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## Dublin Core

### Title

Pembroke Dockyard's Famous Ginkgo Tree | Coeden Ginkgo Enwog Dociau Penfro

### Subject

Pembroke Dock

Doc Penfro

Japan

Siapan

Shipbuilding

Adeiladu llongau

Navy

Y Llynges

### Creator

David James

### Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

### Date

2023

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## Relation

<https://perma.cc/T2V4-CVSM>

## Format

Curatescape story

## Language

English

Welsh

## Coverage

51.693168742515965, -4.95201469500295

# Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

## Lede

A ginkgo tree marks historic ties between Japan and Britain.

## Lede (Welsh)

Coeden ginkgo yn dyst i gysylltiadau hanesyddol rhwng Siapan a Phrydain.

## Story

Until the mid-nineteenth century, Japan was a feudal state governed by a network of powerful families and warlords led by its Shogun, isolated from the rest of the world. At that point, there was a growing realisation that China and Russia were likely to invade.

Russia at the time was expanding her Empire and had a modern navy of steam war ships. Japan, on the other hand, had only wooden sailing junks and war galleys propelled by sail and oar. Thus the Japanese government came to Britain, which then held the world's largest navy, to ask for help to modernise and industrialise their country and build a steam navy for them.

So the first three warships for the fledgling Imperial Japanese navy were ordered in Britain; these were the *Kongo*, the *Fuso* and the *Hiei*. Of these, the *Hiei* was built in a small private shipyard at Jacobs Pill in Pembroke Dock. During her construction, a young Japanese Lieutenant named Heihachiro Togo was sent to Pembroke Dock to assist. During his time in Pembroke Dock, Lt Togo lodged in the Master Shipwright's House in the old Royal Dockyard.

The *Hiei* was launched on the 9th June 1877 amid great celebrations in Pembroke Dock, which were attended by the Japanese Ambassador, His Excellency Jushie Uyeno Kagenori, diplomatic staff and many dignitaries. The *Hiei* sailed off to Japan under the command of a Royal Navy Captain with Lt Togo aboard. On arrival Lt Togo sent a ginkgo tree back to Pembroke Dock with the message, 'Please plant this tree in the garden of my lodging house in appreciation of the kindnesses shown me during my stay.'

The tree was planted by Ambassador Kagenori and thrives to this day.

In 2017, Pembroke Dock historian David James became involved with Japanese journalists and diplomatic staff, who he took to see the tree, and told of its connection to Lt Togo. They explained that Lt. Togo had risen through the ranks of the Imperial Japanese Navy and had become a Marshal Admiral. He was the driving force behind the formation of the IJN and fought and defeated both Chinese and Russian navies off the coasts of Japan, the most

famous battle being at Tsushima in 1905 when the Russian Baltic Fleet was totally destroyed – thus ensuring that Japan could not be invaded.

The diplomats checked the story of the tree and found it to be true. In great excitement they asked David to get a cutting from it, which would then be taken back to Japan and ceremonially planted in a place of honour. They explained Admiral Togo was Japan's national hero and revered by Japan just as the British revere Admiral Lord Nelson.

Staff from the National Botanic Gardens of Wales took the cuttings and potted them for a year until they were strong enough to be dispatched to Japan. Captain Toshihida Noma, Naval Attaché at the Embassy of Japan, had the idea that all the sites in Japan that had a link with Admiral Togo should have a sapling – some 15 in all!

Japanese logistics company Nippon Yusen flew the saplings to Haneda Airport Japan, where they arrived on Christmas Eve 2019. They were then transported to the Hiroshima City Botanic Gardens for potting and a period of quarantine. Then on 1 July 2020, the first sapling was ceremonially planted in Kure Naval base, Hiroshima, by Mr Nishihara, Mayor of Kure City accompanied by journalists and Captain Simon Staley, Royal Naval Attaché from the British Embassy in Tokyo.

Mr Nishihara said Kure City owes its existence to Pembroke Dock as the Japanese navy was born there. For promoting Japan-Pembrokeshire relations, David was honoured by the Rt. Hon. Theresa May PM, as well as by the previous and current Japanese Ambassadors to the UK and, on 10 July 2020, by the Mayor of Kure City, Japan.

### Story (Welsh)

Hyd at ganol y bedwaredd ganrif ar bymtheg, roedd Siapan yn wladwriaeth gyn-fodern dan reolaeth rhwydwaith o deuluoedd pwerus a rhyfelwyr o dan arweiniad Shogun (Cadfridog). Roedd y wlad wedi ynysu ei hun o weddill y byd ond daeth yn fwyfwy amlwg bod Tsieina a Rwsia yn paratoi i oresgynnu'r wlad.

Yr adeg honno roedd Rwsia wrthi'n ehangu ei Hymerodraeth, ac roedd ganddi llynges newydd o longau rhyfel stêm. Nid oedd gan Siapan, ar y llaw arall, fwy na llongau hwylio pren a rhwyflongau. Daeth llywodraeth Siapan felly at Brydain, oedd yn berchen yn ystod y cyfnod hwn ar llynges fwya'r byd, i ofyn am gymorth i foderneiddio eu gwlad, gan ddatblygu diwydiant er mwyn adeiladu llynges stêm.

