



The Foot Tappers News

May - July 2013



Eddie Williams 1941 - 2013

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May 2013

We've all been saddened by the news that Eddie Williams passed away on 2nd April this year. One of South Wales most charismatic characters, always the life and soul of a party who lived life to the full, and beyond. I have known Eddie since the early 60's, when he played banjo, with the Mike Harries Band at No 7 High Street in the old Mavis June School of Dancing Studio. Later, in the same venue saw the first rehearsals of the Mike Harries Marching Band which was later to become the Adamant Marching Band. Then followed many charitable marches through Cardiff where we collected mainly for the Cheshire Homes. Later in the 60's it was the Quebec where Eddie joined the Icon Band. I joined a few years later and we played together for the next 10 to 15 years. The Lions Den was the home of the Icon for the 1970 and early 80's where the band played to capacity audiences every week and it was here that Eddie was in his element.

Aberaeron Carnivals. Again Eddie was the attraction with his risqué songs and anecdotes often to be heard in the Harbour Master or Black Lion. I remember when we used to go to the "posh" camping site on a Sunday (pubs were closed then) where Eddie would be conducting the communal singing. The antics he got up to, like driving his car backwards through the town. Aberaeron will never be the same without him.

Eddie's other bands were Midnight Special, and latterly the Society Band in the Oak in Whitchurch, where we played on a Sunday until about 4 years ago. There is a video clip on the PJS website with Eddie singing which was his last appearance with the Icon in August 2012.

Eddie will be remembered with affection by everyone, for his wonderful voice, and wicked sense of humour with his renditions of the more risqué jazz vocals. We extend to Judith, Bethan and Rhys our sincere condolences at their sad loss.

Eddie's funeral was a memorable occasion and photographs and video clips can be seen on the website

A note from Ian Jameson of the Memphis Seven :- Very sad news about Eddie. He came to France with the Memphis Seven many years ago. The memory of him singing with guitar outside Sandy and Rona's Tennis Club bar is still fresh. Without PA his voice carried right across the orchard.....and down to the river!! A 'true entertainer'; something that most of us jazzers will NEVER achieve.

Eddie Williams 1941 - 2013

The sudden death of Eddie Williams on 2nd. of April robbed the South Wales jazz scene of one of its most loved and charismatic figures.

Though English by birth, born in Redhill, Surrey, on the 10th. September 1941 he lived most of his life in the South Wales valleys. (His father taking employment in the area for BOAC when Eddie was young boy.) Eddie kept the valley boy ,“cheekie chappy”, sense of humour with him for his whole life and was passionately Welsh at heart and a Welsh speaker.

Eddie first came to the notice of the jazz world when he joined the Mike Harries Band in the early 1960's on banjo and vocals. Prior to this, he had for a number of years been a folk singer and guitarist. No doubt the folk idiom had helped to hone the power and timbre of his vocal style. His banjo style was heavily influenced by George Guesnon , particularly in his solo work. He also became adept on the trumpet, playing for both Mike Harries and The Adamant Brass Band. He became lead trumpet for the Adamant and provided a powerhouse role in street parades. He was still playing for them until his premature demise.

Eddie later joined the Icon Jazzmen and was with them in their golden years of the 1970's to early 1980's playing to capacity audiences in “The Lion's Den” at Cardiff's Great Western Hotel. His driving banjo style, alongside Clarence Nugent's drumming, provided the engine room of the band. With his vocals and sense of humour he was a star entertainer and could have made the grade professionally. The Icon Jazzmen during this period played many UK jazz festivals and even the occasional tour to Holland. They featured with both UK and US guest artists providing many sterling performances and accolades from their guests. However, Eddie was happy just to enjoy his jazz. and a pint or two whilst carrying out his duties as an electrician by day. During the late 1980's Eddie joined Midnight Special adding a baritone saxophone to his extensive range of instruments.

Whilst awaiting retirement from his day job as an electronic technician with British Airways, Eddie also became a member of the Speakeasy Jazzband and Creole Quartet (playing the monthly jazz trains for the Heart of Wales railway), taking over from Joe Farler who had joined Chris Barber.

Eddie suffered health problems during the latter stages of his life having to undergo major heart surgery several years ago. He was also diagnosed as being diabetic. His banjo playing diminished slightly but his vocals and trumpet playing lost none of their vivacity. No more the risqué *Celito Lindo* or *Red Wing* , the Spanish menu sang to *Mama Inez* and tear jerking *St. James Infirmary*. Thanks Ed for those happy moments and the *Sentimental Journey* both on and off the stand. *Aufwiedersehen*.

My deepest sympathy goes to his children, Rhys ,Bethan and their mother and wife to Eddie for 33 years, Judith.

Gwyn Lewis April 2013

A selection of photographs taken at Eddie's funeral



From Eddie's house to the Church at Miskin



Arriving at St David's Church Miskin

Visit the PJS Website :- www.pjscardiff.co.uk



March to the Crem



At Coychurch

The Memphis Seven

As you know, the long-running Thursday jazz-club at Mumbles finished this month due to the premises having been sold for development. The Memphis 7 (or 6) has been fortunate to find another venue at Neath, which is an ideal size and very convenient. It will be in Neath Con Club (Constitutional Club) centrally-situated at **11 Orchard Street Neath, SA11 1DT**.

It's a ground floor venue with a good bar at club prices, and street parking is easy too. The intention is to run it as a jazz club on the same basis as Mumbles was, on the first Thursday every month - starting Thursday **4th JULY** With reasonable publicity, hopefully it will become established. Sessions will start at 8-00pm, finishing at 10-30pm (possibly making it easier for local people to get home by public transport etc).

Pete Locke



Roy Davies leads this very entertaining band



Visit the PJS Website :- www.pjscardiff.co.uk



Photo: Paul Dunleavy

The New Georgia Jazz Band

Daniel Sidney Bechet,(son of Sidney), who played drums in a tribute concert to his father at Breda Jazz Festival





PJS GIG LIST



June

4	John Davies Quartet
11	The Wessex New Orleans Band
18	The Memphis Seven (with John Davies)
25	The Society Jazz Band with Gwyn Lewis

July

2	Kennedy's Cowboy Operators
9	The Dave Smith Quartet
16	Hot Club Gallois
23	The NEW Vic Partridge Quartet with Phil Wall
30	John Davies Quartet

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Café Jazz - The Sandringham Hotel, St. Mary Street, Cardiff
Admission - unless otherwise stated
P.J.S Members & Concessions £4 00 Non Members £4.50, Students £2.00



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