

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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FRON-Y-GÔG Morfa Borth

At the far north end of the village, set back from the road and adjacent to the Golf Course. The original bungalow had land bought for it in 1902, and was the home of a Birmingham business man for many years the president of the Golf Club, and his wife. It was a good home by 1910. Today there is a wooden bungalow containing two homes.



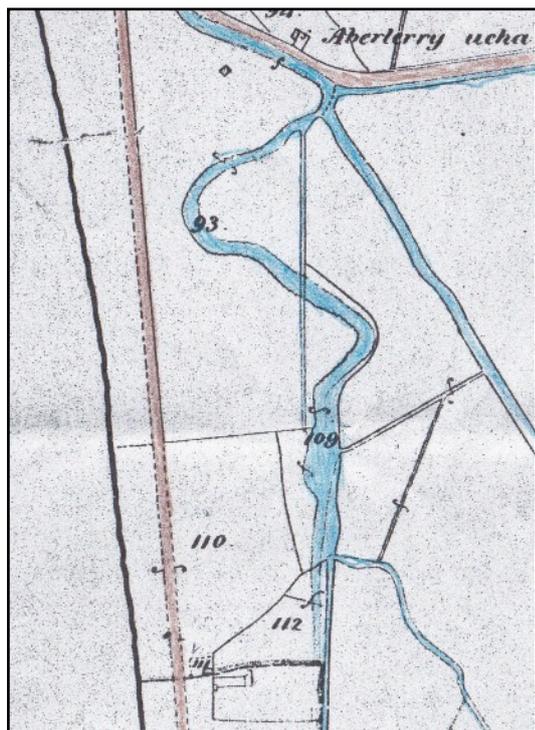
ABOVE The first home. The building has an overhanging roof making a walkway on the north side opening on to its garden. The front door is on the west and has a roof above it supported on brackets. The back of this home has a view of the Cors Fochno and hills to the east past the caravans between its fence and the railway line.



ABOVE The second home has its front door at the end of a wing extending southwards as this building is a T shape. It too has a roof supported by brackets over the front door. There is a shed tucked into the eastern corner of T shape and the garden of the second home is that side.

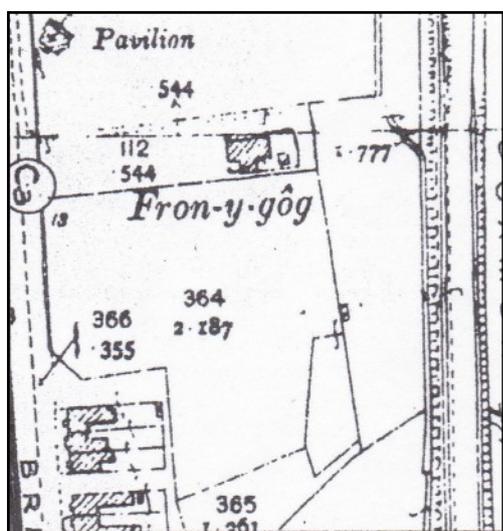
The building is only single storey and is clad in timber as it had to be light because of the many feet of peat below it. The weight of the building would have had to be spread widely on a foundation platform so it could 'float' on the surface of the soft ground. The ground around it is open plan, with plenty of hard standing tarmac for car parking.

The land on which the building stands was originally part of the Cors Fochno bog, owned by the Crown Manor who called it 'waste' because it was no use as farmland.



LEFT Fron-y-gôg stands on the north end of field number 110 called an 'Allotment' in 1848 after a Parliamentary Enclosure of the 'waste'. (Tithe Apportionments Map, Llanfihangel Genau'r Glyn, Henllys Township, CYNEFIN on-line.) It was part of the Gogerddan Estate, and with drainage dug it was used as pasture. Across it running parallel to the sea and marked in brown was the road to Ynyslas which had been there for centuries. It was in use in the twelfth century 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. Field number 110 avoided the old course of the River Lerry marked in blue. The field to the north number 93 was owned by the Jones family of the Gwynfryn Estate at Taliesin, and became the site of the Golf Club. There was an 18 hole course there well before Fron-y-gôg was built.

