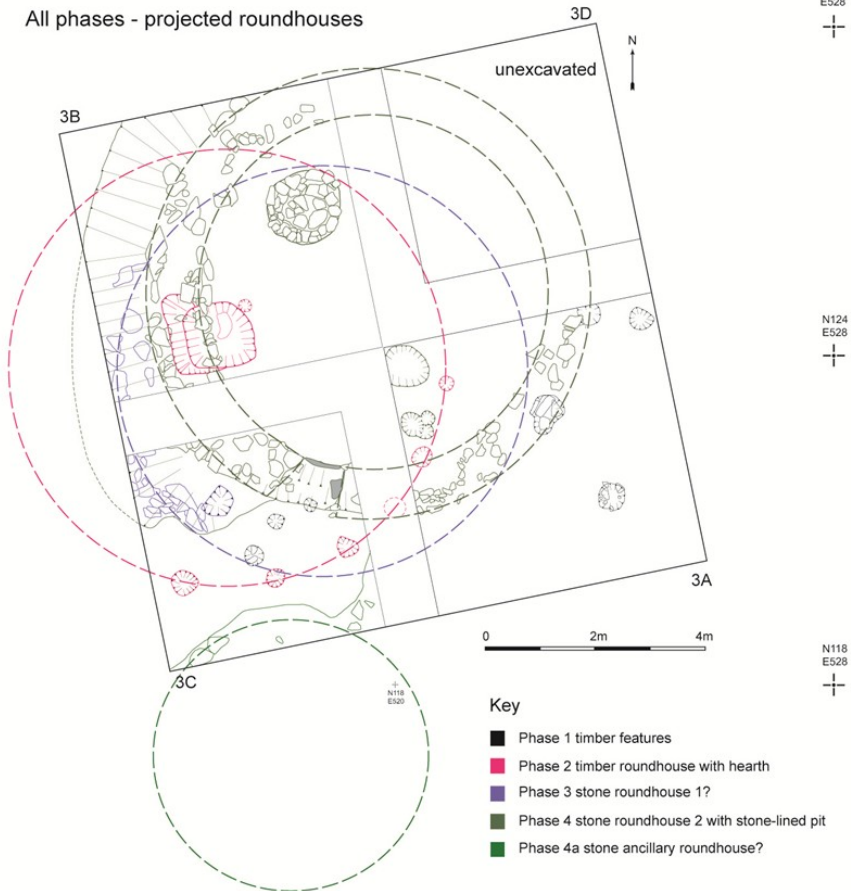


Figure 3 Plan of the sequence of timber and stone roundhouses in Trench 3, as excavated in 2010.

Ffigur 3 Cynllun y dilyniant o dai crynion pren a cherrig yn Nhraen 3, fel y cloddiwyd yn 2010.



Figure 4 east-facing shot of the inner facing of the latest stone roundhouse wall, which seals the central hearth of the first timber roundhouse.

Ffigur 4 Top; llun yn wynebu'r dwyrain o wyneb mewnol wal y tŷ crwn cerrig diweddaraf, sy'n selio aelwyd ganolog y tŷ crwn pren cyntaf.



Meillionydd 2010
Trench 1
Traen 1

quarry hollow suggest that it was deliberately back-filled, possibly during the abandonment of the site when the roundhouses and bank structures were destroyed.

Trench 2

Trench 2 investigated a slot through the outer bank on the south-eastern side of the enclosure, near the entranceway. The bank was constructed from a simple dump of earth and stone, which contained some burnt stones, and inner facing stones were identified. This structure had been badly disturbed and truncated. Some interesting features were identified underneath and just in front of the bank in the south-western corner of the trench – these features were exposed but left unexcavated. They consist of three postholes and a curvilinear wall foundation, which may either be associated with the bank or possibly represent the existence of pre-bank occupation structures.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was positioned over an area of magnetic enhancement in the eastern part of the interior. A sequence of at least two timber roundhouses and three stone roundhouses were identified within the area, alongside the disturbed remains of the inner bank (Figure 3). An early timber roundhouse is represented by an arc of postholes which appear to have defined a circular building, c. 8m in diameter, which was associated with a central hearth. At least one, or possibly two, stone roundhouses were then constructed on the same spot, and situated within a hollow identified along the north-western side of the trench, which created a flat platform or terrace. The latest roundhouse was c. 8m in diameter, with an entrance to the southeast. The building was created from a thick stone-faced wall with an earth or turf core (Figure 4). Within the roundhouse, a large stone-lined pit was identified, and two stone spindlewhorls were also recovered from disturbed floor layers.

