

The Owners & People Of Island House 1902 – 2020

MARCH
2020

Island House Restoration Ltd



After long negotiations with Carmarthenshire County Council exploring all manner of avenues for a possession to be made to save this historic building Island House Restoration Ltd completed the purchase with the intention of restoring the building with the help of many expert advisors whilst the work is carried out and everything documented to show the restoration at various stages of the project.

2004

Roy Granville David Thomas

The executor of the estate of David Walters.

1997

David Walters

David Morlais Walters was the only child of Dudley and Dorothy Walters, he was born in July 1953 and lived at Island House along with his parents who had moved from Llangain, Carmarthenshire when he was 11 years old.

David passed away in May 2004 at the age of 45.

The whole of David's estate was bequeathed to members of his family of which one was the executor of the will Roy Granville David Thomas.

The will was never executed and subsequently the building which was already in a dilapidated state of repair deteriorated greatly in the lifetime and after David's death in 2004. In 2012 Carmarthenshire County Council ordered that the building should be shored up with scaffolding to protect public safety and to keep as much of the house intact as possible as it was of great significance to the Township of Laugharne and had been awarded a Listed Building Status of Grade II* by CADW on the 25th of September 1986.

1964

John Dudley David Walters

John Dudley David Walters (Dudley) and his wife Dorothy Eleanor Hannah Walters moved from Pant Yr Athro Llangain and purchased Island House on the 19th of October 1964, Pant Yr Athro was a mansion-sized house and nowadays is a Hotel and Restaurant. The purchase price for Island House was £4,250.

John Dudley David Walters died on the 29th of March 1993, his wife Dorothy only outlived her husband by 4 years as she passed away in on the 10th of September 1997 leaving the property to their son and heir David Morlais Walters.

1943

Caleb Rees

Caleb Rees bought Island House for £1,800 from Mary Rose Richards on the 15th of November 1943, he is stated as a retired civil servant from Newport Monmouthshire.

He was a well-educated man, after attending a village school in Pembrokeshire he went to further his education at Port Talbot Intermediate School where he was given a scholarship to Cardiff University College in 1899 where he won the Gladstone Memorial Prize whilst studying English, he graduated in 1902 with first-class honours. He then attended several different degree courses ending up with an M.A degree in 1909.

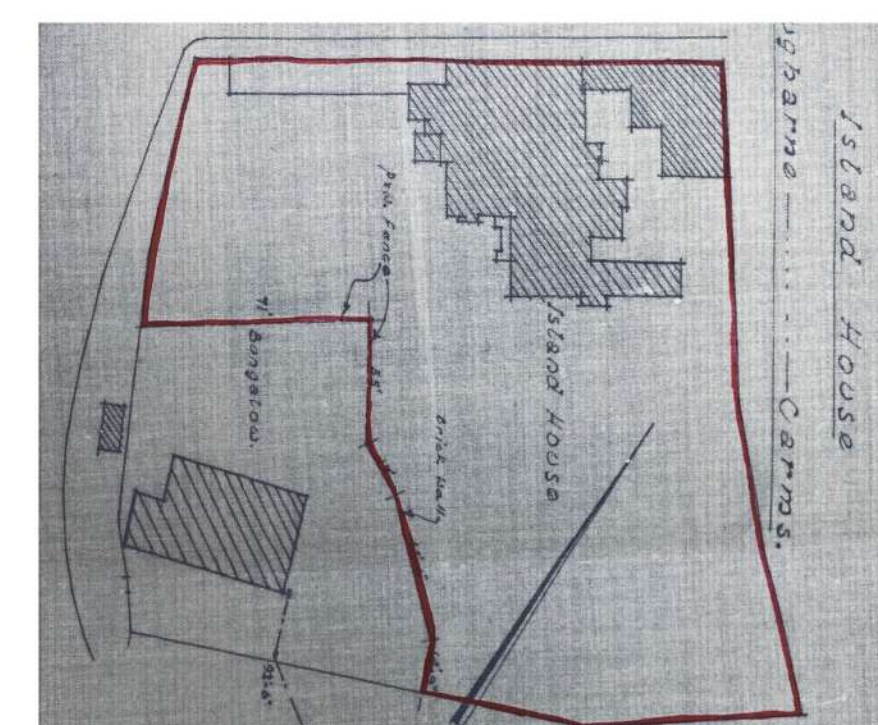


In 1912 he was appointed as an inspector for schools for the counties of Brecon and Monmouth and also the borough of Newport and later on becoming the deputy chief inspector for Wales.

Caleb was born in 1883 and passed away on the 9th of January 1970 only 8 days after his wife Laura Gertrude Powell whom he married on the 28th of August 1922.

Above right is an aerial photograph of Island House taken in 1948 whilst Caleb Rees was the owner of the property, you can clearly see how the garden was kept in an immaculate condition with vegetable patches on either side of the garden, greenhouses along the front wall, a circular feature at the rear of the house and paths around the whole garden.

