



## Sandstone discovery

Stone from the Forest of Dean has been identified in the grounds and walls of castle buildings. A recent visit by the Welsh Stone Building Forum has provided physical evidence of some research carried out by Fr Seamus Cunnane. Although most of the site used Cilgerran slate, records dating from 1244 show that 12,000 cut blocks of red sandstone were ordered from St Briavel's quarry near Tintern Abbey. These seem to have been used for decoration.

Much of the stonework on the site has been moved and reused over the centuries so it is difficult to say for sure exactly where these were used originally. Some have been found built into the east end of Castle Green House

and some have been discovered within the grounds.

The blocks would have been loaded onto large ships at the north of the River Severn, taken out of the Severn estuary, around South Wales and Pembrokeshire into the port of Cardigan directly to the castle for installation—a major feat of transportation.

- The Welsh Stone Forum promotes awareness and knowledge of natural stone use in Wales. Members come from conservation, heritage, planning, geology, architecture and masonry. They have regular field trips to study buildings and discuss issues relating to conservation, geological planning and architecture. The forum is connected to the National Museum of Wales.

**Rare hollies dating back to the 1830s have been found in the grounds. Six species are identified in a report by the Welsh Historic Gardens Society, together with Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus Aculeatus*), which was formerly used by butchers to clean their cutting blocks, and Japanese Spindle (*Euonymus Japonicus*). Together these discoveries indicate mid Victorian planting. The report also identifies the remains of a fernery near the main entrance.**

**T**he castle grounds was the final destination of the Cadwgan bike ride in June, which also featured a jazz band playing—the first in the grounds for at least 60 years.

**C**ardigan's Gŵyl Fawr Ceisteddfod was initiated from the steps of Castle Green House. We hope this is the start of a renewed association of the eisteddfod tradition with Cardigan Castle for future years.

**J**uly saw the visit by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. The Prince showed firm interest in the castle and said he hoped to return to see the completed project.

**N**ew gates have been installed at the main entrance in Green Street. They will remain in place while work is in progress. The boarding that was put up as emergency security four years ago had deteriorated and needed replacing. Gates of a more appropriate design will be installed a later date. The gates have been made by wrought iron specialist Colin Davies of Hermon, Crymch.

**W**ork to tidy the grounds continues. Slate steps and a paved seating area around the lily pond can be seen and the kitchen garden layout is now visible.