

Building Resilience and Self Esteem through Boxing

Introduction

Women's Boxing Wales: Past, Present and Future (WBW) is a sporting heritage project, which documents the experiences of female participants in Welsh boxing. The purpose of the project is to celebrate the contributions they have made to the rich history of boxing in Wales and draw attention to the challenges and barriers that female participants face in the sport. The archive published on People's Collections Wales includes images and interviews with boxers (amateur and professional), boxing coaches, historians and journalists.

Curriculum for Wales

Four Purposes

- healthy, confident individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society

Progression Steps

- This resource is suitable for learners at Progression Steps 3, 4 and 5

Areas of Learning and Experience

Health and Well-Being

Statements of what matters

- Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits (engaging in physical activity, understanding the link between physical and emotional well-being).
- How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being. (self-regulating emotions).

- Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others (setting appropriate goals and planning actions to achieve them, evaluating and reducing risk).
- How we engage with social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and well-being (interacting pro-socially, understanding that my values, attitudes and identity are shaped by different groups and influences).

Humanities

Statements of what matters

- Enquiry, exploration and investigation inspire curiosity about the world, its past, present and future. (making enquiries, considering facts, opinions and beliefs, drawing conclusions).
- Events and human experiences are complex, and are perceived, interpreted and represented in different ways. (expressing opinions, exploring different perspectives, developing informed judgements).
- Informed, self-aware citizens engage with the challenges and opportunities that face humanity, and are able to take considered and ethical action. (recognising that injustices and inequality exists, understanding that many factors influence our behaviours, actions and decisions including ethical and moral judgements and viewpoints, exploring/critically examining own beliefs and actions).

Learning Outcomes

1. I can understand how boxing enables individuals to build confidence and self-esteem, and to develop and maintain positive habits that support emotional well-being, identity and community.
2. I can reflect on the way I express and process my emotions through physical action and activity.

Activity ideas:

Activity 1: The history of Women's boxing in Wales

Students can learn about Women's Boxing in Wales by exploring the Timeline, dates and context information below, and the archive of images and videos in the Women's Boxing Wales account on People's Collection Wales.

Activity 2: Exploring your boxing identity

1. list the qualities of a boxer (e.g. strong, aggressive)
2. Draw or describe what you think a boxer looks like
3. If you were a boxer – how would you express your identity – what ring walk music would you chose? What colours would you wear?

Activity 3: Conduct a survey

	Ask your peers in the class if they watch boxing, or if they are involved in a local boxing club.
Extension:	Develop this into students learning and adopting a boxer's stance and performing a ring walk entrance to music of their choice.
Discussion ideas:	<p>Discussion 1: Boxing and gender</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can you name any Welsh boxers? • Why do you think women and girls were not allowed to box professionally until 1998 and in the Olympics until 2012? • Can you name any female boxers? • Why do you think boxing is a sport mostly for men and boys? <p>Discussion 2: Is boxing violent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with learners, do they think that boxing is violent? • Then watch: Interview with Jade Gitcam (from 2:02 minutes) Interview with Reece Wigley • What are the things about boxing that are important to the boxers in the interviews? E.g. community, health, emotional regulation, feeling strong, family etc • Discuss – what is violence? Is it aggression? Uncontrolled aggression? What do they think of aggression in other sports - football, rugby, martial arts e.g. judo, karate, Taekwondo? • Discuss again, do learners think that boxing is violent? • The aim is not for learners to change their minds necessarily, but rather to help learners recognise that people have different perceptions and interpretations, and that these can be influenced by the rules, structures and expectations of society. In exploring this, learners can critically evaluate different views, and develop their own informed viewpoints. <p>Quote: 'There is a difference between fighting and boxing' (Jade Gitcam)</p>
Extension:	Female boxers to discuss: Lauren Price; Ebanie Bridges; Franchon Crews-Dezurn; Claressa Shields; Katie Taylor.
Resources:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women's Boxing Wales Timeline, dates and context - See below. 2. Women's Boxing Wales: Past, Present and Future - Archive on People's Collection Wales https://www.peoplescollection.wales/users/107796



Zoe Andrews



Reece Wigley

Content in this archive includes images and interviews with Welsh professional, amateur and youth boxers, boxing coaches, journalists and historians:

Professional boxers: Lauren Price, Ashley Brace, Monique Bux

Amateur boxers: Zoe Andrews, Lynsey Holdaway, Rosie Eccles, Charlene Lijertwood, Jade Gitcam, Carrie Ann John

Youth boxers: Zoe Andrews, Lauren Rees, Shauna Miller, Reece Wigley

Boxing coaches: Simon Jones, Gemma Price

Journalists and historians: Gareth Jones, Malissa Smith

Highlights from the archive:

