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For more information about Omeka Classic, see <https://omeka.org/classic/>.

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For a .csv containing tabular data for all stories, see the larger collection at

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For an archived snapshot of the story as it appeared between 2020 and 2023 on

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Dublin Core

Title

The Mermaid's Purse | Pwrs y Fôr-forwyn

Subject

Stories

Storiau

Mermaids

Môr-forynion

Children's Activity

Gweithgareddau Plant

Creator

Gillian Brownson

Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

Date

2023

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Relation

<https://perma.cc/ZFU6-ET44>

Format

Curatescape story

Language

English

Welsh

Coverage

53.157096034112314, -4.280232875367876

Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

Lede

Holyhead writer and performer, Gillian Brownson combines art, poetry, beachcombing and creative storytelling at the coast in this piece suitable for children between the ages of 5 and 8.

Lede (Welsh)

Mae'r awdur a'r perfformiwr o Gaergybi, Gillian Brownson, yn cyfuno celf, barddoniaeth, chwilota ar lan y môr a chwedleua creadigol ar y glannau yn y darn hwn sy'n addas i blant rhwng 5 ac 8 oed.

Story

Gillian has put a little mistake in this poem! Listen carefully. Can you spot what it is? What word would you use instead?

“C’mon, we’ll go down The Mermaid and collect some firewood on the way.”

They’re my Grandma’s words. She lived in Brynsiencyn near the banks of the Menai Straits. ‘The Mermaid’ was the name of the pub that stood at the small ferry port, where the local ferry would run over to Caernarfon when my Dad was a boy. Over time though, long after the pub had called its final time, it became the colloquial name for that beautiful stretch of shore, and the place where my sisters and I would walk with our dear Grandma. So, whether it was a testament to Brynsiencyn people’s love of a pint (My Grandad could often be found in that pub!), or simply the aptness of the name for the mystery of what lay beneath the swellies of the Straits, it stuck. The Mermaid.

Imagine what this meant for a small girl. Every time I looked out to the water, I saw something. A bird, some lonely sea lion, flotsam and jetsam, or ‘her?’

“Look, Grandma, is that her?”

Grandma never answered ‘yes,’ but she didn’t answer ‘no’ either.

THE Mermaid. Just one. Always there. To my young mind, she watched us on the shore as we combed for the things she might have left behind. The shore was a treasure of finds, as shorelines always are. I’ve been back many times with my own children, and we’ve found bird skulls and crab claws, sea glass and pennies, and of course, we’ve found her purse, many times. Sadly, we’ve found many other things that don’t belong there, and that I’m sure she’d be unhappy about.

This story is written for her, the Mermaid, and my Grandma, who kept her alive for me.

Found objects are brilliant for inspiring stories, songs, plays, art or a combination of all of these things. We found a fish egg pouch, and I turned it into ‘The Mermaid’s Purse’. Over the

coming weeks, I'll be using this story to inspire school children and families to do the same – to go out along the shore, find brilliant sea stuff and turn it into something magical. I'm looking forward to collecting lots of community sea stories for the Ports, Past and Present archives as we move along on this journey.

Story (Welsh)

“Ty’ d, awn ni lawr i’ r Mermaid a hel priciau tân ar y ffordd.”

Geiriau Nain ydy’ r rhain. Roedd Nain yn byw ym Mrynsiencyn ar lan Afon Menai. Y ‘Mermaid’ oedd enw’ r dafarn yn y porthladd fferi bach, lle byddai’ r fferi lleol yn hwylio drosodd i Gaernarfon pan oedd fy Nhad yn fach. Dros amser serch hynny, ymhell ar ôl i’ r dafarn gau am y tro olaf, dyna’ r enw ar lafar ar y darn hyfryd hwn o draeth, lle byddai fy chwirydd a minnau’ n cerdded gyda’ n hannwyl Nain. Felly, naill ai fel arwydd o gariad pobl Brynsiencyn at eu peint (ac yn y dafarn y gwelech chi Taid yn aml!), neu am fod yr enw’ n un addas ar gyfer y dirgelion o dan donnau’ r Afon, aros wnaeth yr enw: y ‘Mermaid’.

Dychmygwch beth roedd hynny’ n olygu i ferch fach. Bob tro y byddwn i’ n edrych allan dros y dŵr, fe welwn i rywbeth. Aderyn, morlew unig, broc môr, neu ‘hi’?

“Sbïa, Nain, ai hi sy yna?”

Fyddai Nain byth yn dweud ‘ie,’ ond fyddai hi byth yn dweud ‘nage’ chwaith.

Y ‘Fôr-forwyn’. Dim ond un. Yno bob amser. Yn fy meddwl ifanc i, roedd hi’ n ein gwyllo ni ar y lan wrth inni chwilio am y pethau y gallai hithau fod wedi’ u gadael ar ôl. Roedd y traeth yn drysorfa darganfyddiadau, yr un fath â phob traeth bob amser. Dwi wedi mynd yn ôl droeon efo fy mhlant fy hun, ac rydyn ni wedi dod o hyd i benglogau adar a chrafangau crancod, gwydr môr a cheiniogau, ac wrth gwrs, rydym wedi dod o hyd i’ w phwrs hi, droeon. Yn anffodus, rydyn ni hefyd wedi cael hyd i lawer o bethau eraill nad ydyn nhw’ n perthyn yno, pethau dwi’ n siŵr y byddai hi’ n anhapus yn eu cylch.

Stori yw hon sydd wedi’ i hysgrifennu iddi hi, y Fôr-forwyn, ac i Nain, a gadwodd y Fôr-forwyn yn fyw imi.

Mae pethau rydych chi wedi’ i canfod yn wych o ran ysbrydoli storïau, caneuon, dramâu, celf neu gyfuniad o’ r holl bethau hyn. Cawson ni hyd i gwddyn wyau pysgod, a’ i droi’ n ‘Bwrs y Fôr-forwyn’. Dros yr wythnosau nesaf, mi fydda i’ n defnyddio’ r stori hon i ysbrydoli plant ysgol a theuluoedd i wneud yr un peth – mynd allan ar hyd y lan, canfod broc môr gwych a’ i droi’ n rhywbeth hudolus. Dwi’ n edrych ymlaen at gasglu llawer o storïau môr cymunedol i archifau Porthladdoedd Ddoe a Heddiw wrth inni symud ymlaen ar y siwrnai hon.

Factoid

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