

The site is thought to be early medieval, with some claiming it to have been founded by St Cewydd himself in the 6th century.

1803: In *The Scenery, Antiquities and Biography of South Wales collected during two excursions in the year 1803* by Benjamin Heath Malkin, is the following:

‘There are two uncommonly large yew-trees, evidently of great age, but in unimproved luxuriance and preservation, under the shade of which an intelligent clergyman of the neighbourhood informed me, that he had frequently seen sixty couples dancing at Aberedw Feast, on the fourteenth of June. The boughs of the two trees intertwine, and offer ample space for the evolutions of numerous a company within their ample covering.’

Members of the Woolhope Botanical Society visited Aberedw in 1871 and 1891 and described the yews as follows:

1871: ‘First we visited Aberedw churchyard, and examined the grand old yew trees, the largest of which measured 25ft in girth..... to all appearance, a sound and sturdy tree and may live another thousand years, when we hope some active member of the Woolhope Club will again record its measurement.’

1891: ‘Two venerable yew trees in the churchyard are undoubtedly the most ancient living remnants of antiquity here. Their riven hollow trunks, with gnarled excrescences, boughs, and branches, rendered the work of their measurements, at a height of 5ft from the ground, in accordance with the rules of our Club, a matter of such difficulty, that their girth was taken at 3ft from the ground, and was found to be respectively 23ft 2ins and 18ft 6ins’.

Several reports note this churchyard as a place of music making. In *Journey to Llandrindod Wells* (1746) the writer, on reaching the churchyard, found under a yew tree ‘about ten couples dancing to the tune of an indifferent fiddle’.

In Morton’s *Tree Heritage of Britain and Ireland* (1998) we are told that when merrymaking took place in the churchyard ‘musicians played from two tiered rows of benches in the porch and dancing took place between the two big yews’.

1998 Tim Hills: This male/female pair grow on the north side of the churchyard. The female is the larger of the two, NNW of the church. It is a tall hollow tree with a small internal stem. It was possible to record a girth of girth of about 22' beneath the clipped twiggy growth.

1998 Tim Hills



2004 Geoff Garlick



The female yew in 2015 - Paul Wood



The male yew, below, grows NE of the church. In 2004 I recorded a girth of 19' 3" at about 1'. In 2015 Paul Wood noted the rubbish, broken glass and stone piled against the tree. The photo on the right was the only one available due to twiggy growth, low branches and the siting of a shed.

Male yew in 2004



Male yew in 2015



In addition to the two old yews, Paul Wood recorded two younger but well established trees in the churchyard. One grows SW of the church tower and the other west of the tower on the north side.



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