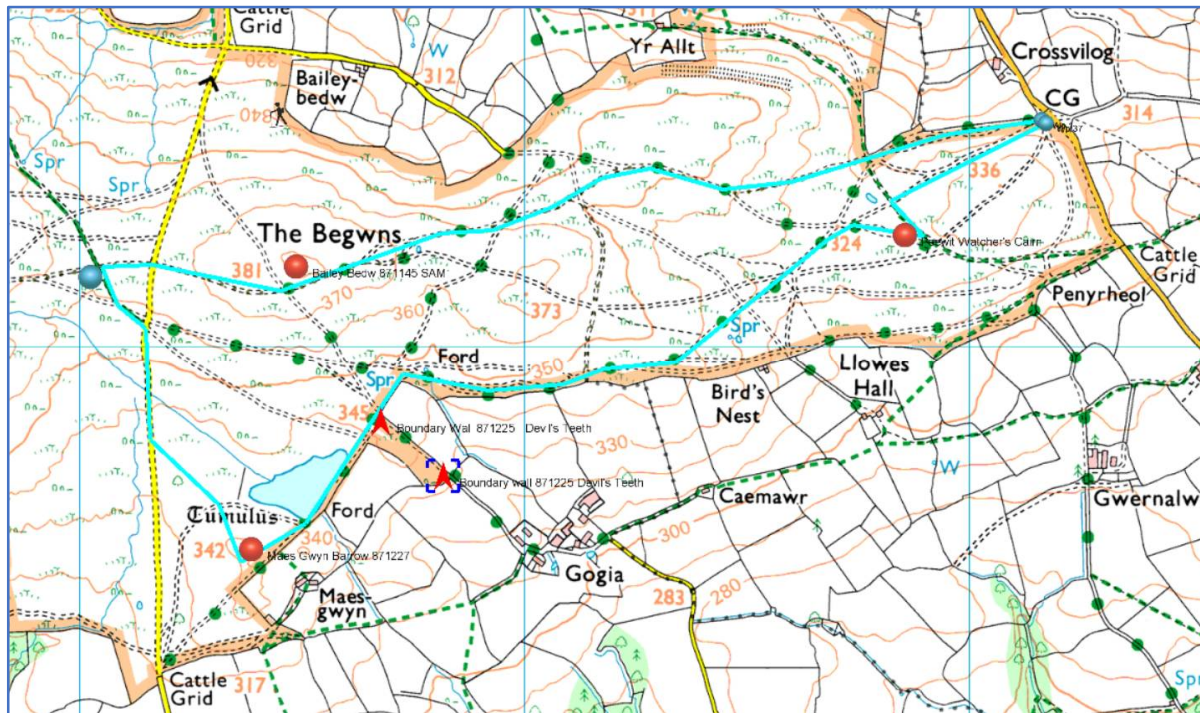


Radnorshire Society Field Section joined with Painscastle & District Local Interest group to enjoy a Begwns Walk on Saturday December 19th 2020.

Present: Elsa Harflett, Bronwen Jenkins, Wendy Ozols, John Price, Jenny Francis, James & Jenny Martin, Wayne & Ann Mathews, Tim Francis, David Price, Jenny Hodge, Michael & Denise Fordyce, Laura & Kevin Woodside Jones, Terry Couzens, Baz Capsey, Mike Reynolds, Mo Lloyd



After parking at the car park on the Begwns on the road from Painscastle to Clyro [SO 18166 44508], we proceeded in a westerly direction. The Begwns, which was part of the Maesllwch estate, was gifted by the De Winton family to the National Trust in 1992.

We walked along the ridge to Bailey Bedw round barrow/ring cairn. This is prehistoric and has been dated to the Bronze Age. It was excavated in 1930 by Colwyn Vulliamy, who thought it was a hut circle. He cut a trench east-west across the centre of the cairn. He reported finding a ring and a sword near the outer edge of the cairn, which he thought was Saxon. The sword is now in Cardiff museum and it is thought to be Iron Age. We also talked about various encroachments on the hill, with one called Smokey Squire's Castle; this was popularly thought to be a 'Ty unnos'.

We continued on across the road to one of the interesting pools on the Begwns. This was formed when spare ammunition, which had been stored at Gwernyfed during the war, was detonated. This ruptured the bed-rock allowing a spring-line to create a small pool. Then we returned to the road and walked to the Maes Gwyn Bronze Age round barrow, which is a prominent feature in the landscape. It is 1.8 metres high, but there is a huge hole in the centre where it has been robbed. This was the first of the two excavations by Colwyn Vulliamy in 1930, although he reported that other than some burnt bone there was nothing of interest. There is some well-constructed stone walling forming the boundary of the hill at this point.

We then walked past the Fish Pool, which is sometimes called Monk's Pool, and discussed whether it had a link with the Cistercian house of Abbeycwmhir, as there were several granges belonging to that monastery at Clyro, Brilley and Gabalfa. So, this would be a likely route for the monks travelling to and from the Abbey. The pool had become silted up by the 1980s and was re-instated by Henry & Hadyn

Milward from Gogia farm. Further on there are large stone slabs forming the boundary of the common and these are known locally as the Devil's Teeth.

We followed the boundary for a while and then headed back to our starting point after passing the Peewit Watcher's Cairn. This pile of stones was built in the mid-1990s by a couple from Clyro, Mr & Mrs Mortimer. At its maximum it was over a metre in height, however the animals have rubbed on it and so it is now quite small. There are several interesting ponds on the Begwns containing pillwort, fairy shrimps and the three native varieties of newt. We returned to the cars after an interesting exploration of some of the archaeology of the Begwns.



The "Bomb Pool" on the Begwns