Amgaewyd yr anheddiad i ddechrau gan ffos gul siâp U. Byrhawyd hon yn ddiweddarach drwy greu pant cloddio bas a llydan gyda gwaelod fflat iddo, wedi'i leoli yn union o flaen y clawdd allanol yn Nhraen 2 (ac yn gysylltiedig mae'n debyg â'i adeiladu). Mae'r rwbel sy'n llenwi'r pant cloddio'n awgrymu ei fod wedi cael ei llenwi'n fwriadol, mae'n bosibl pan adawyd y safle pan gafodd y tai crynion a'r cloddiau amgylchynol eu dinistrio.

Traen 2

Roedd Traen 2 yn ymchwilio i slot drwy'r clawdd allanol ar ochr dde-ddwyreiniol y lloc, ger y fynedfa. Adeiladwyd y clawdd o lwyth syml o bridd a cherrig, a oedd yn cynnwys rhai cerrig llosg, a gwelwyd rhai cerrig yn wynebu at i mewn. Roedd yr adeiledd hwn wedi ei niweidio'n ddrwg a'i fyrhau. Gwelwyd rhai nodweddion diddorol o dan y clawdd ac yn union o'i flaen yng nghornel dde-orllewinol y draen – amlygwyd y nodweddion hyn ond fe'u gadawyd heb eu cloddio. Maent yn cynnwys tri o dyllau pyst a sylfaen wal gromlinog; gall hon fod naill ai'n gysylltiedig â'r clawdd neu efallai'n dangos adeileddau a oedd yn bodoli cyn adeiladu'r clawdd.

Traen 3

Tyllwyd Traen 3 mewn ardal lle cafwyd darlenniadau magnetig uwch yn rhan ddwyreiniol tu mewn y lloc. Gwelwyd dilyniant o fan leiaf ddau dŷ crwn pren a thri thŷ crwn carreg yn yr ardal hon, wrth ochr gweddillion y clawdd mewnol (Ffigur 3). Cynrychiolir tŷ crwn pren cynnar gan arc o dyllau pyst sy'n ymddangos eu bod yn diffinio adeilad crwn, c. 8m mewn diamedr, a oedd yn gysylltiedig ag aelwyd ganolog. Yna cafodd o leiaf un, neu efallai ddau, o dai crynion cerrig eu hadeiladu yn yr un fan, a'u lleoli mewn pant a nodwyd ar hyd ochr ogledd-orllewinol y draen, a oedd yn creu llwyfan neu deras gwastad. Roedd y tŷ crwn diweddaraf c. 8m mewn diamedr, gyda mynedfa i'r de-ddwyrain. Lluniwyd yr adeilad o wal drwchus wedi'i wynebu â cherrig gyda llanw o bridd neu dyweirch iddi (Ffigur 4). Yn y tŷ crwn,

Research programme and methodology (Season 2; July 2011)

The second season of excavation aims to reopen and extend the trenches opened on the eastern side of the enclosure (Figure 5), so that the excavations of all archaeological deposits and features may be completed, thus enabling the sequences to be fully explored and understood.

1. Trench 1 will be extended to the southeast, in order to excavate the remainder of the quarry hollow and to assess its relationship with the outer bank and outer ditch. The north-western end of the trench will be reopened and extended to expose a new a larger area of the inner bank and roundhouses.
2. The south-western corner of Trench 2 will be extended so that the occupation features identified beneath the bank may be investigated.
3. Trench 3 will be reopened, enabling the excavation of the roundhouses to be fully completed.

Acknowledgements

The exhibition and open day events and activities are being funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and run in association with Dafydd Hughes at Menter y Felin Uchaf and Arwel Jones of the Llŷn Landscape Partnership.

We are extremely grateful the landowners of Meillionydd, the Thomas family at Meillionydd Mawr and Meillionydd Bach, who have generously hosted the excavations and activities and have been tremendously supportive of the work.

A great many thanks are due to the excavation team who have made this work possible.

The excavations are funded by Bangor University, Cardiff University, the University of Wales and the Prehistoric Society.

cafwyd twll mawr wedi'i leinio â cherrig, a hefyd darganfuwyd dwy sidell garreg dan haenau'r llawr.

Rhaglen a methodoleg ymchwil (Tymor 2; Gorffennaf 2011)

Amcan yr ail dymor o gloddio yw ailagor ac ymestyn y traeniau a agorwyd ar ochr ddwyreiniol y lloc (Ffigur 5), fel y gellir cwblhau cloddiadau o'r holl ddyddodion a nodweddion archeolegol. Trwy hynny gall y dilyniannau gael eu harchwilio'n llawn a'u deall.

