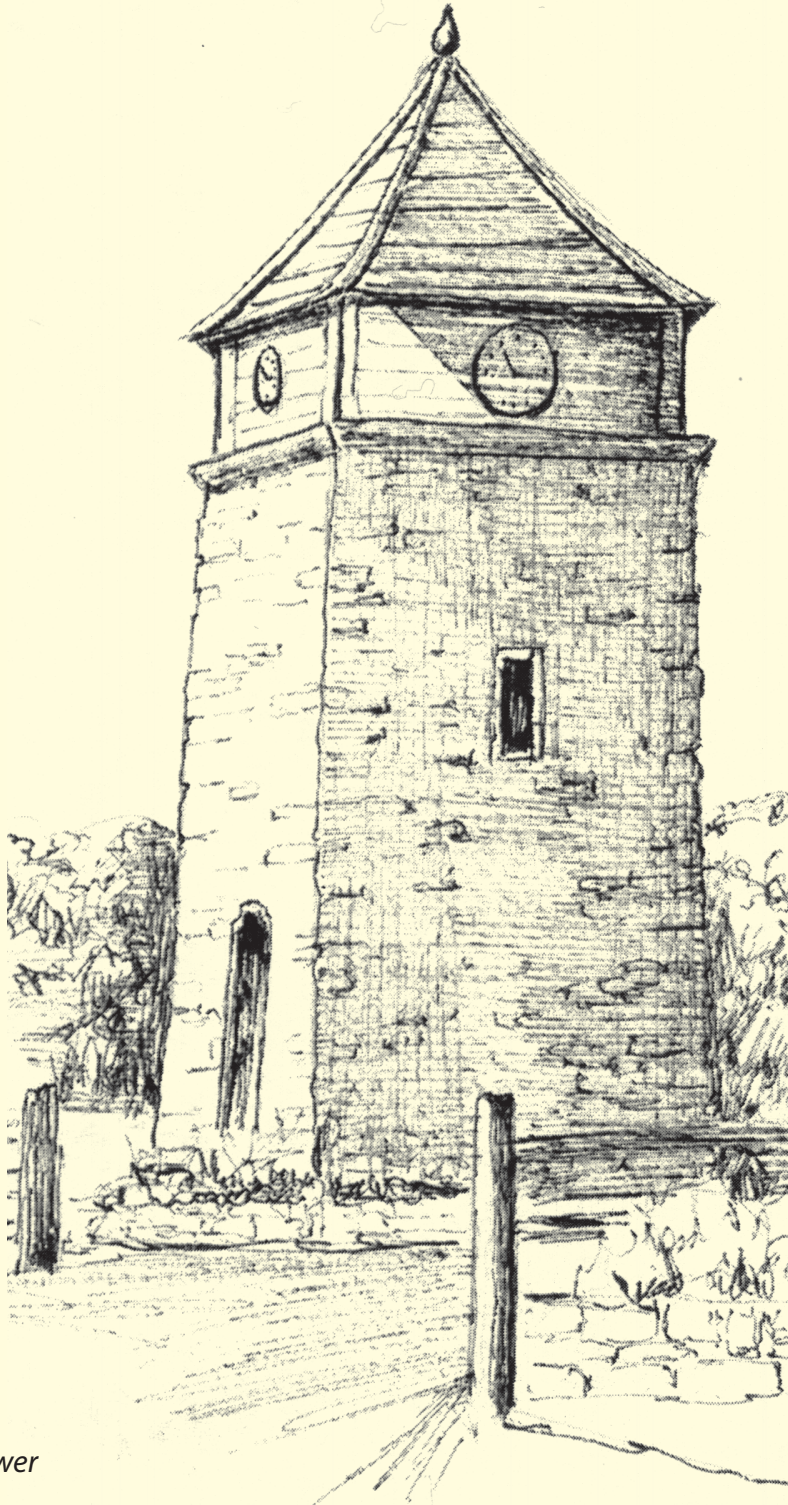


MARLOES



Marloes Clock Tower

DR

*Naws am Le
Sense of Place*

Early history

Archaeological evidence shows that prehistoric man had a considerable presence in the area. Clusters of worked flints, cores and flakes have been found on several inland sites, sometimes associated with burnt stones and 'pot-boilers'.

There are three Iron Age promontory forts, Watery Bay Rath with three banks and ditches, Wooltack Point (Deer Park) with area of 22ha, one of the largest in Wales, and South Castle on Skomer. There are Iron Age hut settlements and fields on Skomer. On Gateholm archaeological evidence of settlements, possibly dating back to the early medieval period can be found.

