

## Ferryside Residential Education Centre

The story of the Ferryside Residential Education Centre starts at the outbreak of World War Two, when an RAF Air/Sea Rescue base was set up in Ferryside. High speed motor boats were deployed to rescue airmen downed at sea. They were housed in a very large Nissen Hut where the River Towy Yacht Club compound now stands, and launched down a purpose built slipway.

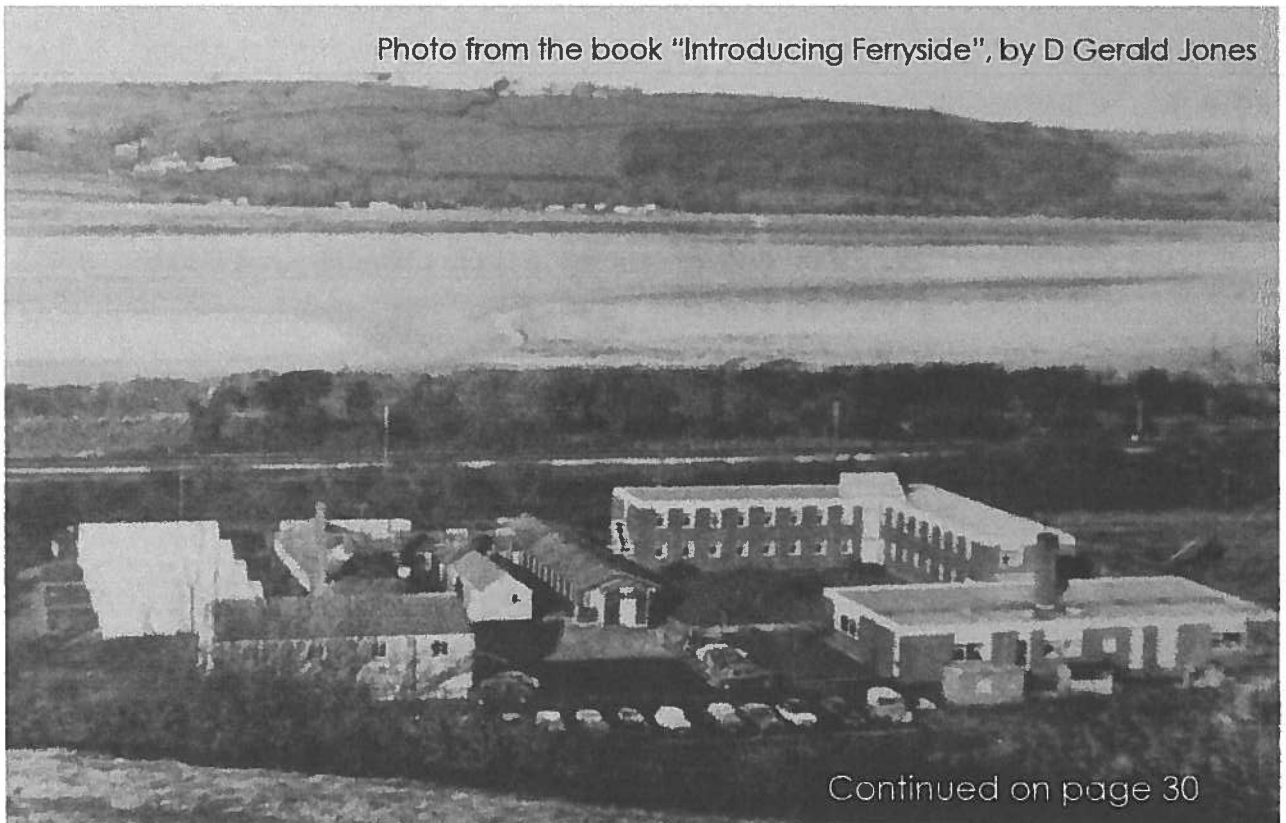
The site was also used for various training purposes. For example, this 1940 photo shows boys of Rotherhithe Nautical School doing boat drill. Interestingly, they are using one RAF boat and one local fishing boat.