1. Caiff Traen 1 ei hymestyn i'r de-ddwyrain, er mwyn cloddio gweddill y pant cloddio, ac i asesu beth yw ei berthynas â'r clawdd allanol a'r ffos allanol. Ail-agorir pen gogledd-orllewinol y draen a'i hymestyn i amlygu ardal newydd a mwy o'r clawdd mewnol a'r tai crynion.
2. Estynnir cornel dde-orllewinol Traen 2 fel y gellir ymchwilio i'r nodweddion anheddu a ganfuwyd o dan y clawdd.
3. Ail-agorir Traen 3 gan alluogi i gloddio'r tai crynion gael ei gwblhau'n llwyr.

Diolchiadau

Cyllidir yr arddangosfa a'r gweithgareddau dyddiau agored gan Gronfa Treftadaeth y Loteri ac fe'u cynhelir mewn cydweithrediad a Dafydd Hughes o Fenter y Felin Uchaf ac Arwel Jones o Bartneriaeth Tirlun Llŷn.

Rydym yn hynod ddiolchgar i berchnogion Meillionydd, y teulu Thomas ym Meillionydd Mawr a Meillionydd Bach, sydd wedi caniatáu i'r cloddiadau a'r gweithgareddau hyn gael eu cynnal ac sydd wedi rhoi cefnogaeth eithriadol i'r gwaith.

Mae llawer o ddiolch yn ddyledus i'r tîm cloddio a wnaeth y gwaith hwn yn bosibl.

Cyllidir y cloddiadau gan Brifysgol Bangor, Prifysgol Caerdydd, Prifysgol Cymru a'r *Prehistoric Society*.

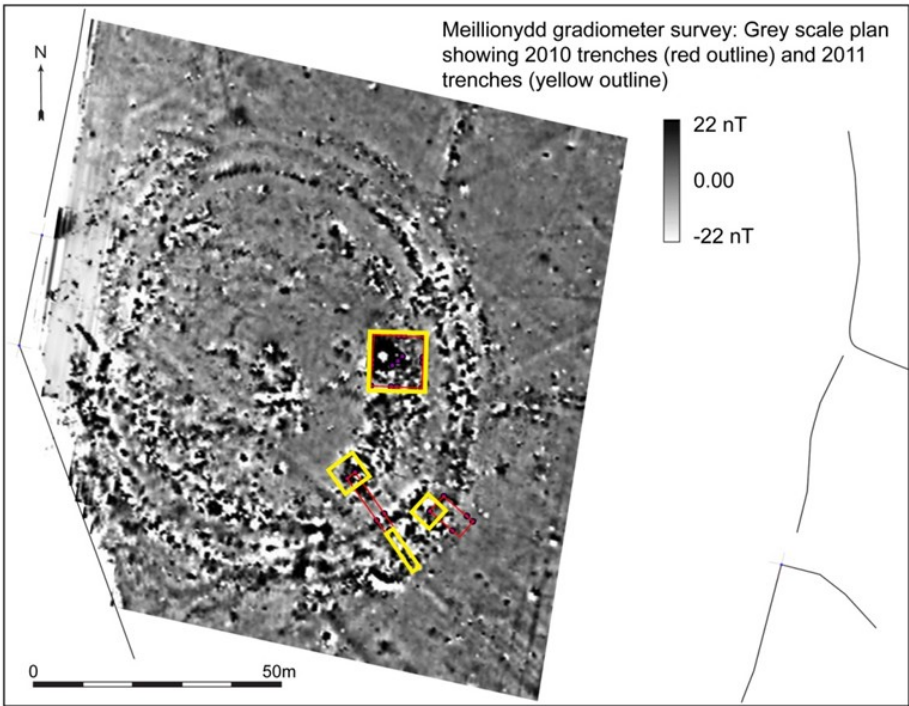


Figure 5 Geophysical survey of Meillionydd, Rhiw, showing the position of the trial trenches opened in 2010 (red) and trenches to be opened in 2011 (blue) (adapted from Smith and Hopewell 2007, Figure 10).

Ffigur 5 Arolwg geoffisegol ym Meillionydd, Rhiw, yn dangos safle'r traenau arbrofol a agorwyd yn 2010 (coch) a'r traenau i'w hagar yn 2011 (glas) (addaswyd o Smith a Hopewell 2011, Ffigur 10).



Meillionydd 2010
Trench 3A
Traen 3A

The Bronze Magician

Alistair J.P. Sims

She spins, ever spinning; the spindlewhorl twirls, like a dancer pirouetting. It is her beginning. The undulating spindlewhorl weaves the story. The first threads are woven into the tapestry of life. It is her beginning; it is time to listen and to be enshrouded into threads of lives past.