Before Caleb Rees sold Island House to Dudley and Dorothy Walters he annexed part of the land shown in the plan below in around 1962 and built a house in what was part of the grand garden of the property, upon the sale in 1964 to the new owners he put a covenant in place that the land and new house could be purchased back off Caleb within 10 years of the sale of Island House in 1964.



Plan of the annex of the property by Caleb Rees in around 1962

Caleb, as we have mentioned above, died in 1970 only 6 years after the sale to Dudley and Dorothy Walters which most likely meant that the covenant he had placed on the new property was probably void meaning that the house he built would be bequeathed to his family.

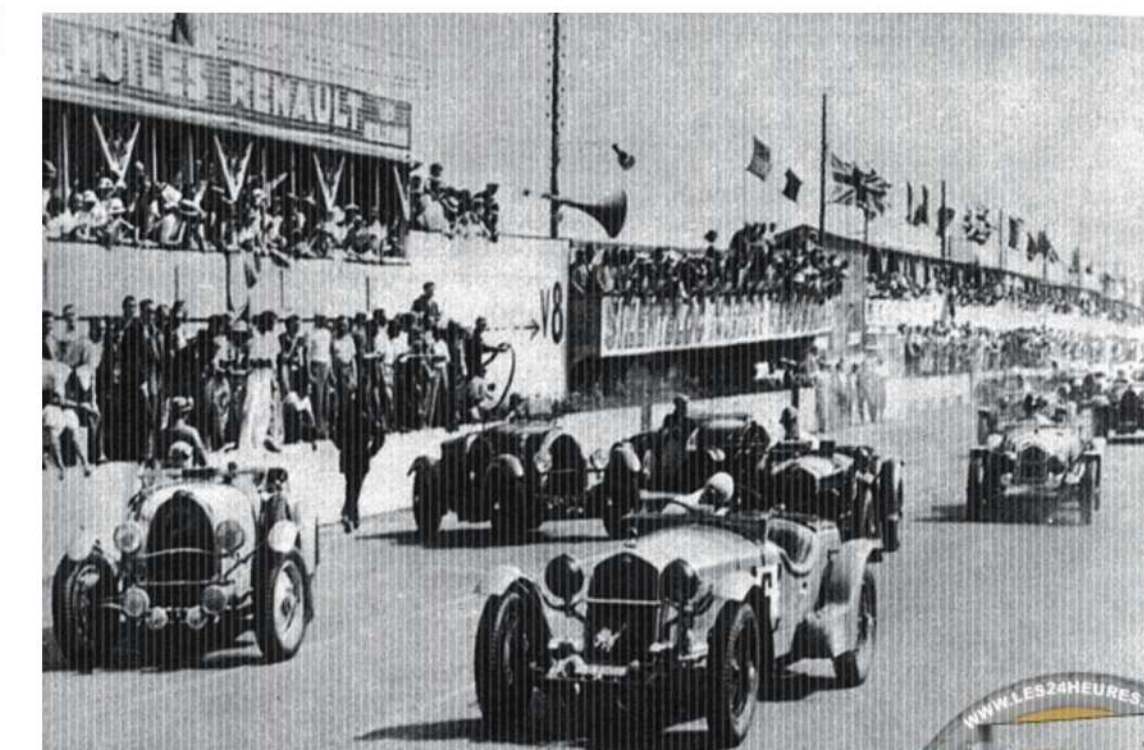
Major Thomas Picton Rose-Richards

Major Thomas Picton Rose-Richards and his Wife Mary Rose-Richards bought Island House from Thomas William Morgan on the 25th of June 1940 for the sale price of £1,250.

Major Thomas Picton Rose-Richards, had served throughout the Great War, and had become a Mid-War MP for Breconshire, before retiring, and moving to Island House on the 25th of June 1940 along with his wife Mary and son Thomas Essery.

Thomas Essery Rose-Richards who went by the name of Tim was a Sub-Lieutenant in the Fleet Air Arm and was born in Swansea on the 6th June 1902.

Tim was a well known racing driver, he had entered Le Mans five times, finishing in 3rd place in 1931, 1932 and 1933. He also raced in Grand Prix, finishing fourth in the 1934 Dieppe GP with a Bugatti T51, and third in the 1935 Eifel Voiturette GP driving ERA R1A.



Tim won a coveted BRDC Gold Star in 1935, and this resulted in him being remembered in the BRDC Hall of Fame, at the famous Brooklands.

When War broke out, Tim volunteered into the Royal Navy. From the Navy, he became a Flight Lieutenant in the Fleet Air Arm, serving at HMS Daedalus on the South Coast, with 765 Squadron.

The Squadron flew the Supermarine Walrus. This was a single-engined 'flying-boat', which was used as a search and rescue and reconnaissance aeroplane.

On the 7th October 1940, during the Battle of Britain, a German Bomber was forced down in the English Channel.

Thomas and his aircrew were sent to rescue the downed crew, in their Supermarine Walrus. As they came down to prepare for landing, their aircraft was raked by machine-gun fire from a German Heinkel, which sent them spinning into the sea.

