TOP TREASURE

Find this at

MUSEUM of ISLAND HISTORY

Education Contact:
estelle.baker@iow.gov.uk

Questions

This is shown from three different angles.

- What do you think it is? Can you describe it?
- What do you think it is made from?
- How big do you think it is?
- What is it made from?
- What do you think it was used for?

FACT FILE

Anglo-Saxon Skillet

What is it?

This metal bowl with a handle is called a skillet. Have you noticed that the handle is bent and that it has a cross on it? The cross is a Christian symbol and we think it may have been used in a baptism ceremony. In a baptism water is sprinkled on the forehead. It is a symbol of being clean and ready for a new life for God.

It also looks like containers used in Roman times for washing hands before a feast or for cooking. What do you think?

Basic facts

Size: Length 348mm, diameter of bowl 188mm, depth of bowl 67mm. Weight 380g.

How old is it?

From about 600 AD– 800 AD or 1200 to 1400 years ago

Significance

We think this is a Christian symbol which makes it the Island's earliest Christian object. This makes it very special because at this time Christianity was being re-introduced to England and we don't have many crosses on objects from this time.

It is also rare to find skillets, especially in such fantastic condition.

What is it made from?

It is made of copper alloy. This means it is mostly made of a metal called copper but also has other types of metal in it. Bronze is made of copper and tin.

Other facts

It was found by metal detectorists in 2005.

Other facts

In 597 AD a monk called Augustine was sent to persuade King Ethelbert to become a Christian. Over the next century many people became Christians

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle was probably written in the time of King Alfred (871–899 AD). It says that the Christian warlord Wulfhere, son of Penda, attacked the Island in 661 AD and then sent Eappa the priest, 'the first man to bring baptism to the Isle of Wight'. Would he have used a skillet like this one for these baptisms?

Twenty five years later in 686 AD Bede tells of a 'dreadful slaughter' when Caedwalla seized the Island and killed around 1200 families who would not convert to Christianity.

These written documents often conflicted with other sources but they give an interesting insight into the time. We have no evidence for hundreds of people being killed in one event.

TOP TREASURE

4787 NBH 2/21 LF

Why don't you?

- Find more images of the skillet online, visit: . Can you draw your own version of it?
- Watch a video of a Christian baptism to understand what a baptism is and how the skillet might have been used. Visit: tiny.cc/baptism-video
- Learn about different religions by watching this video: tiny.cc/religions-video. Can you find out about the symbols that belong to other religions?
- Find out more about thing found on the Isle of Wight during Anglo-Saxon times and create a fact file. Visit: finds.org.uk
- Think of something that is important to you. Can you create a symbol to show it in the box below?

TOP TREASURE

The Isle of Wight Museums and Schools programme is supported by Arts Council England, funded through the Department for Education.

Supported using public funding by
Department for Education
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

4787 NBH 2/21 LF