

# 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

*This work is for research and educational purposes only.*

# SABRINA COTTAGE

Morfa Borth - the Marsh Harbour

Formerly part of New Street and on the east side of the High Street. Being built at the 1861 Census for a home by a Rees family of master mariners and named after a schooner whose master was Captain David Rees in 1885. Still owned by the family in 1925.



*LEFT Sabrina Cottage in 2019.*

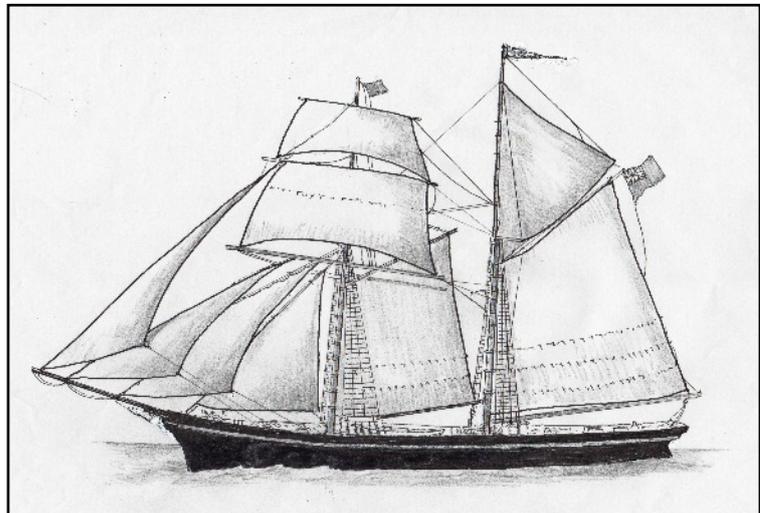
This is the northernmost house in a terrace of three houses. Its front door opens directly on to the street. The walls are rendered and the front windows match those of the rest of the Terrace. At the back a narrow garden extends down to a ditch - a former brook.

For the history of the site please turn to 'New Street'

A master mariner, Captain Dafydd Rees born about 1828 and his wife Margaret were

living in Sabrina Cottage in 1871 called then Number 1 New Street. They had a daughter Jane aged 14 (born about 1857) and a small lodger, John Rees aged 4 (born about 1867) (Census) In 1871 Welsh holiday visitors from Oswestry, Montgomery Newtown and Llanidloes stayed in the house for nine weeks in the summer. and probably came on the train as the station had opened in 1863. 'Mr Rees' was their landlord. In 1880 'Mrs Rees' was the landlady for holiday visitors for four weeks that summer. Two families at once could be made room for. They were Welsh from Newtown, Cemmaes and Llanidloes (Cambrian News). Terry Davies says the cottage was named after Captain Rees's schooner which he commanded in 1885. (Terry Davies, 'Borth a Seaborn Village', p. 37) - and 'A Maritime History' p. 45) The name

*A Schooner*



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does not appear in Council lists however until after 1910 when it was still called Number 1 New Street.

The three houses were built for the Rees family - in 1881 Jane Rees 23 Captain Dafydd's daughter earning her living as a dressmaker was in Number 1, Catherine Rees 55 (the widow of Captain Richard Rees) was in Number 2 and Eliza Rees 45 a mariner's wife was in Number 3 (Census) Captain Dafydd's son Captain Thomas Rees would build Arequipa next door.

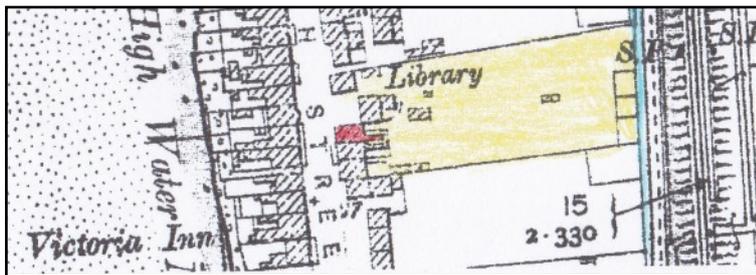


*LEFT Sabrina Cottage in 1886 had a small back yard and a track into the large garden area shared by all the houses. It had more depth than an old cottage but had no extension on the back. The front door opened directly on to the street (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map surveyed in 1886 and*

*published in 1888, Cardiganshire N W III.10)*

In 1891 the Captain's wife Margaret was at home and Jane, aged 33 had not married and was still working as a dressmaker.

