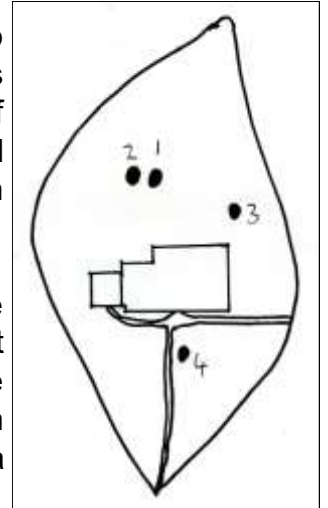


A Roman incised stone is seen in the church porch. Together with font and stoup they provide evidence of Christianity in this area before the Norman Conquest. It is surprising that these immense yews were not noted prior to the Brecon Survey of 1970. Precise recording of the girths of these complex trees is not possible, and they have generally been measured to the nearest foot. Girths were recorded in 1999 and the photos taken in 2005.



Two views of Defynnog's largest yew are shown below. It measures an immense 38', second only to the famous Fortingall Yew in Perthshire. But while all that remains of the Fortingall yew are two fragments and some posts marking where the original tree once stood, this yew is complete. It is female and supports ten substantial branches which radiate from its 'walk in' centre. In 2005 I noted a single male branch, since confirmed by colleagues.



Tree 2, below, grows only a few metres away. It is a 22' girthed female yew that has almost certainly layered from the first tree. Recent analysis of samples taken from both trees confirm that they share the same DNA.



Tree 3 grows NE of the church on a mound contained within a wall. It consists of three main growth areas and measured about 25'. Decaying wood on the outer edges will eventually reduce its girth. In 1999 I recorded it as a male tree, but arils were clearly visible in 2005. A more rigorous examination might reveal that this tree too has both male and female branches.



Tree 4 is female and grows south of the church. Bristly growth prevented measurement.



The 1970 Brecon Survey recorded girths as follows: Tree 1- 40' ; Tree 2 - 20' ; Tree 3 - 26' 6" ; Tree 4- 28'.