Interview with Jade Gitcam

<https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1997796>

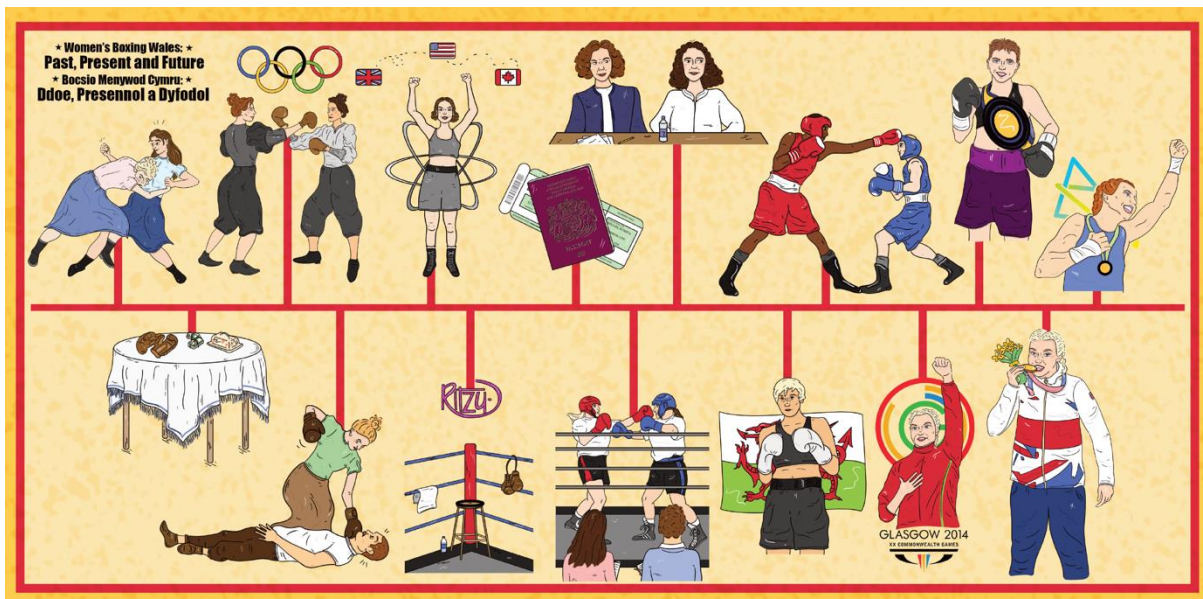
Interview with Reece Wigley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=d4PgsG3yrSM>

Interview with Gemma Price

<https://www.peoplescollection.wales/items/1997766>

Women's Boxing Wales Timeline, dates and context information



Women's Boxing Wales: * Past, Present and Future *

* Timeline order of events: *

- Image 1: 1722 - Women take part in the first public boxing fights.**
- Image 2: 1876 - Nell Saunders wins a butter dish and \$200 dollars after beating Rose Harland in the earliest documented women's boxing match in America.**
- Image 3: 1904 - the 3rd olympics games in St Louis, USA featured a women's boxing exhibition**
- Image 4: 1920's - women began boxing for both self-defence and exercise**
- Image 5: 1950 - Barbara "The Mighty Atom of the Ring" Buttrick rises to fame, becoming the worlds unbeaten flighweight. She eventually becomes one of the first women to be elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame.**
- No Image - There are several instances of women's boxing between 1950-1990. Scholars Malissa Smith, Sarah Crews and Kasia Boddy write about some of this activity in USA and UK and how these instances relate to broader civil and women's rights movements.**
- Image 6: 1994 - First Wales-based unlicensed boxing card featuring all female boxers, promoted by Des Phillips - Ritzzy Nights Spot, Kingsway, Swansea**
- Image 7: 1995 - Llanelli boxer Petrina Phillips fights German Professional boxer Regina Halmich in Germany. Phillips remained unlicensed to box in the UK.**
- Image 8: 1997 - Marie Davies and Marie Leefe fight in the first licenced female amateur boxing bout at Whitland Sports and Social Club, Carmarthenshire. This gained unprecedented press coverage from mainstream news outlets. These articles mainly focused on if women and girls should be allowed to box.**
- Image 9: 1998 - Jane Couch wins landmark case against British Boxing Board of Control, becoming the first licenced female boxer in the UK.**
- Image 10: 2008 - Lana Cooper becomes the first Welsh female boxer to be granted a professional boxing licence by British Boxing Board of Control.**
- Image 11: 2010 - Lynsey Holdaway fights Nicola Adams in Liverpool. Adams made history at the London 2012, becoming the first Olympic Gold medallist for Women's boxing.**
- Image 12: 2014 - Lauren Price wins Commonwealth Bronze in Glasgow**
- Image 13: 2018 - Ashley Brace wins EBU superfly title**
- Image 14: 2021 - Lauren Price wins Olympic Gold in Tokyo**
- Image 15: 2022 - Rosie Eccles wins Commonwealth Gold in Birmingham**

Did you know that the UK's first official amateur boxing match between two female boxers took place in Carmarthenshire?

