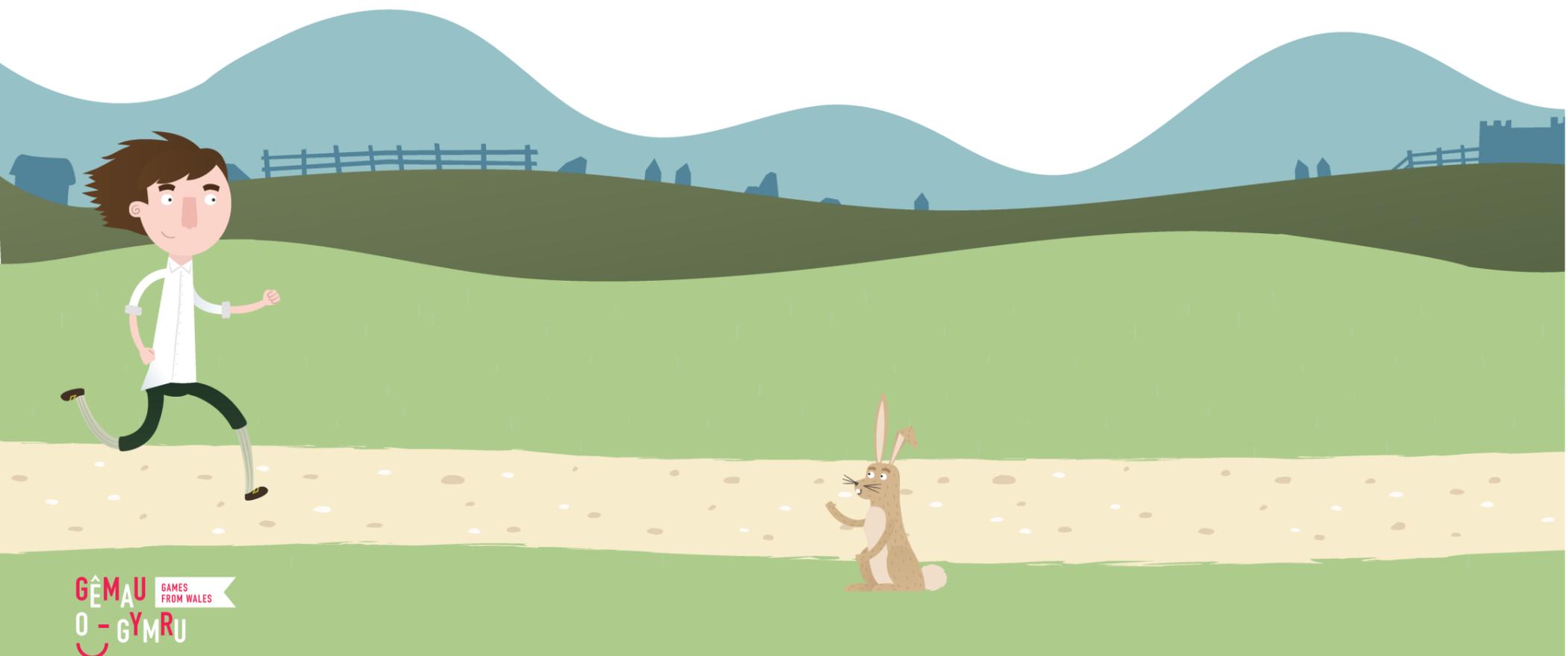


Guto Nyth Brân

Stori gefndirol

Cafodd Griffith Morgan neu Guto Nyth Brân (1700-1737) ei eni yn Llwyncelyn ger Pontypridd. Roedd yn byw ar fferm fach ei rieni ac yn gweithio yno fel bugail. Dywedir ei fod yn gallu rhedeg mor gyflym fel ei fod wedi dal ysgyfarnog un tro, a hynny wrth helpu ei dad i hel defaid. Mae'n debyg fod pentrefwyr lleol yn adrodd ei hanes yn dal llwynogod ac yn dal adar wrth iddynt hedfan. Ceir nifer o straeon eraill yn sôn am gyflymder anhygoel Guto, yn cynnwys y chwedl amdano yn chwythu'r gannwyll yna cyrraedd ei wely cyn i'r golau ddiffodd.

