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Registered Charity 1068022 **PATRONS:** Dame Cleo Laine, Paula Gardiner, Huw Warren

## Review of the Year 2017 - Adolygiad o'r Flwyddyn 2016

Jazz Heritage Wales is a registered charity 1068022 founded by **Jen Wilson** in **1986** and run by a Board of Trustees and a team of dedicated volunteers based at University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UWTSD). We are not just about jazz but the social history, culture and politics surrounding the music. We are the only mixed media jazz heritage resource centre in the UK and have over thirty years experience of working in the community and cultural industries, developing and delivering projects that reflect the diverse and inspiring communities within Wales. There is ample opportunity in the future for advanced academic study within our **Special Collections Resources** for aspiring students to contribute to our cultural heritage. Discussions are on-going with UWTSD for this innovative initiative.

UWTSD conferred **Hon. Professor of Practice** on Jen in July 2016. We are indebted to **UWTSD** for their support and encouragement of our work, and also to all the staff at **Townhill Campus Library** where we are based.

## WELSH GOVERNMENT'S SAINT DAVID AWARD FOR CULTURE GWOBR DAIVD SANT DROS DDIWYLLIANT GAN LYWODRAETH CYMRU



Photo: Saint David Award

In March 2017 Jen received the **Saint David Award for Culture from the Welsh Government – Gwobr David Sant dros Ddiwylliant gan Lywodraeth Cymru**. A “shocked and stunned” Jen said: “to receive this award from the Welsh Government - especially considering the competition on the night - is the highest accolade. The award places jazz heritage within its socio-cultural context in popular music in Wales.”

After the Awards, Jen retreated back to the jazz office to complete her book on how jazz came to Wales for the **University of Wales Press**. Titled **JAZZ The Devil's Music in Wales**, the book traces the story of jazz music from its earliest days of slave songs and abolitionist campaign songs, ragtime in the cafés during WWI, through to the lady syncopators and orchestras of WW2. Along the way racism against Jewish and African American bands was rife as well as a misogynistic backlash against women performers. Jazz wasn't called the music of protest and rebellion for nothing. **A BIG THANK YOU to Silva Huws** an Advisor on our Board of Trustees who worked for several years proofing the book during its gestation period.

## COAL AND POP MUSIC

Jazz Heritage Wales was brushed by pop stardom again this year by the group **Public Service Broadcasting**; our previous liaison with pop stars was with the **Manic Street Preachers**. Our Collections hold archive footage of **Swansea Women's History Group** documentaries shot during the 1980s. **Public Service Broadcasting** were keen to use sound/image from our **Smiling and Splendid Women** documentary of the **1984/85 miners' strike** for their new **CD Every Valley** which they are currently touring. SWHG was led by Ursula Masson who later gained a Ph.D., Gail Allen (our Treasurer) and Jen Wilson were members. Ursula, who encouraged Jen to set up the Women's Jazz Archive in 1986, died of cancer but her memory and legacy is preserved with us through her writings and video documentaries and through the Women's Archive of Wales for whom Gail volunteers.

Public Service Broadcasting is the corduroy-clad brainchild of London-based **J. Willgoose, Esq.** who is on a quest to inform, educate and entertain audiences around the globe. **Every Valley** takes us on a journey down the mineshafts of the South Wales valleys, with the stories found there a black mirror to the plight of workers everywhere. Although **Every Valley** is the story of one industry in a region and time far from ours, the tales of a disenfranchised working class in this age of turmoil could not be more relevant.

(taken from [www.publicservicebroadcasting.net](http://www.publicservicebroadcasting.net))



## A CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SISTER ROSETTA THARPE



Photo: Sister Rosetta Tharpe

In May 2017 the life and times of the guitarist and vocalist **Sister Rosetta Tharpe** was brought spectacularly to life by the **Swansea 4D Choir** led by **Kate Davies** and **Carol Shephard**. A new composition was composed for the occasion by **Val Regan**, called "**Sister Rosetta**", which was sung to archive footage of the first female rock n roll and R&B guitarist. Jen was asked to give a potted history of Sister Rosetta to a packed audience who then joined in with the choir. Sister Rosetta was a crossover artist, from sacred to secular. Taking gospel into pop and putting the guts into R&B.

In 1938 Sister Rosetta signed with Decca Records, reinterpreting sacred music for the rebellious. She had a rolling guitar style, same as Big Bill Broonzy. Black working class people identified with her

music. She recorded **“Strange Things Happening Everyday”** in 1944, the first crossover record from gospel to become a hit in the R&B charts. She was referred to as the Godmother of Rock n Roll. She left for New York after two failed marriages, and her talent soon got noticed, singing secular music at the Cotton Club. Church people got hot under the collar but Rosetta loved God and nightclubs in equal measure. Rosetta decided to marry for a third time – this time in great style. She brokered a recording deal for the marriage ceremony which was held in a football stadium holding 25,000 people. It was packed, and Rosetta charged an entrance fee. An astute businesswoman. **Ottile Patterson** and **Chris Barber** booked Sister Rosetta for a tour of the UK in 1957 which is where Jen got to know about her from the ads in the **Melody Maker**, the weekly jazz newspaper. One of the gigs filmed and screened on BBC TV, took place on a railway platform in Charlton-Cum-Hardy outside Manchester, with fans riding the Hallelujah Gospel Train. Sister Rosetta died in 1973. The **Swansea 4D Choir** can be seen below, led by Kate Davies and Carol Shephard pumping out the finale to **“Sister Rosetta”**. You can hear the choir singing it on their Facebook page, see below.