Ym Mhrydain felly comisiynwyd y tair llong ryfel gyntaf ar gyfer Llynges Ymerodrol newydd sbon Siapan sef y *Kongo*, y *Fuso* a'r *Hiei*. Adeiladwyd yr *Hiei* mewn iard llongau bach yn Jacobs Pill yn Noc Penfro. Daeth is-gapten ifanc o'r enw Heihachiro Togo i Ddoc Penfro i gynorthwyo. Yn ystod ei ymweliad arosodd yn Nhŷ'r Prif Longsaer yn yr hen Ddoc Brenhinol.

Lansiodd yr *Hiei* i'r dŵr ar 9 Mehefin 1877 yng nghanol dathliadau mawr yn Noc Penfro. Yn bresennol roedd Llysgennad Siapan, Ei fawrhydi Jushie Uyeno Kagenori, staff diplomataidd, a llawer o swyddogion pwysig. Cyrchodd yr *Hiei* am Siapan dan lywyddiaeth Capten y Llynges Frenhinol, gyda Lt Togo ar ei bwrdd. Pan gyrhaeddodd ei wlad, danfonodd Lt Togo goeden ginkgo yn ôl i Ddoc Penfro gyda'r neges: 'Os gwelwch yn dda, plannwch y goeden hon yng ngardd y tŷ lle bues yn lletya, yn dyst i'r caredigrwydd a brofais yn ystod f'arhosiad.'

Plannwyd y goeden gan Lysgennad Kagenori: mae hi'n fyw ac yn ffynnu hyd at heddiw.

Yn 2017, daeth hanesydd Doc Penfro David James i gysylltiad â newyddiadurwyr a staff diplomataidd o Siapan. Aeth â nhw i weld y goeden, gan adrodd y stori am Lt Togo. Esbonion nhw fod Lt Togo wedi cael gyrfa ddisglair yn Llynges Ymerodrol Siapan (IJN),

gan gyrraedd swydd Llyngesydd Marsial Togo a yrrodd ddatblygiad Llynges Siapan, a brwydrodd yn erbyn – a threchu – llyngesau Tsieina a Rwsia ar arfordiroedd Siapan. Y frwydr enwocaf oedd Tsushima ym 1905, pan chwalwyd Llu Baltig Rwsia'n llwyr, gan ddiogelu Siapan rhag goresgyniad.

Aeth y diplomatiaid i siecio stori'r goeden, a darganfod ei fod yn hanesyddol gywir. Wedi eu cyffroi, fe ofynnon nhw i David gymryd sbrigyn o'r goeden. Roedd Llyngesydd Togo yn arwr cenedlaethol yn Siapan, yn union fel y Llyngesydd Nelson ym Mhrydain.

Cymerodd staff Gardd Fotaneg Genedlaethol Cymru doriadau, a'u magu am flwyddyn nes iddynt fod yn ddigon cryf i gael eu danfon i Siapan. Cafwyd syniad gan y Capten Toshihida Noma, Attaché'r Llynges i Lysgennad Siapan, y dylid plannu coeden fach ym mhob lle yn Siapan oedd â chysylltiad â'r Llyngesydd Togo – rhyw 15 yn gyfan gwbl!

Cwmni logisteg Siapanieg Nippon Yusen a gludodd y coed ifanc i Faes Awyr Haneda, a chyrhaeddont ar noswyl Nadolig 2019. Aethant ymlaen wedyn i Ardd Fotaneg Dinas Hiroshima ar gyfer cyfnod o ofal dan gwarantîn. Wedyn, ar 1 Gorffennaf 2020, plannwyd y goeden fach gyntaf mewn seremoni ym morlys Kure, Hiroshima, gan Mr Nishihara, Maer Dinas Kure, ym mhresenoldeb newyddiadurwyr a Chaptan Simon Staley, Attaché y Llynges Frenhinol i Lysgennad Prydain yn Tokyo.

Dywedodd Mr Nishihara fod bodolaeth Dinas Kure yn ddyledus i Ddoc Penfro, oherwydd yno y ganwyd llynges Siapan. Anrhydeddwyd David James am ei waith yn hybu'r berthynas rhwng Siapan a Sir Benfro gan y Prif Weinidog, Rt. Hon. Theresa May, yn ogystal â Llysgenhadwyr presennol a blaenorol Siapan, a daeth anrhydedd arall, ar 10 Gorffennaf 2020, oddi wrth Faer Dinas Kure, Siapan.

## **Factoid**

### **Related Resources**

James, D., *Hancock's Shipbuilding Company in Pembroke Dock* (Pembroke: Pembroke & Monkton Local History Society, 2018)

Tenby Observer, *Pembroke Dock Ginko tree known across Japan with a high degree of affection*, archived at <https://perma.cc/J5RX-5EZ6>

BBC News, *Wales' Tree of the Year 2019: Shortlist Revealed*, archived at <https://perma.cc/2A7F-TST7>

Tenby Observer, *Diplomat's visit restores town's historic links with Japanese Navy*, archived at <https://perma.cc/5B43-NE65>

Western Telegraph, *Pembroke Dock Ginkgo tree nominated for tree of the year*, archived at <https://perma.cc/SCZ3-R8UL>

### **Official Website**