Daeth merch leol o'r enw Siân (neu Siân o'r Siop) yn hyfforddwraig ac yn rheolwraig ar Guto. Wrth iddo ddod yn fwy enwog cafodd Guto sawl sialens i gystadlu mewn rasys, gan roi achos i bobl fetio ac ennill (a cholli) arian. Rhedodd Guto ei rês



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gyntaf yn erbyn capten o Loegr, a hynny dros bellter o bedair milltir dros Gomin Hirwaun. Enillodd Guto yn rhwydd a chafodd wobwr oedd yn werth £400.

Yn y man, syrthiodd Guto a Siân mewn cariad. Cyn i Guto gyrraedd 30 mlwydd oed, roedd y pâr wedi ymddeol o'r busnes rasio oherwydd nad oedd neb yn mentro cystadlu yn ei erbyn.

Flynyddoedd wedyn, er ei fod wedi ymddeol, rhedodd Guto mewn un rês arall yn erbyn rhedwr newydd o'r enw Prins o Fedwas. Y wobwr oedd 1,000 gini (£150,000 yn 2015.) Roedd y rês yn ddeuddeg milltir o hyd, rhwng Casnewydd ac eglwys Bedwas. Yn rhan gyntaf y rês roedd Prins ar y blaen, ond yna wrth garlamu i fyny'r allt olaf dyma Guto yn pasio Prins ac yn ennill y rês a'r wobwr a theitl y dyn cyflymaf.



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Ar ôl y rês dyma pawb yn llongyfarch Guto. Oherwydd fod Siân mor falch o'i chariad, mae'n debyg ei bod hi wedi rhoi slap i Guto ar ei gefn, ac yn dilyn hynny dyma Guto yn cwmpo'n farw ar y ffordd.

Claddwyd Guto yn eglwys Sant Gwynno yng nghoed Llanwynno. Cafodd ei gampau rhyfeddol eu canmol mewn baled Gymraeg gan I.D. Hooson ac mewn baled Saesneg gan Harri Webb. Yng nghanol Aberpennar mae cerflun o Guto Nyth Brân, a phob nos Galan ers 1958 cynhelir rês i gofio amdano. Bob blwyddyn bydd rhedwr dirgel yn cael ei wahodd i redeg, i gynrychioli ysbryd Guto. Un flwyddyn daeth Linford Christie (enillydd medal aur Olympaidd) i redeg, a dro arall daeth Shane Williams (chwaraewr rygbi rhyngwladol) i gymryd rhan. Ar ôl y rês cynhelir gwasanaeth coffa yn eglwys Sant Gwynno a bydd y rhedwr dirgel yn gosod torch ar fedd Guto.

