



Clearwell Village Walk

SUMMARY An easy walk around Clearwell village.

START There is limited parking next to the Clearwell Memorial Hall, otherwise there is usually street parking. Start the walk at Clearwell Cross in the centre of the village.

WALK INFO

DISTANCE ¾ MILES

No. OF GATES 0

No. OF STILES 0

- Clearwell Cross [1] is a 14th century preaching cross. It has had several restorations over the years; the last in 1991 was jointly funded by Clearwell villagers and English Heritage.

- Leave the cross and walk uphill towards St. Peter's Church [2], you will easily see the spire. Pass St. Peter's and stop at the entrance to Clearwell Castle [3] at the bend in the road. Opposite the castle is the 'Dog Well' [4]. Inside was a hand-cranked pump to feed water into a tank at the castle. Notice the troughs on the outer wall at horse and dog level.

- Clearwell Castle. The present building was built by Thomas Wyndham in 1728. His granddaughter Caroline, Countess of Dunraven, was a great benefactor to Clearwell. Fire, neglect and finally asset stripping took their toll and by 1953 the castle was almost a ruin. However, hard work by Frank and Alice Yeates over many years ensured the castle's survival and it is now a well-known wedding venue.

- Enter the churchyard through the small gate opposite the castle entrance through the avenue of yew trees. St. Peter's was built by Caroline and architect John Middleton in 1866. Notice how Caroline's entrance ahead is more ornate than the public entrance around to the right. There are no gravestones here as St. Peter's replaced a chapel on the edge of the village where burials still take place.

- Walk back to the Cross passing the Victorian village school. Stop at the Wyndham Arms [5], an L-plan 17th Century coaching inn with an overhanging wood-framed gable. Originally the landlords would have kept horses in nearby fields in readiness for the arrival of the Lydney to Monmouth stage coach.

- Continue around the Wyndham, and walk left up the path to the village well [6], from which the village gets its name. It was restored by Caroline and Middleton in Victorian times and again by the Parish Council in 2005. The inscription was



taken from an old photo of the well. Continue ahead back to the road. The hand-pump you pass was formerly used to supply water to the vicarage near to the castle. The pump in the Dog Well would have been similar to this one.

- Turn right and return to the cross. Walk straight ahead at the cross to the Mortuary Chapel [7] situated at the bend in the road in the distance. This chapel was restored by Caroline and Middleton in 1866 but still has no electricity to this day. Buried in the churchyard lies F. G. 'Chris' Miles V.C, a coal miner who enlisted in the Gloucestershire Regiment in WWI. He won his V.C. for storming an enemy machine

gun post. Chris had the rank of 'Private'. After the war he returned to coal mining and lived at Cemetery House next to the chapel.

- Further up this road within easy walking distance is Clearwell Caves. The caves have a large car park and are open to the public. Several scenes in Dr Who episodes have been filmed there. As you return to your car, don't be surprised if you 'bump into' a celebrity as many have visited Clearwell including famous footballers, the Olympic Rowing Team and TV personalities.