Thomas was reported missing 7-8 miles south of Anvil Point. None of the bodies were recovered, and so Tim is commemorated on the walls of the Lee-On-Solent Memorial, Hampshire. Tim is not commemorated at Laugharne.

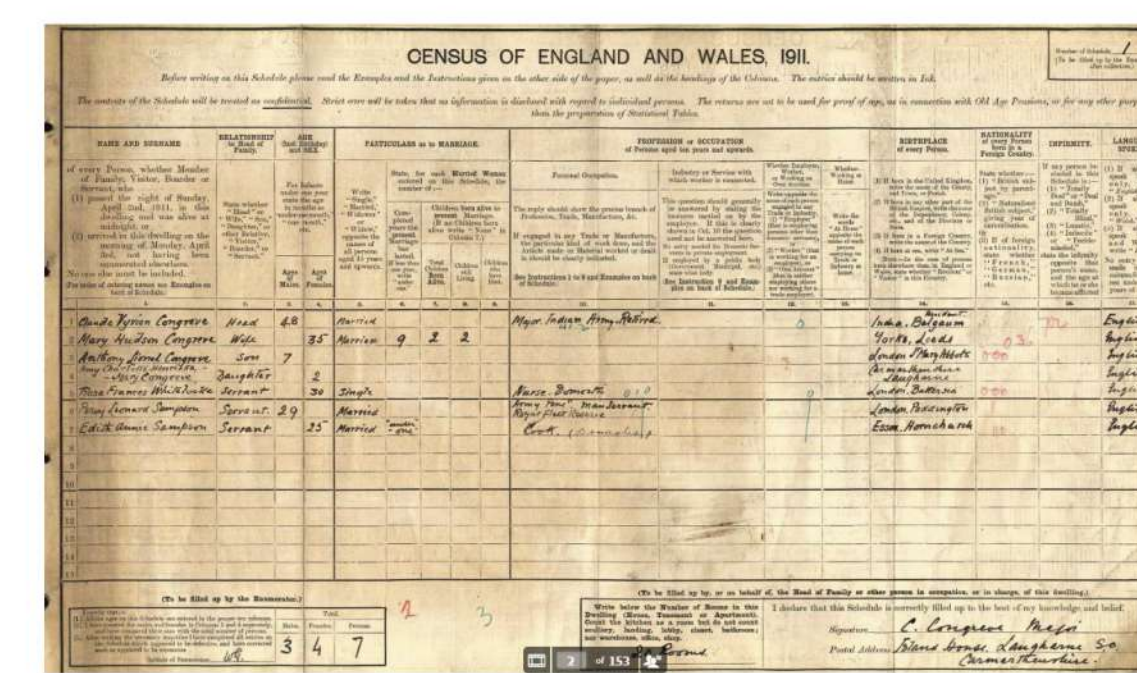
Thomas William Morgan

Thomas Morgan bought Island House on the 3rd of November 1937, he is said to be of Great House in Laugharne and was in business as a Fish Merchant.

Major Claude Vyvian Congreve (Schneider)

Major Schneider of the Indian Army and his wife Mary Hudson Congreve (originally of Leeds and the daughter of Mr Thomas Titley) married in 1902 and took up residence at Island House in 1903, it is noted elsewhere that Major Congreve changed his name from Schneider to Congreve when WW1 broke out but this doesn't seem to be the case as in the local newspapers from this period see him change his name in around 1909.

In 1908 it is reported in a local newspaper under the heading "Drainage Scandal" that the owner of Island House was Mr Thomas Titley and the occupier was a Major Schneider, later on in another news article in 1909 it states that a Major Congreve is living at Island House and they were actually two of the same as the Major had a double-barrelled name "Congreve-Schneider" if the name was changed at this period of time it is not known why as the great war did not break out until 1914.



Major C.V Schneider was the son of Brigadier General John William Schneider, John Schneider was born in 1824 and entered the Bombay Army in 1840. He was in a number of campaigns (Maharatta War 1844-45; the Indian Mutiny 1857 and the Abyssinian War in 1868). He was Judge Advocate General from 1868-72 before becoming Resident in Aden from 1872-77. He then commanded a Division in the Bombay Army 1877-82. He became a General in 1888 and some time along the line he got his Knighthood. He died in 1903.

CONGREGRE Claude Vivian of Island-house Laugharne Carmarthenshire retired major Indian Army died 17 February 1923 Probate **Camarthon** 27 April to Mary Hudson Congreve widow. Effects £2998 11s. 6d.

The mother of Major Schneider Dame Amelia Euphemia Schneider was listed in the newspaper as passing away (16/03/1915) in Laugharne, She was the widow of Sir John Schneider, K.C.B., and daughter of the late Colonel Chas. James Colley Davidson, Bengal Engineers, she left an unsettled estate of the gross value of £867, of which £813 is net personally.

1940

1937

1902