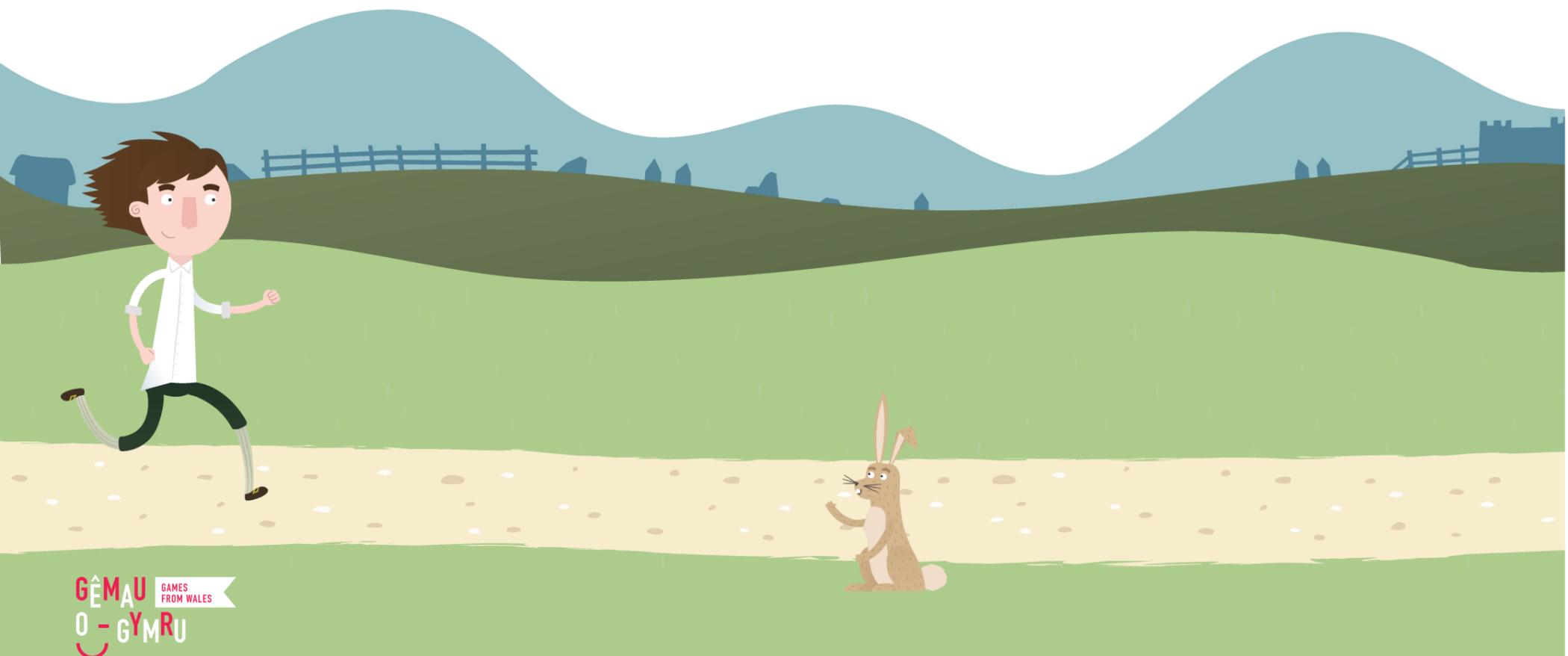


Guto Nyth Brân

Background Story

Griffith Morgan, better known by his nickname Guto Nyth Brân (1700-1737), was born in Llwynceilyn near Pontypridd. He lived on his parents' small farm, where he worked as a shepherd. It is said that he could run so fast he once caught a hare whilst helping his father herd sheep. Local villagers apparently told tales of him catching foxes and birds in flight. There are many other stories which tell of Guto's amazing speed including a tale in which it is said that he could blow out a candle and be in bed before the light faded.

The local shopkeeper, Siân (or Siân o'r Siop as she was known) became his trainer and manager. As his fame spread Guto was challenged to compete in races on which people would bet and



Guto Nyth Brân

win (or lose) lots of money. Guto Nyth Brân's first race saw him competing against an English captain over a distance of four miles on Hirwaun Common. Guto won easily and was rewarded with prize money of £400.

Guto and Siân fell then in love. Before Guto turned 30 years old the pair retired from racing because no-one dared to compete against Guto.

Years later Guto came out of retirement to take part in one last race against a new runner called Prince of Bedwas. The prize was 1,000 guineas (£150,000 in 2015.) The race covered the twelve miles between Newport and Bedwas church. Prince took an early lead, but a valiant uphill sprint from Guto saw him run past Prince to win the race, prize money and the title of fastest man.



Guto Nyth Brân

When the race was over everyone congratulated Guto. It is said that Siân was so overjoyed that she slapped him on the back, resulting in Guto keeling over and dying on the road.

Guto is buried at St Gwynno church in Llanwynno forest. His amazing feats of speed have been eulogised in a Welsh ballad by I.D. Hooson and in an English ballad by Harri Webb. A statue of Guto Nyth Brân stands in the centre of Mountain Ash where every new year's eve since 1958, Nos Galan races have been run in Guto's honour. Every year a mystery runner takes part, representing the spirit of Guto. Runners have included Olympic gold medal-winning athlete Linford Christie and Welsh rugby international Shane Williams. After the race a Memorial Service is held at St Gwynno's Church where the mystery runner lays a wreath on Guto's grave.

