

Bryn y Môr Stone Head

This intriguing carved stone head was discovered whilst rebuilding a dry stone wall on Bryn y Môr farm near Valley during the 1950s. Weighing 32kg, it was created from a single boulder of coarse sandstone. It is difficult to determine the origin of the stone as large boulders can be found within the glacial deposits that cover most of Anglesey.

A circular mortise hole is located at the base of the head, allowing it to be placed securely in a prominent position, whilst the rounded rear suggests that it was meant to be viewed from all directions. It has a pecked finish to its head, possibly indicating hair. Below the chin there is a distinct feature, running from one side to the other.

Carved stone heads are difficult to date, as they are rarely found in any archaeological context. Most have to be dated stylistically – their features compared to other known examples. Bottom right is an image of a stone head discovered whilst excavating a 4th century Roman temple in Caerwent, Monmouthshire. The two examples below are to be seen in the wall of Llanbedrgoch Church and are likely to be Medieval in date.



Carved Stone Heads, Llanbedrgoch Church

The Bryn y Môr head features almond shaped eyes which have long been associated with early, prehistoric carved stone heads. However, it also has architectural detailing, such as the flat base and support hole that could suggest a later, possibly Medieval date.



Bryn y Môr Stone Head, side view

Caerwent Stone Head, c.4th century



Newport Museum and Art Gallery