School friends Marie Davies and Marie Leefe fought at a social club in Whitland, West Wales on 31st October 1997. Davies and Leefe were 16 years old at the time. Also fighting in the tournament [...] was Dawn North, 25, from Staffordshire, who had to come to Wales because two previous attempts to get a match in England failed' (BBC News, 1997).

Featured in this collection:

Lauren Price MBE is the first Welsh woman to win a Commonwealth medal for boxing, and the first Welsh woman to win Olympic Gold for Team GB. In 2021, a telephone box was painted gold in Lauren's hometown, Ystrad Mynach, to celebrate her success at the Tokyo Olympics. That same year Lauren was named BBC Cymru Wales Sports Personality of the Year. Lauren began her professional boxing career with BOXER and Sky Sports in 2022. In November 2022, Lauren was handed MBE by King Charles III.

Rosie Eccles trains with Team GB and she boxes for Wales. Rosie won silver medals at the 2016 Women's European Amateur Boxing Championships and the 2018 Commonwealth Games. She went on to win Commonwealth Gold in 2022 at the Birmingham games.

Lynsey Holdaway is a European Silver medallist and she represented Wales at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

Zoe Andrews first started boxing when she was 5 years old. At 10 she began training out of Briton Ferry Boxing Club. Zoe is part of the Welsh Amateur Boxing team and has her sights set on winning Commonwealth Gold.

Ashley Brace is the first Welsh female boxer to win a European Title. Ashley won her title in 2018 after turning pro in 2015. She is currently coaching boxing in Ebbw Vale.

Lana Cooper was the first Welsh female boxer to be granted a professional boxing licence in 2008. Ten years after British boxer Jane Coach took the British Boxing Board of Control to Court for refusing her a professional boxing licence to fight in Britain, Lana received her licence and made her debut in Swindon against Kristine Shergold. Lana is now a boxing coach at Gelligaer ABC, Hengoed.

Petrina Phillips – (adapted from Gareth Jones' profile in his Boxers of Wales series) Llanelli's Petrina Phillips fought Germany's Regina Halmich in 1994 in Germany when UK-based female boxers were unable to obtain professional licences to box in their home countries. At the time Halmich was a national heroine, and she has since been inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. However, Petrina's contributions to boxing are relatively unknown. Petrina won world kick-boxing titles, and as a boxer she headlined Wales's first women-only bill at Riley's nightclub, Swansea, on September 14, 1994. With

the support of Women's International Boxing Federation, Petrina's dad, Des Phillips organised the event, which saw Petrina take on Midlander Cheryl Robertson for the vacant British flyweight title. After eight hard rounds, the judges were unable to separate them.

Prior to Petrina's fight with Regina Halmich, her father fought (and won) a battle to have Hen Wlad fy Nhadau played pre-fight, rather than God Save the Queen – the Germans compromised by including both. With Phillips constantly moving forward and Regina boxing off the back foot, it was one of those contests in which personal preference can influence the scoring.

When the 10 rounds were complete, the local heroine's right eye was virtually closed; the only scars of battle on her challenger were rope marks on her back. But the verdict went unanimously, but narrowly, in favour of the home fighter. Ill-health and surgery prevented Petrina from training and continuing her boxing career.

Monique Bux is a professional boxer who trains out of St Joseph's Boxing Gym in Newport. Monique made her professional debut on the undercard for Joe Cordina's world title fight in Cardiff, 2022.

Gemma Price is a boxing coach and part of the management team at Llanrumney Phoenix Boxing Club, and she is an inspector for British Boxing Board of Control.

Jade Gitcham is a Welsh boxer who trains out of Jack 2 A King, Swansea. In 2022, Jade won the Women's Winter Box Cup in England.

Reece Wigley is a boxer and youth volunteer at Bulldogs Boxing Club, Port Talbot.

Lauren May Rees is a boxer and youth volunteer at Bulldogs Boxing Club, Port Talbot.

Shauna Miller is a boxer who trains at Bulldogs Boxing Club, Port Talbot.

There is a place for us

says Gemma Price, referring to the women and girls who populate the sport of boxing.