In the 1901 Census Captain Dafydd Rees was at home aged 65 with his wife Margaret. The couple said they spoke only Welsh.



*LEFT In 1904 there are tiny buildings at the rear of the house, and three enclosures at the end of the gardens beside the ditch (former brook). A Ty Bach - outside lavatory and perhaps a pig sty might be expected there (Detail from the 25 inch Ordnance Survey Map revised in 1904 and*

*published in 1905, Cardiganshire N W III.10)*

In 1910 for a valuation for a tax planned but not levied the house was valued at £170 with £5.6s to pay, £6.5s gross. The owner was John Rees and there was a tenant called Booker. (The Council did not know his or her first name). The address was still New Street (Ceredigion Archives T/DV/18 and map in the National Library of Wales)

There is no entry for the house in the 1911 Census - no-one was there to fill in the form - so we do not know how many rooms it had. Angorfa had five main rooms.

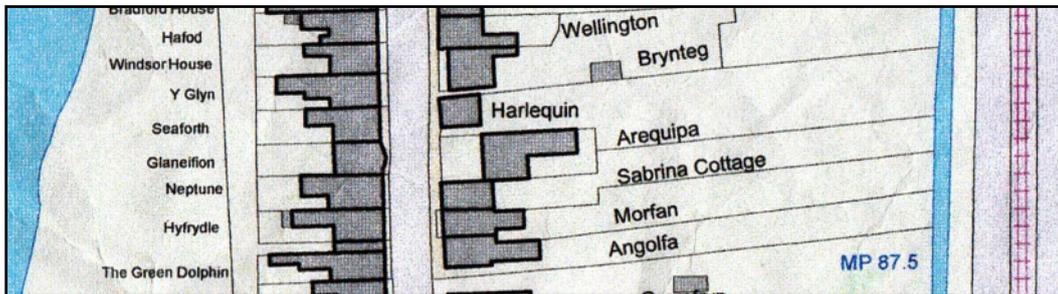
Sometime after 1922 furnished apartments of four bedrooms and one sitting room were advertised for holiday makers in the Illustrated Borth Guide price 6d. (Aberystwyth Public Library). In 1925 John Rees was still the owner, and living there was Nellie Beynon. The house had its name 'Sabrina Cottage'.

In 1945 at the General Election Gwendoline M. and Nellie Bevan and George and Vera Levett had votes for the house. In 1949 Nellie Beynon paid the Rates. By 1957 she had died.

Terry Davies mentions in his 'Borth A Maritime History' that he was told by Glyn Jones in 1960 that Sabrina Cottage had just been sold for the (then) large sum of £1,000 (page 90). A

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previous price had been estimated at about £200. Miss Beynon paid the rates in 1963 she was probably the Gwendoline Beynon who had a vote for the house (Electoral Register and Rates, Ceredigion Archives).



*ABOVE Today Sabrina Cottage has its own garden reaching down to the ditch.*

*(Detail from a Council Map courtesy of Councillor Ray Quant who provided it to help with research for a local event). (Information about the Rees family and a photograph are in Terry Davies 'Borth A Maritime History,' pp 43 - 45)*



LEFT The back of Sabrina Cottage in 2019. Very little has happened to the back. There are still sash windows. A roof light is for the attic floor.



ABOVE The garden.



ABOVE A glimpse of the walling of Morfan next door, it is likely that Sabrina has similar rubble stone underneath the plaster.

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gan/by Beryl Lewis  
[cyf/ref ADX/1629]

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

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**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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