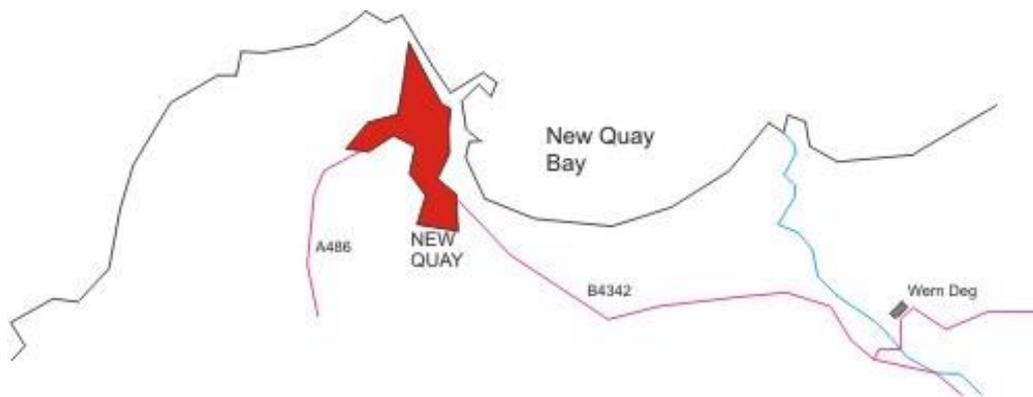


Wern Deg vineyard



Wern Deg was created by Dr. Idris Thomas who retired from his post as the Head of a music Department and moved to Sussex. He maintained his lands at Llanarth in Dyfed. The vines were first planted in 1964, following an experiment in Welsh viticulture at Trimsaran near Llanelli by Granville Lloyd. This latter venture failed when the vines died mysteriously overnight- it was believed at the time as a result of salty winds.

The Llanerth vineyard saw a succession of disasters. Bad ploughing, attacks by rabbits and birds, faulty spraying contributed to the death of the initial 1000 plants. However, he persisted and by 1970, there were 2 viticultural experiments in Wales. The other was that of Wing-Commander Mathias at Lamphrey Court in Pembrokeshire. By 1976, that was run down and did not continue.

Dr Thomas persisted, and his 2 acres yielded an average 70 bottles of wine a year. By 1977, a crop of 688kg produced 570 bottles. Most of the vines were Seyve-Villard (Seyval Blanc) and Muller Thurgau- staples of the early British growers, with a little Reichensteiner. A few Ortega, Perle, Chardonnay and Madeleine Sylvaner were also included.

The grapes went back to Sussex and were vinified by the Merrydown Wine Company. In 2006, the house was advertised for sale, with the vineyard still extant. At that time, the grapes were described as Seyval Blanc. The owners said that *“Before we arrived at the vines were looked after by enthusiasts associated with another local vineyard. In the time we’ve been here we’ve pruned and harvested the vines ourselves and subbed out the vinification process to the Three Choirs Vineyard in Gloucestershire. In 2005 we produced 800 bottles of which 200 were made into sparkling wine.”*

References

Joanna Smith. The New English Vineyard 1979

Sales leaflet (on line) Small Vineyard and Spacious Home for sale (dated about 2005)