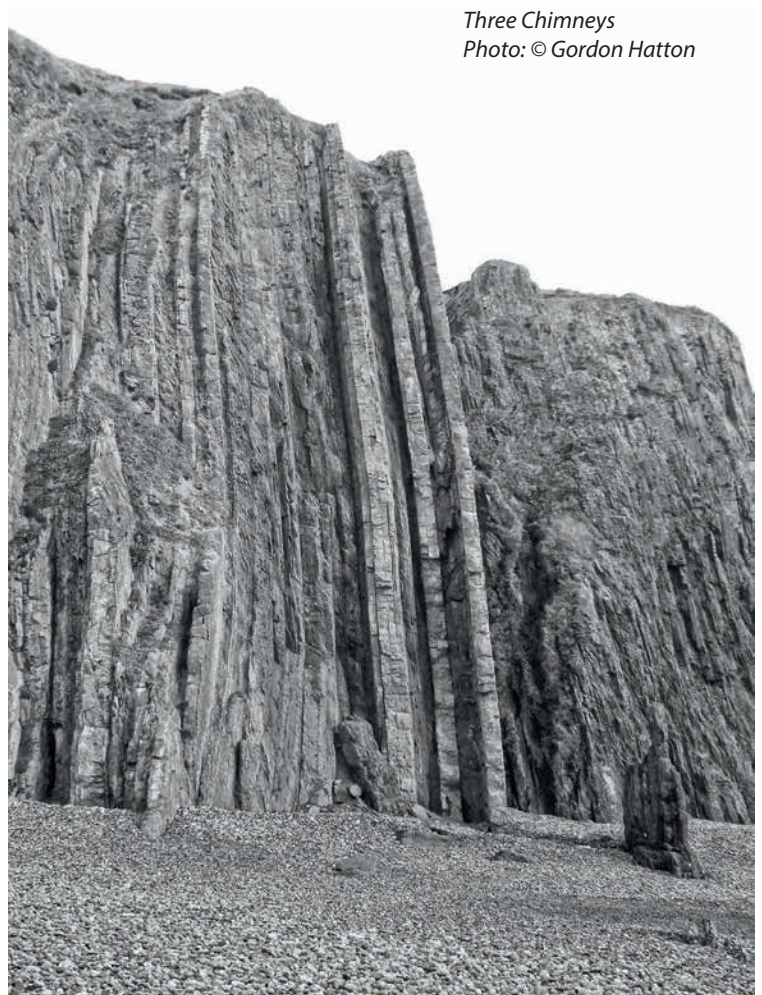
Towards the end of the 6th century, Christianity superseded the 'Old Religion' of the Celts and later, the area was subjected to incursions by Irish and Viking groups. Local place names such as Skomer (originally Skalmey), Skokholm and Musselwick are of Scandinavian origin.

In the 11th/12th centuries parts of Wales became subject to the Norman conquerors, and land in the Marloes area (often spelt Malros or Marles) was held under the feudal system from the barony of Walwyn's Castle, who, in turn, held their land from the Earldom of Pembroke. When that earldom passed to the Crown, taxes (in lieu of manorial dues) were collected by the king's officer (the Reeve). In the 14th/15th centuries, taxes were payable by land holders from Ffilebeche, Ramaskell and Ffobbeston (in modern day Philbeach, Runwayskiln and Fopston) as well as several tenants in Marles.

Geology of Marloes

The area has been shaped by several geological phases through hundreds of millions of years. The oldest rocks found locally are at Musselwick Sands, the dark coloured mudstones contain Trilobite fossils. During the Silurian period, many layers of sedimentary rock were laid down in this time forming mudstones, sandstones, and volcanic ash ('tuff'). Later, these sedimentary layers were folded and deformed deep underground.

You can see this in the rocks of Marloes Sands cliff at the 'Three Chimneys'. This structure consists of hard sandstone pillars interbedded with softer sandy mudstone which has eroded away. Looking at this it is hard to imagine that the 'beds' were once lying horizontally!



Three Chimneys
Photo: © Gordon Hatton

During the Devonian period a vast amount of eroded material was washed by flash floods from mountains to the north onto alluvial plains, creating the huge bulk of rock: the Old Red Sandstone, clearly evident at Red Cliff on Marloes Sands.

The final period to shape this landscape was a mere 5 million years ago when the land was covered by shallow seas. The seas eroded away all geological structures to form a marine platform, giving the flat-topped cliffs, so typical of this area.

Wildlife around Marloes

The Marloes peninsula covers a very wide range of habitats in a small area - beaches, cliffs, clifftop grasslands, heathland, farmland, scrubby valleys, irrigation ponds, meres and wet



woodlands. These varied habitats provide homes for a wide range of birds, insects and amphibians. The sea which surrounds the peninsula is beautifully clear and full of underwater life while the cliffs and lanes are host to a wonderful array of wild flowers in early summer.

