

THE BUILDINGS OF MOREFA BORTH

- the Marsh Harbour

Ceredigion



That part of Borth Village on a pebble bank with the sea on one side and the Cors Fochno marsh some reclaimed and the railway on the other. In the distance is the River Dyfi. Photograph Michael Lewis

Photographs and History by BERYL LEWIS

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SURREY, Fish and Chips, Café and Gift Shop. Morfa Borth, Borth Marsh.

At the northern end of the village with the beach across the road. Built on the site of a field owned by a farmer David Williams. The ground was later owned and developed by Captain David Jones of SeaView now Maes Arfor and his four steamship captain sons. Surrey was built between 1888 and 1901 for Captain Hugh Jones, the younger son.



LEFT Surrey in 2018

Surrey is a single fronted detached house under a tiled gable roof parallel to the street. It has two storeys and a gable at right angles to the main roof in the front with a window for an attic floor. There is a small ventilator chimney close to the south end of the main roof.

The front which looks over the street to the beach, has ground and first floor canted bay windows. It is a narrow but deep building - and today has single storey wings either side to house a café one side and a shop the other. The fish

and chips sales counter is in the front of the main house. The modern front door opens into it and is recessed and a ramp with a handrail leads up to it. String courses (lines of moulding) run along the wall above the top bay window, and the top of the lower bay window and are continued on the walls either side. The roof of the upper bay window is nearly flat, and is edged with a bold moulding. The large windows are modern but keep the style of sash windows with two large lights. The upper window in the gable is also modern. The café has a double door alongside the main building and a tiled step leads down to the pavement. On the other side the gift shop has a modern door and large shop

windows with blinds. Its roof is a shallow lean-to against Surrey's main wall and is tiled. The wall on the south side of the main house is rendered and has an upper and lower window.



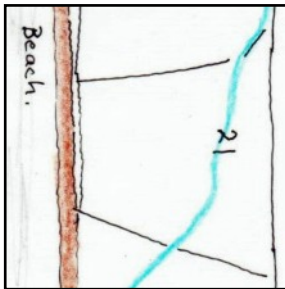
LEFT There is a large extension on the rear of the original house.

On the north side of the house the main house ends with a gable with plain barge boards and there is a recessed door at the far end, a private entry for the family home at the back of the building.

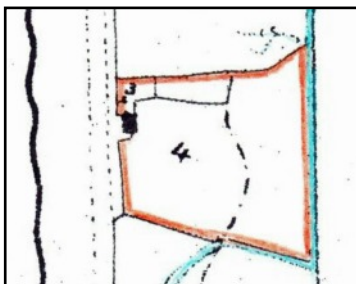
BELOW The rear section of Surrey.



The ground for this house was enclosed in 1826 by David Williams from the shingle bank thrown up by the sea, and called 'waste' because it was no use for farming. The ground measured two acres and two rods (half an acre) and extended to a brook.



LEFT On a map of 1829 it is shown as Number 21 with no cottages on it, and it stopped short of the roadside. A brook ran across it. This land at the edge of the Cors Fochno marsh by then was drained and was suitable for him to farm. A rent of £1.12s had to be paid every year to the Crown manor who owned the ground and there was the option to buy it for £8 which he did (Detail after the map, National Archives LRRO 1/3060).



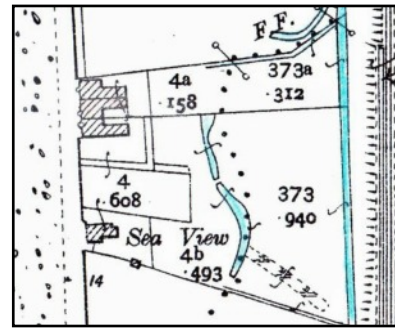
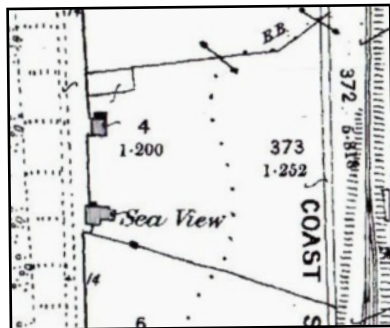
BELOW LEFT By 1848 a small cottage had been built near the street on the north of the ground. The field was Number 4 and the cottage with some enclosed garden beside it was Number 3. Edward Jones was the owner and occupier of the cottage, and he was a tenant of the field, which was still owned by David Williams. Interestingly the 'brook' had been diverted to run along the eastern boundary of the ground. Its route is marked on maps with dashed lines as this was the old course of the River Leri and was used as the boundary between the Cyfoeth and Henllys townships. The road had been there for centuries and was a turnpike road by the 1770s. It led to a ferry from Ynyslas to Aberdovey and was a quick way to North Wales. Fresh water for the cottages and houses came from the brook and for fuel villagers could dig peat on the far side of the