Photo: ©Jackie Ford/4D Choir <https://www.facebook.com/4Dchoir/videos/346041912475232/>

## BEHIND THE SCENES OF JAZZ HERITAGE WALES – BY DEB CHECKLAND, CHAIR OF TRUSTEES

The priority of the JHW Trustees is the safety and security of the Collection, and to ensure this, we have had to get out and about, linking with archive, library, and museum colleagues in Swansea and across Wales. We have been delighted to become an integrated part of the vision for the **UWTSD Swansea College of Art**, and look forward to hearing where we will be based in 2018. The recognition by UWTSD of the special nature of our Collections, Prof. Jen’s research and the support of our professional Advisors etc., has been invaluable in enabling us to highlight our work and enhance our profile. Recognition within Wales for the place of jazz, its links to slavery and the role of women, saw Jen being awarded the **St. David Award for Culture 2017** by the Welsh Government., an unexpected and special joy for us all. We have been delighted to host follow up visits. Seen here is the **Cabinet Secretary for Health Vaughan Gethin AM**, presenting Jen with her UWTSD scroll for **Hon. Professor of Practice** at the jazz office. Mr. Gethin AM had hosted the table at the St. David Award ceremony at the **Senedd** in Cardiff and was keen to visit Jazz Heritage Wales and hear our stories. The Trustees recognize that stability and sustainability comes through our partnerships, especially with UWTSD and the Welsh Government. Work is currently underway on updating our



websites, digitizing and cataloguing the Collection, and widening our take up as a resource by students and staff, which are all part of this equation. Another welcome visitor from the **Welsh Assembly** was **Ken Skates AM, Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Transport and Infrastructure**. Mr. Skates AM has a particular interest in heritage and archives and was particularly fascinated in our historical research into how jazz music came to Wales, asking pointed questions on the role African Americans played in influencing Wales' popular culture, particularly with the choirs of freed slaves that visited Swansea in the 1870s and the burgeoning jazz culture of Swansea's 1920s café society.



**Photo: UWTSD. Ken Skates AM at the jazz office**, with L-R Councillor Louise Gibbard, Swansea Council Women's Champion; Julie James AM, Leader of the House and Chief Whip; Jen Wilson; Ken Skates AM; Deb Checkland Chair of Trustees; Alison Harding, Executive Head of Library and Learning Resources UWTSD; Gail Allen, Treasurer; Professor Ian Walsh, Dean of Faculty of Art & Design UWTSD.

## **SWANSEA INTERNATIONAL JAZZ FESTIVAL 2017**

The jazz festival, into its fourth year, is fast acquiring a reputation for excellence and innovation attracting record visitors to the city. Artistic Director **Dave Cottle** ensures a diverse programme of jazz along with workshops, South Wales Schools Big Band Workshops, plus concert and free events all around the Maritime Quarter. This year, the **Three Divas** from Jazz Heritage Wales showcased the best of the classic blues singers, and also featured music and lyrics by the classy, philosophical, downhome piano player Mose Allison, who died last year. **YouTube** features the Three Divas Women in Jazz Allstars Sample, the JHW Archive Tour, and JHW Swansea Museum Exhibition Launch 2016.



**Photo: Elissa Evans.**  
**Elissa, Jen (centre) and Margot Morgan**

## BLACK HISTORY MONTH – CROSSING OCEANS EXHIBITION AT ST. FAGANS



Photo: People's Collection Wales/St. Fagans Museum of History, Cardiff

Our touring exhibition **CROSSING OCEANS: Wales, Slavery and its Music CROESI'R MOROEDD: Cymru, Caethwasanaeth a'i Miwsig** was displayed for a special event at the St. Fagans Museum of History, Cardiff, with African drumming workshops. A total of 1380 visitors attended on the day. Thanks to **People's Collection Wales** for helping to organize and co-ordinate this event for us.

### Jazz Heritage Wales touring exhibition **CROSSING OCEANS**

Our **CROSSING OCEANS** touring exhibition also featured at the **CHWARAE TEG 'Womenspire' Awards** in June. Chwarae Teg is a charity founded in 1992 "Building a Wales where women achieve and prosper." Categories were Rising Star Award, the Woman in Business/Enterprise Award, Learner of the Year Award, Woman in Education Award, Leader of the Year Award, Employer of the Year Award, Community Activist of the Year Award, Woman in STEM Award, Woman in Creative Industry Award, Game Changer of the Year Award, Woman in the Rural Economy Award, and Man of the Year Award. **Photo: Courtesy Chwarae Teg**



## SWANSEA'S MISSION GALLERY CELEBRATES 40 YEARS



Margot and Elissa of the Three Divas with Jen on piano, helped celebrate the Mission Gallery's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with blues and jazz standards. A great evening with poets and painters was organised by artist **Keith Bayliss**.  
**Photos: Mission Gallery**