The high tidal range and shifting sandbanks of the estuary were problematic for rapid deployment and so, in 1942, rescue operations were moved to Aberystwyth.

However, Ferryside was retained as a maintenance base and continued to be important to the war effort. As many as 120 RAF men were stationed here and they were billeted on the site now occupied by the Education Centre...the site is still referred to as "The Billets" by many locals.

Photo from the book "Introducing Ferryside", by D Gerald Jones



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The base included four Nissen Huts, removed in the 1980s, and wooden huts which are still in place. There was also an open hangar, basically three walls and a roof, which was later adapted to become the centre's main hall.

After the war, the site was acquired by the County Council.

Its catering facilities were used to provide school dinners for the local primary school, whose pupils were escorted down the road by their teachers. This continued till 1990, when the school set up its own catering facilities.

The site was developed as Further Education Centre and officially opened in 1969 by Charles Nevill, then Lord Lieutenant of Carmarthenshire. (He lived, incidentally, in Brondeg, Ferryside). Facilities included a new dining room and kitchen, classrooms and a residential block with 60 bedrooms and two bath/shower rooms. The bedrooms were upgraded in 1977 to include washbasins.

For many years, the County Council have used the site for training courses and conferences. Their Youth Services and Music Services were also housed here.

The facilities have been hired by many organisations for residential events. These include The National Youth Orchestra, WEA, The Church In Wales and many others. The popular Welsh learners summer school "Cwrs y Fferi" was also held here for over 10 years.

The site is now surplus to the County Council's requirements and will be offered for sale on the open market.

Les Jones



## Expression of Interest Form

### Notes Summary

**What is the title of your project?**

**In no more than 15 words, please choose a title which you think best describes your project.**

Forget Not Ferryside: To record and display Ferryside's diverse contribution to the 20th Century

**Reference number**

SH-13-03602

**Date received**

01/07/2013

### Section one: Your organisation

#### 1a Name and address of your organisation

**Name of your organisation** Ferryside Social Enterprise Group

**Address line 1** 2 Royston Court

**Address line 2**

**Address line 3**

**Town / city** Ferryside

**County** Carmarthen

**Postcode** SA17 5SP

#### 1b Details of main contact person

**Name** Les Jones

**Position** Secretary

**Is the address of the main contact person the same as the address in 1a?**

**Daytime phone number, including area code** 01267267123

**Alternative phone number** 07974134858

**Email address** les.jones@btinternet.com

**1c Is the address of your project the same as the address of your organisation?**

Yes

**1d Are you a not for profit organisation?**

Yes

**1e Where did you hear about the Heritage Lottery Fund? Please pick from list or specify below.**

Other

**Please specify**

email newsletter from CAVS about Heritage Lottery event

## **Section two: The heritage**

**2a Tell us about the heritage that your project will focus on and what you would like to do with a grant.**

Ferryside was a small fishing village until the arrival of the railway in 1852. Since then it has a variety of roles, including holiday resort, cockle producer, wartime RAF air/sea rescue station and now is a dormitory for workers in the adjacent towns of Carmarthen, Llanelly and Swansea. It has a thriving primary school and supports a wide range of clubs and third sector organisations, including an in-shore lifeboat.

Some of the wooden huts in which RAF servicemen were billeted during the war are still standing and are amenable to repair and re-use. They are on a site owned by Carmarthenshire County Council, which they are willing to lease at a peppercon rent. With a grant, we would bring these hut into use and create a heritage exhibition. It would, naturally, major on the wartime RAF base but also cover other aspects of wartime life in the area, eg, the Home Guard, work in the Pembrey Ordnance factory and the war's effect on farming, etc.

There would also be space for exhibits on other subjects such as the interesting natural heritage of the Tywi Estuary and

**2b How much is your project likely to cost? If you know, tell us what the major costs are expected to be.**

The majority of the costs will be for building re-furbishment, and exhibition equipment. We can only give an indicative cost at this stage.

**2c How much are you likely to ask for from us?**

10000

**Please now attach any supporting documents.**

**Once we receive this form we aim to contact you within 10 working days.**