

Roman lion points to S. Wales fort



THIS stone lion from the Roman occupation is the first of its kind to be found in Wales and is sure to have pride of place at a South Wales archaeological open day.

It was discovered at a Cowbridge site due for housing development and dates to the second century AD.

The lion was found in a drainage ditch at Hopyard Meadow by Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust. Their director, Mr Gareth Dowdell, said: "We are all very excited about this find.

"We can't put a monetary value on it because it

● Karen Francis, aged 22, of Brighton Road, Gorseinon, is pictured with the stone lion found in Cowbridge.

is a priceless part of our heritage. We've already had experts to look at it and they agree it is a very important find."

He believes the lion was part of a monument commemorating the death of an important local official or officer in the Roman army.

The find points to Cowbridge being the site of Bovium — the "missing" Roman fort.

The lion, made of fine grained sandstone, weighs about a hundredweight. It has one paw in its mouth and one resting on an object which is missing. Mr Dowdell believes it might have been a human head or skull.

The find came after six months work on the site which is to be developed in two weeks. It will be on show at the Trust's annual open day tomorrow at their headquarters, in Prospect Place, Swansea. After the exhibition Mr Dowdell hopes the owners of the site will let it go to a museum.

THE LION IS NOW IN
THE NATIONAL MUSEUM,
CARDIFF, AND A REPLICA
IN COWBRIDGE COUNCIL CHAMBER.