Shadows swirled overhead, as the light of the morning sun rose unsteadily to his feet, and eventually at full height, looked down upon the landscape and with his face turned downwards, beamed. A clammy breeze drifted along, but as it moved over the rolling hills and up towards the highest peak, the air cooled and almost gained a chilling bite. Just below the icy winds, and near a Hill-fort was one of the three enclosures, which dominated the hilltops of the peninsular. The breeze was cool but not of a bitterness that dominated the upper heights of the hills. The air drifted along a stone embankment, whispering against the stone guardian until it was able to drift through the entrance, a timber framed gateway, which was attired in many colours; shades of blue, green and red cloth wrapped around the posts. As the zephyr rushed through the entrance it swirled in every direction, filing through the roundhouses that criss-crossed the enclosure. Wrapping and warping around the structures, the air finally dwindled to stillness. Only the tiniest of breezes were left drifting aimlessly through the settlement.

The Metal Magician Gofannon mirrored the wind, up the hills and along side the stone embankment, where burnt stones of many hues, rested in relaxed retirement for a noble service – the protection of the settlement. They came from the flames to be shattered by cool water, heating the liquid in leather containers, and now used in the splendid art of construction. Gofannon saw, as he followed the wind, glowing from the embankment, pinks that ranged from crimson to the palest rose. He noticed the sparkling of quartz, which brought a magical overtone to the already glimmering guardian. Gofannon smiled, as he walked through the entrance, his eyes glancing at the darting fabric that wrapped the timbers, which flapped in the wind. It was good to home, he thought, to be back with his family.

As he moved through the settlement, like the zephyr, Gofannon strolled around the roundhouses. He watched a community that was vigorously at work, preparing the feast of the ceremony of marriage that had taken place earlier, which he now had the good fortune to give the blessing and the gift giving. He breathed in the acrid and cloying scents of wood smoke that mixed with the sweet and mouth-watering aroma of mutton turning upon a spit. He heard the sounds of the quern stones grinding and grating against

wheat. Cauldrons over flickering flames, were heard to bubble away, like a base note in the melody of the settlement.

He saw the men seated beside the spits, turning the meat every so often, joking, conversing, playing Artek Rhiau, a game of strategy consisting of stone counters. He always enjoyed the game, Gofannon thought, and noticed that the men were attired in their finest clothes, in brown or green warm woollen close fitting trousers, and upon their torsos lay long tunics of a variety of colours, from blues, greens and reds. Cloaks of sheepskin adorned their shoulders. All had cloak clasps of varying quality; most wore ones of bronze, although there were a few exceptions. The married men had ingots of bronze strapped to their arms. At their belts were Iron single bladed knife hung sheathed in sheepskin. Those yet to be wedded wore ingots of Tin, and a knife of bronze.

Gofannon observed that away from the impracticalness of the men, as the females of the settlement consistently observed to him, women went about their business and continued to prepare their share of the feast, which would celebrate the new union of man and woman. As their hands busied with practiced movements, they were free to chatter amongst themselves. The women were clothed in long ankle length tunics, which hid close fitting trousers, and of the same colour to the men's garments. They also wore cloaks of sheepskin fixed in place by bronze clasps, and those who were married wore ingots of bronze, while the women yet to be wedded had ones of Copper. With the laughter of the men and the chatter of the women, an atmosphere of gladness and good cheer engulfed the settlement. Gofannon soaked up the ambience, revelling in it.

Gofannon soon came to the bride's Tadogi's roundhouse, not far away from the initial celebrations. He looked at the roundhouse, as he prepared the ground for metalworking, which after the blessing he would perform. The structure had many phases of use, rebuilt successively in timber and now in stone. A thick stone-faced wall with an earthen core created the present construction, and outside the stone roundhouse were the deteriorated old timbers of an older phase. Before he would start his work, he would make himself known, and so he entered the roundhouse.

Inside the construction was a large stone lined pit covered with pelts of sheepskin. Away from this and close to the inner walls of the roundhouse were more stone creations. There were a number of slate grey pot boilers, which dominated the left of the building and beside this was a pelt of sheepskin with a number of small objects, a number of whittle-tang hafted knives of iron, as well as, a couple of polishing stones. Beside these were a collection of stone hammers, pounders and grinders. Blue veined, they sat

upon the sheepskin with imperialist haughtiness at the speckled iron knives next to them. Away from the proud stones were two spindlewhorls, one half finished. The second was worn with use, and a half finished length of newly created woollen fabric was attached to the object. The fully formed but dilapidated spindlewhorl glowed with a fervent smugness at the unfinished object besides him, laughing at the items disability of service. All these games of pettiness subsided by the glare of a single hammerstone, which lay upon his own pelt of sheepskin, like a high king disciplining his subject, the golden and storm hued rock took the silent stares and murderous whispers of the fellow objects without a commotion or fear.

