

# Research bids to uncover the exact birthplace of Henry VII

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THE exact birthplace at Pembroke Castle of the town's most famous medieval son could soon be established thanks to funding from the Castle Studies Trust.

The Trust has awarded a grant to well-known castle expert Neil Ludlow and Dyfed Archaeology Trust to research Pembroke Castle, the birthplace of Henry VII, founder of the Tudor dynasty.

The geophysical survey will further advance the understanding of one of Wales and the UK's most iconic castles and birth place of Henry Tudor, who the town council hopes to permanently commemorate with a planned statue in the town.

Best known for its massive round keep built by William Marshal, the greatest knight of his age, little else is known about what exactly was in the castle's interior.

Even the location of the possible chamber block where Henry VII was born is unknown because of post-medieval destruction.

Tantalising glimpses of what lies beneath the surface were revealed in aerial photographs in 2013, with parch marks revealing the outline of a number of possible buildings.

Dyfed Archaeology Trust with the guidance of Mr Ludlow will use the latest geophysical techniques in-



Pembroke Castle aerial photo copyright RCAHMMW

cluding ground penetrating radar to try and reveal some of the secrets.

Not only could the research reveal the possible chamber block where Henry VII was born, but also what was likely to be extensive high status buildings befitting the great medieval baron and protector of Henry III in his minority, William Marshal, who

built extensively there in the early 13th Century.

Neil Ludlow said: "Despite being one of the largest and most prestigious castles in Wales, its internal arrangements are surprisingly little-known.

"Thank you for the support of the Castle Studies Trust who helped.

"Our knowledge of them

will be increased immeasurably due solely to this generous grant."

In 1456, Henry VII was born at the castle and it is alleged he spent most of his childhood there.

In the past the castle also played a prominent role in the Civil Wars 1642-49 and was besieged by Oliver Cromwell.