River Leri near Ynys Fergi (Map after the Tithe Apportionments Map for Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Cyfoeth Township, on-line at CYNEFIN)

In the 1851 Census we learn that David Williams had been a farmer but had retired. He was 76 and had been born at Cerrigdifor in about 1775. At the Census he was lodging in Edward Jones's cottage. Edward Jones himself was a 50 year old labourer, born in Troed-y-rhiw about 1851. His wife Margaret was 48 and had been born in Ty Simnai (still alongside the road to Llandre). They had a family of daughters, Mary 18, Jane 13, Anne 11, Eliza 7 and Margaret 5. Only the eldest was not born in Borth - she was born in Penybont.

Surrey would be built between the Terrace of three villas on the site of Edward Jones's garden and Captain David Jones's Sea View House now Maes Arfor. Surrey was built for his youngest son Captain Hugh Jones.

In 1910 for a tax planned but not levied, the owner was Captain Hugh Jones, and the house



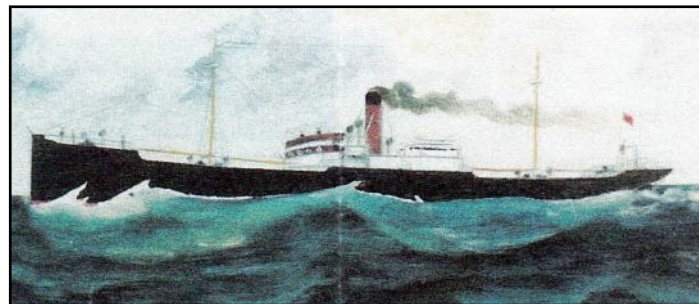
LEFT On the 5 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 the house is not there – and not even planned. However Sea View House was built. *RIGHT* By 1904 the ground on which Surrey was to be built is fenced off (Details of Maps 1888 and 1905, Cardiganshire NW III.10).



ABOVE Captain Jones.

and garden were rated at £12.15s. Gross £15. The 1911 Census said the house had 9 rooms (excluding any bathroom or back kitchen). At home was Capt. Hugh Jones's wife, Ann J. Jones, born in Taliesin about 1876, and she had had 4 children, but there was only one alive then, a one year old daughter, Ann Jane born in Borth. Ann spoke Welsh and English.

In 1918 on November 15th the Cambrian News reported the



RIGHT His steamship the S.S. Heath Park.

death of Captain Hugh. His steam ship, S.S. Heath Park had been torpedoed near Bilbao, and his body had been picked up and buried at Bilbao. Three other Borth men were on the vessel,

and relatives were anxious about them, David Llewellyn Lewis, David Kenneth Jones of Glanmor and Seaman Roberts from Borth. All the crew were lost.



LEFT Maes Arfor is in the foreground then Surrey as a private house. The gable end on the south side of the house was plain with no windows, and the house had a slab chimney with four chimney pots. There is a glimpse of a further chimney at the rear. The front of the house had a low rendered wall around it, with an opening for the front door and another into ground

between itself and Glendower next door. The lines of the string courses were picked out in a darker colour, and the gable at the front ended with a finial. The main chimney looks very similar in shape to the brick chimneys of the three terrace houses and was probably also brick. The windows look like sash windows with wooden frames but large lights (Postcard private collection)



ABOVE Surrey was much more decorative than the Surrey we see today. This picture was taken after 1956 as the promenade had been built. The front door had a pretty little porch roof supported on brackets with a finial. There was another finial on the top of the roof at the front. A 'hot dog' stall was on the north side of the house, and a 'Surrey Cafe' on the other side.