Gofannon couldn't help but chuckle to himself, as he imagined the personalities of the objects, and he watched the bride Roisin, as she picked up the spindlewhorl with the half-finished fabric, and began to finish the cloth that her sister had started earlier. She was oblivious of him, and Gofannon gave a small smile. He flicked his eyes towards her Mamau, who sat in the roundhouse with the rest of the female Tras, and inclined his head in acknowledgment before he left the building.

Gofannon, as he moved outside the roundhouse quickly dug a small hole, with his iron knife, which was sheathed in goatskin on his left hip. Now sat in the palm of his right hand, he shaped the small creator with the knife into a neat circular pit, depositing a small earthen bank around the crevice. He then called for two young lads, who carried his bronze casting kit, along with his skin bellows. He soon went back to his work, preparing the pit for the melting and casting of bronze, and his eyes glazed over at instinctive movements, his mind was elsewhere, recalling his youth. Gofannon now had the pit aflame with charcoal, with a lad huffing and puffing he worked the bellows. Gofannon looked away from the turning pit, his eyes found Roisin, as she stepped out of roundhouse.

'It is now time for your and Llew's blessing, and for you to be officially the daughter of Lugus,' Gofannon smiled, and moved to embrace Roisin. His smile grew brighter as he remembered Roisin as a young girl, always placing daisy chains upon his head.

Roisin couldn't quite believe what was happening, everything had gone so quickly. She was just able to keep her composure, before Llew joined her outside the roundhouse. The newlyweds took each other's hand and looked at each other. Llew smiled, if a little ungainly, while Roisin smiled shyly. Their hands squeezed each other's, as they watched the people of the settlement to form around them. On Llew's right was his Tadogi and Mamau, while Roisin had her parents on her left. The elders came to stand in front of them, and leading them was the Head Tras, Idnerth. Next to him was Metal Magician

Gofannon, holding a number of metal objects in his hands.

Llew saw Idnerth smile at him and Roisin, and then speak.

‘We are gathered her for the blessing of Llew son of Lugus, and Roisin Merch of Emyr,’ ‘now I leave it for Metal Magician Gofannon to complete the ceremony,’ said Idnerth, as he stepped aside to join the elders.

The Metal magician gazed at the crowd and the back to the couple.

‘From Tyn and Copr you sprang, innocent to each other,’ and as he said this Lugus moved to remove his son’s Tin ingots from his wrist, and Almedha also moved to remove her daughters Copper pin.

‘These two in union form Efydd, the signifier of union, marking you mutually in purpose,’ Gofannon continued, and he walked towards the couple, placing a bronze ingot that their parents had denoted, as a bride price, in each other’s outstretched hand. ‘These will be melted down after the blessing to create new pins to represent your life together,’ he atoned.

‘Together you keep each other, and protect each other, thus Haearn shows your promise to do so,’ Gofannon cried out.

The Metal Magician then gazed at Llew.

‘Will you son of Lugus protect your wife?’

‘Yes,’ answered Llew, without thought.

‘Then Haearn protect you both,’ called Gofannon, as he handed to Llew an Iron knife, sheathed in sheepskin.

‘In any union, one must have knowledge of each other, to better understand each other, thus you must guide each other,’ said the Metal Magician.

‘Together you will be today, but how long will that last with the frailties of age? With Aur you may grow old together, and so your union will never fade,’ stated Gofannon, as he gave small ingots of gold to the couple.

Metal Magician Gofannon finished the ceremony, looking at the Tras of the settlement. He moved his hands to the heavens and shouted out for all to hear.

‘From Tyn and Copr, together in Efydd, protected with Haearn, understanding and life together, with Aur. Bless these two, Llew and Roisin, as they start their great journey together.’

The cheer that erupted from the crowd and reverberated over the settlement, drowning anything else that Metal Magician Gofannon may have said. Gofannon turned to look at Llew and was proud of his Nephew.

She spins, ever spinning; the spindlewhorl twirls, like a dancer pirouetting. The end had come. The undulating spindlewhorl has finished the story. The last threads are woven into the tapestry of life. It is her new beginning; it is time to contemplate and to be resurrected back into threads of lives present.