Situated in the centre of the peninsula, the extensive marshes and pools of Marloes Mere are very popular as a bird-watching

location, where wildfowl and raptors may be seen in the winter, and migrating birds in spring and autumn. Watch out for Chough!

Churches and Chapels

The Church of St. Peter the Fisherman occupies a prominent site in the village with weekly services. The earliest reference to a church was in 1291, when it was referred to as 'Ecclesia de Malros'. Built in the form of a cross with two transepts and 19th century internal baptistery, the Church contains a Norman font and a vaulted chancel with squints from the 13th century.

In the village centre Moriah Baptist Chapel (built in 1892), takes the place of a much smaller building. The present congregation holds weekly services. Public baptisms once took place near Mullock Bridge; in recent times the stream at Sandyhill (SN 857 087) has been used.

The present Village Hall was built as a Wesleyan Chapel in 1767 by David Allen of Fobston, St. Brides and was in use until the early 20th Century. Prior to this a group of Non-conformists had met at Philbeach.

At Martins Haven you will see below the buildings a Celtic cross found in 1984 in the foundation wall. The ring cross is dated from between the 7th and the 9th centuries.

Trade and Industries

The coast and the sea has always provided a source of livelihood for Marloes residents and helped supplement their income. For example, the eggs of the Herring, Lesser, and Greater Black-backed Gulls were collected from nearby islands and coastal cliffs during May. They would be fried, boiled or pickled or used for baking. It is said eggs were provided to London restaurants.

Laver is a seaweed, a delicate sheet-like growth covering rocks. Laver bread is a Welsh delicacy, often fried with bacon. Village ladies 'picked' (collected) the seaweed and large bags were carried from Marloes Sands back to the village from where it was sent to the Swansea area for processing. An acquired taste!

Seaweed Picking



In the mid 1800s Medicinal Leeches were gathered from Marloes Mere and transported to Harley Street, London. Because of the widespread collection, this species is now confined to about 20 UK localities. 1980's survey of Marloes Mere failed to find any Medicinal Leeches.

Agriculture is an important industry. The fertile soil, often red, has been farmed for many years. The land was scattered with smallholdings; most of the farms once belonged to the vast Kensington estate. It is said that Lord Kensington could ride over his own land from St Brides to Haverfordwest.

During WWII flax was grown extensively for the war effort. Since the war there has been a move towards larger farms and the area became known for the 'earlies' potato crop. Recently, some of the farms have diversified into tourism; and the Marloes peninsula has become a popular destination for tourists, to enjoy the wildlife and water sports.

Fishing

Before WWII up to 8 fishing boats were based at Martins Haven, each with a crew of 2 or 3 men. In early days boats would have been propelled by oars and perhaps a small sail, but in more modern times a small engine would have been used. These fishermen would have 'potted' for crab, lobster and crayfish and would have also netted herring. The sea and weather conditions dictated where the boats would land their catches - Martins Haven, Hopgang or the Horseneck near Albion Sands. At Horseneck, iron rings to which boats were secured may still be seen at the base of the cliff.

Netting for herrings was carried out between Hopgang and Tower Point; Hopgang was a base where fishermen would rest up between each day's fishing. During the herring season they didn't go home, relying on village women to bring food and drink and to take the day's catch on donkeys to the village to be 'salted down' to preserve it.

The rock outcrop which forms part of the jetty at Martins Haven is known as 'The Washing Rock'. This was where the fishermen would stretch their nets to clean and repair them. The fishermen would have knitted their own nets and made their own lobster pots from willows harvested locally. When the opportunity arose they would trade spider crabs for wine with French fishing boats they sometimes encountered beyond Skomer. Nowadays, Martins Haven is used for boat excursions to Skomer and other islands.