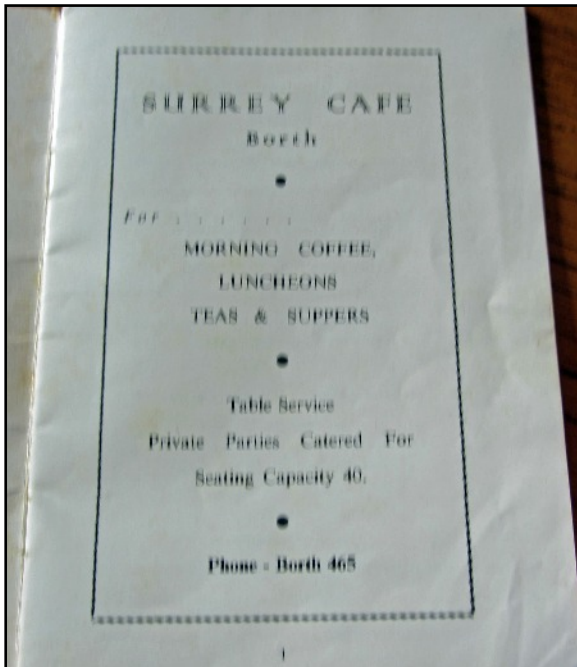
A second postcard of the seafront shows the porch better. It had a central post and side struts in the front. This was matched by a decorative gable on the house. Strips of wood curved up and crossed into an 'X' shape, with a central post. They were painted red, as was the woodwork on the porch. The roof was topped with red ridge tiles. Beside the house on the north was a notice board, and then the 'Hot Dogs' stall. On the far side was a 'Surrey Café' which had a blind to protect the windows from the sun.



Postcards by courtesy of Mr and Mrs David Matthews who drew the arrows to show which was the house now called Maes Arfor.

After 1922 holiday apartments were advertised there, 5 bedrooms and 2 sitting rooms (The Illustrated Borth Guide' Price 6d. Aberystwyth Public Library). In October 1924 a Miss Jones lived there. (Cambrian News) In 1938 Ann Jane Jones paid the Rates.

In 1949, for the Rates the owner had been Ann Jane Jones, but was then Alfred Henry Littler. Terry Davies has written that a descendant of the Jones family now lives at Ynyslas.

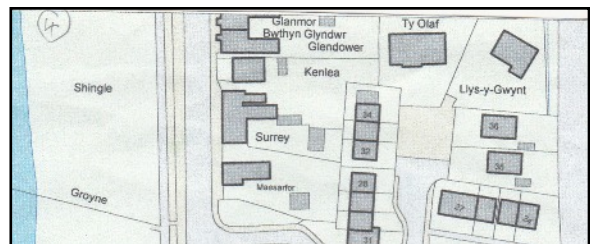


LEFT An Advertisement from a brochure for 'Borth, Cardiganshire' 1s.6d of 1962. The café could seat 40 customers (Private Collection).

In 1963 A. Samson paid the Rates for a house, garden and shop and of course with a business it became more valuable, from £30 in 1949 to £43 (Rates, Ceredigion Archives). It was probably his shop we can see on the postcards.

In the 1970s Surrey and Maes Arfor lost some of their back gardens when the Cae Gwylan Estate was built between their gardens and the ditch beside the railway line.

RIGHT Detail from a modern Crown 25 inch Map of the Council, Surrey shares ground at the rear with Kenlea (Detail from a map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant when assisting research for a local event).



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Hoffem ddiolch i Beryl am fod mor garedig â chaniatáu i ni rannu ei gwaith â'r gynulleidfa ehangaf bosibl.

Ceidw Beryl Lewis yr hawlfraint yn ei gwaith ac mae'r hanesion yn cael eu rhannu at ddibenion preifat ac ymchwil yn unig.

Houses of Borth consists of over 350 histories of individual buildings, lavishly illustrated with photographs, maps and documents. All the files are available from our website: <https://www.archifdy-eredigion.org.uk/tairborth.php>

We would like to thank Beryl for her kindness in letting us share her work with the widest possible audience.

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