On September 1st 1891 Sir Pryse Pryse of Gogerddan sold some of his field 110 to a surgeon from 'Buttrells' Llandre, John Harden Jones. In December 1902 Dr Jones sold a strip of it to Mrs Elsie Wright and her husband Alfred Cecil Wright, a Birmingham, manufacturer of screws who lived at Edgebaston. The land cost £95 and they built a bungalow on it. They bought more land from Dr Jones in 1906 - the ground on the north of the bungalow abutting the hedge of the golf course.

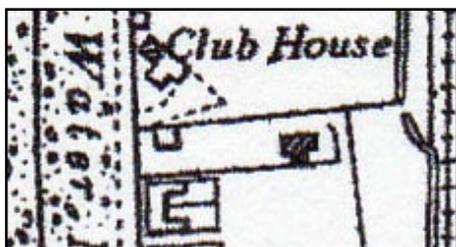


LEFT The bungalow in 1904. It almost filled the width of the strip of ground, and was set back a long way from the road. There is some kind of porch or bay window on the south side and a small garden area. The tiny building was probably its outside lavatory as there was no sewage disposal at that date. (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and published in 1905, Cardiganshire III.10)

The name of the bungalow is Welsh and translates as perhaps the top of cuckoo hill. There were plenty of fields around and no doubt the call of cuckoos could be heard each year. Mr Alfred Wright was a keen golfer, and possibly retired to the bungalow because he was president of the Golf Club from 1912 to 1920. He was also the president of Borth's Agricultural Society's Committee, who planned Agricultural Shows (Cambrian News January 27th. 1911).

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied, £675 was written beside it in pencil which indicated a good quality home. It was called a 'house and land' and Mrs Elsie Wright was both the owner and the occupier. There would have been £12.15 s to pay £15 gross. The bungalow does not appear in the 1911 Census, possibly no-one was there to fill in the form. The Wrights may have been using it as a second home at that time.

By 1925 the Wrights were no longer there. Paying the rates for the 'bungalow' was Thomas H. Carver, £12.10s and £15. He also paid £1.18s and £2 for some 'agricultural land land there. Herbert H. Roberts had been the owner. He was from the prosperous Roberts family grocers and property owners of Robert's Stores (now the Premier Stores). Mr Carver was from Plas Penrhyn, Glandovey, and was called a 'gentleman' in a Deed of April 1925 when he bought Fron-y-gog and its land from the Roberts family for £930. He had been occupying the bungalow as a 'private resident' (Kelly's Directory).



In 1934 Mr J. C. Corfield paid the rates as the owner and occupier of the bungalow.

LEFT In 1935 Brockhill was built on some of the long front garden. (Detail from a 6 inch Ordnance Survey Map of 1948)

Mr Corfield with J. N. Carver set up a 'camping ground' on land the council called 'Fron-y-gôg now part of the 'Golden Sands'. Today caravans stand on land between the end of Gron-y-gôg's garden and the railway line.

In 1935 and 1938 V. B. Toler paid the rates. With votes for the bungalow in the General Election of 1945 were Elizabeth Davies and Charles R. F. Toler. The Toler family ran a boarding house at Moelynys.

In 1949 paying the rates was Violet B. Crossthaite.

In the 1950s Mrs Toler was advertising the bungalow to let, with four bedrooms, one sitting room and all mod cons.

In 1953 the bungalow was up for sale. It was freehold, and had a lounge, dining room, living room, kitchen and scullery, and six bedrooms including a box room. There was also a bathroom and lavatory. Outdoors had well maintained lawns, a good kitchen garden, a coal house, tool shed, W.C. and a garage. The place was in a good state of repair. (June 26th. Birmingham Post - from a collection of cuttings in the Ceredigion Archives, ABY/B/16)) This description explains the valuation put on the bungalow in 1910.

In 1957 and 1963 paying the rates for the bungalow was A. J Jones, and Florence Jones had a vote for the house in 1963.

The present building is in the same place as the old bungalow with the exception of the wing to the south which is longer. Also the boundary on the south has changed, it is no longer very close to the bungalow and at an angle to the main street. It is now at right angles to the main street allowing room for the longer wing of the second home. Its garden and parking area is now fenced or walled and separated from Brockhill which has taken up most of its old long garden to the street. A driveway has been made to access Fron-y-gôg on the north side of Brockhill's garden.



On the far left a glimpse of Fron-y-gog in an aerial photograph dated from 1956 to 1959. It was quite sizeable and rendered or painted white. (Aberystwyth Public Library)

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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-ceredigion.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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