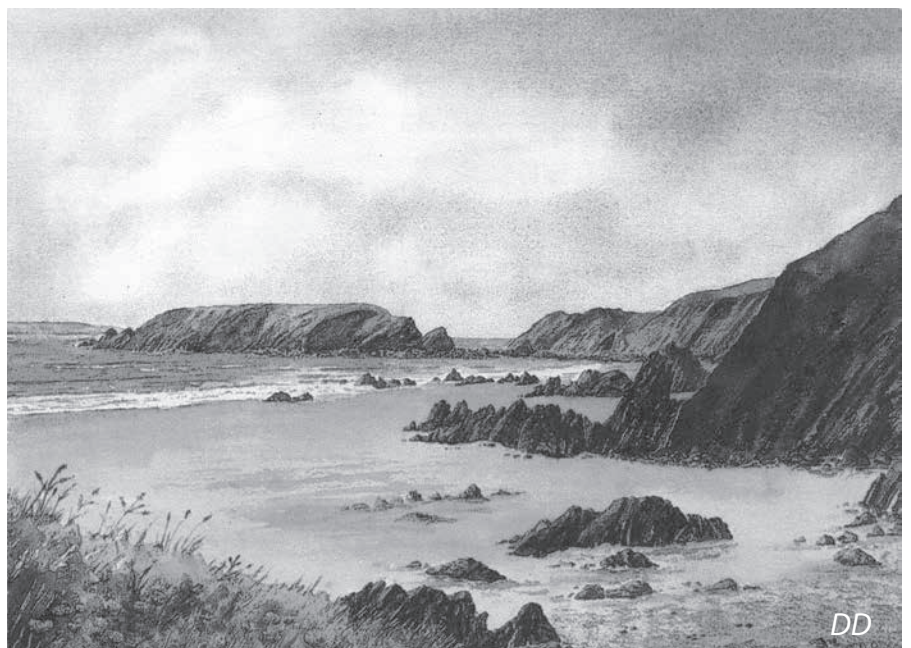
Military history

Dale Airfield, part of which is in the parish of Marloes, was opened in 1942 under RAF Coastal Command as a satellite for nearby RAF Talbenny. The 304 (Polish) Squadron operated here from 1942-1943. There is a memorial in St Peter's Church to aircrew who lost their lives. RAF Coastal Command Defence Unit followed and then the Royal Navy as the flying conversion and training station HMS Goldcrest. The main runway and some dispersal points are visible from the coast path. This remains one of the best preserved layouts of a WWII airfield in Wales.

RNAS Dale had transmitting and receiving stations at Philbeach and Fobston. The site still has many buildings standing; all now in private ownership and some used within the community.

In March 1943 the Air Ministry offered the island of Grassholm to the US 8th Air Force for bombing practice. It was used, but stopped when concern was expressed over damage to the gannetry.

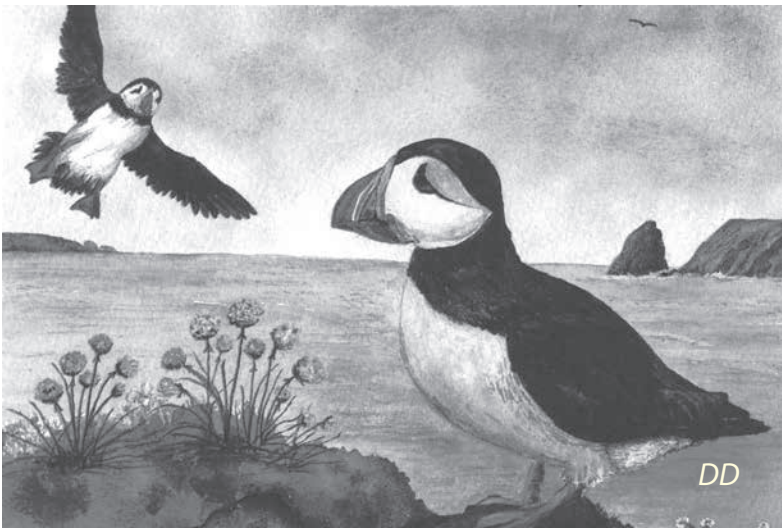
Marloes Sands



Education

The 1847 Report on Education in Wales reported that 'a school on its present footing has been at Marloes from time immemorial'. At one time a school did meet in what is now the Village Hall.

Following the Education Act of 1870 a school was built in 1873 on the outskirts of the village on the North Lane which linked with St. Brides. A house for the Headmaster was built next door, and in use until the 1950's. Operated as a Voluntary Controlled School the local clergy were prominent in directing it, as was the Dowager Lady Kensington until her death in 1911. Children walked to school from across the parishes. In the 1950s and 60s attendance dropped, until in 1963 the school closed and Marloes children transferred to Dale. Presently, children attend Coastlands CP School in St. Ishmaels from 3-11 years. Marloes is in the Milford catchment area for secondary schooling.



Kensington, St Brides & Clock tower

The Clock Tower was erected in 1904 by members of the Pembrokeshire Liberal Association, in memory of the 4th Baron Lord Kensington, William Edwardes.

A former MP and member of the House of Lords he had come to live at what is now known as St. Brides Castle in 1880. He died tragically in 1896 while hunting in Scotland. His wife chose a memorial clock as a reminder of his 'remarkable punctuality'. Built

of local quarried stone, the Tower stands 30ft high (9m). Owned by Marloes & St. Brides Community Council, it was restored in 2005/6. The tower is opened daily during summer months, an interpretation panel inside explains the story.



COUNTRY CODE

Respect - Protect - Enjoy

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Consider other people

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