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For a .csv containing tabular data for all stories, see the larger collection at

<https://doi.org/10.7486/DRI.ht259b362>.

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## Dublin Core

### Title

St Columba, Saint and Ship | Sant Columba, Sant a Llong

### Subject

MV St Columba (ship)

Holyhead

Ferry

### Creator

Holyhead Maritime Museum

### Publisher

Ports, Past and Present Project

### Date

2023

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### Relation

<https://perma.cc/PL69-SGLY>

### Format

Curatescape story

### Language

English

Welsh

### Coverage

53.31397938415945, -4.623584247927936

## Curatescape Story Item Type Metadata

### Lede

This story is one of a continuing series to showcase some of the special objects we have in the museum's collection. One of the most fascinating and certainly the largest objects on display at the Holyhead Maritime Museum is the Franta Belsky mural that once graced the forward lounge on the Holyhead ship *MV St. Columba*.

### Lede (Welsh)

Mae'r stori hon yn un mewn cyfres barhaus i arddangos rhai o'r gwrthrychau arbennig sydd gennym yng nghasgliad yr amgueddfa. Un o'r gwrthrychau mwyaf diddorol ac yn sicr un o'r mwyaf sy'n cael ei arddangos yn Amgueddfa Forwrol Caerdybi yw murlun Franta Belsky a fu unwaith yn addurno Lolfa Flaen llong o Gaerdybi, *MV St. Columba*.

### Story

One of the most fascinating and certainly the largest objects on display at the Museum is the Franta Belsky mural that once graced the Forward Lounge on the Holyhead ship *MV St Columba*.

The vessel was named after the sixth century Irish monk who founded the monastery on the Scottish island of Iona, then part of the Irish kingdom of Ulster. It is believed that the work to produce the treasured 'Book of Kells' may have been started by monks at Iona.

The mural portrays episodes in the life of St Columba. It depicts his journey to Iona and the monastery he founded on a base of stones. St Columba did much to spread Christianity to this area of Scotland. It also shows the coronation of the Scottish King Aiden, which helped bring peace to the feuding clans. Praying figures, a Viking ship and white doves of peace are also depicted.

The Car Ferry *MV St Columba* was built in Denmark and commenced operations on the Holyhead to Dún Laoghaire route in May 1977. At 7,836 tons she was then the largest Sealink ship on the Irish Sea. She could carry up to 2,400 passengers and 335 cars or 36 HGV's, or a mixture of both. A popular ship, she was well liked by both passengers and crew alike.

In 1997 she left the Irish Sea for the warmer climes of the Mediterranean as the Greek ferry *Express Aphrodite*. It is not known when the mural was removed from the vessel but rescued by members of the Museum, it now hangs in pride of place at the Museum to remind us of the strong Celtic links between Ireland and Wales.

Franta Belsky was a Czech sculptor known for large-scale abstract works of public art as well as more iconographic statues and busts of noted 20th-century figures such as Winston Churchill and members of the British Royal Family.

### Story (Welsh)

Un o'r gwrthrychau mwyaf diddorol ac yn sicr un o'r mwyaf sy'n cael ei arddangos yn yr Amgueddfa yw murlun Franta Belsky a fu unwaith yn addurno Lolfa Flaen llong o Gaerdybi *MV St. Columba*.

Cafodd y llong ei henwi ar ôl mynach Gwyddelig o'r 6ed Ganrif a sefydlodd y fynachlog ar ynys Iona yn yr Alban, a oedd y pryd hwnnw yn rhan o deyrnas Ulster yn Iwerddon. Credir y gallai'r gwaith i greu 'Llyfr Kells', sy'n gymaint o drysor, fod wedi'i ddechrau gan fynachod Iona.

Mae'r murlun yn portreadu episodau ym mywyd Sant Columba. Mae'n darlunio'i daith i Iona a'r fynachlog a sefydlodd ar sylfaen o gerrig. Gwnaeth Sant Columba lawer i ledaenu Cristnogaeth i'r rhan hon o'r Alban. Mae hefyd yn dangos coroni Brenin yr Alban, Aiden, a fu o gymorth i ddod â heddwch yn y brwydro rhwng y claniau. Dangosir hefyd ffigurau yn gweddio, un o longau'r Llychlynwyr a cholomennod gwyn heddwch.

Cafodd y fferi ceir *MV St. Columba* ei adeiladu yn Nenmarc a dechreuodd weithio ar y llwybr rhwng Caergybi a Dún Laoghaire ym mis Mai 1977. Roedd yn pwysu 7,836 o dunelli a hi oedd llong fwyaf Sealink ar Fôr Iwerddon. Gallai gario hyd at 2,400 o deithwyr a 335 o geir neu 36 o HGVs, neu gymysgedd o'r ddau. Roedd yn llong boblogaidd ymysg y teithwyr a'r criw fel ei gilydd.

Ym 1997 gadawodd Fôr Iwerddon a hwylio i wres y Môr Canoldir fel y fferi Groeg *Express Aphrodite*. Nid yw'n hysbys pryd y cafodd y murlun ei dynnu o'r llong ond cafodd ei achub gan aelodau o'r Amgueddfa, ac erbyn hyn mae ganddo le amlwg yn yr Amgueddfa i'n hatgoffa am y cysylltiadau Celtaidd cryf rhwng Iwerddon a Chymru.

Roedd Franta Belsky yn gerflunydd Tsiecaidd a oedd yn adnabyddus am waith haniaethol ar raddfa fawr mewn celfyddyd gyhoeddus yn ogystal â cherfluniau a phenddelwau mwy eiconograffig o ffigurau amlwg yr 20fed ganrif fel Winston Churchill ac aelodau o Deulu Brenhinol Prydain.

## **Factoid**

## **Related Resources**

Holyhead Maritime Museum, 'St. Columba – Saint and Ship', *Holyhead: Stories of a Port*, 29 October, 2020, archived at <https://perma.cc/5NLA-AP8F>

Nigel Thornton, 'MV St. Columba: Past and Present', *Dover Ferry Photos*, 11 October, 2020, archived at <https://perma.cc/Z92L-KJYJ>

## **Official Website**