



## **PRESERVATION JAZZ SOCIETY ---1989 to Present**

The Preservation Jazz Society or PJS for short was founded by Brecon Jazz Festival favourites the Adamant New Orleans Marching Band and about a dozen of their friends in 1989. The object to promote Traditional New Orleans Jazz music in a six piece band ensemble in a club atmosphere.

Starting at the Bottleneck Bar at the Philharmonic Pub in Cardiff with little money and after a quiet start we built up a solid audience with live traditional jazz bands each Tuesday evening.

Journalist and Novelist Eric Reynolds was given the job of publicity and booking bands up to three months in advance to create a programme structure that be could be publicised well before the gigs took place . We started a newsletter 'The Footappers News' that's still published today.

One of the revenue raising problems at the time was that we could not charge an entrance fee to the music room at the pub, the only income available was raffle tickets plus a donation from the Pub.

Thanks to Dai Richards, a Cardiff City Council Counsellor at the time with a brief for promoting the Arts and an Artist himself, the PJS were given a helpful grant each year for as long as Dia had a say in things or at least until the Council changed-which it did after several years. None the less without Dia's help things would been a difficult.

The grant put the society on a sound financial footing and enabled a great range of bands from further afield to play at our gigs.

Builders work took hold at the Philharmonic Pub and we moved to the Golden Cross Pub, Custom House St, Cardiff. We bought a second hand piano which added much to the gigs. One of the notable bands amongst many to visit us was the Grand Dominion Jazz Band from Canada.

The world famous Lions Den Bar in the basement of the Great Western Pub where just about everyone in Jazz worldwide had played had closed. Around 1990 moves were afoot to set up a permanent jazz venue to present a wide range of jazz



in Cardiff.

The motivating force was the Welsh Jazz Society which had put on successful Cardiff Jazz festivals over the years at various venues culminating in three fabulous festival weekends in the early eighties at St Davids Hall with people like Sarah Vaughan, Bill Eckstine, Teddy Wilson and many many other top line artists.

WJS and their director with Jed Williams, the music promoter who did so much to make the Brecon Jazz Festival a success together with Chris Hodgekins of Jazz Services UK and Cardiff Jazz Society set up the legendary Four Bars Inn.

The FBI venue was located upstairs at the Globe Pub opposite Cardiff Castle it was given a small stage, some stage lighting, and a sound system. A grand opening took place with an all day Jam session led by Humphry Lyttelton, an icon of the British Jazz Scene.

An invitation was given to the Preservation Jazz Society to present New Orleans Traditional Jazz there and we moved from the Golden Cross as that venue was changing.

For some years the very best Jazz musicians from Britain as well as from around the world played at the Four Bars Inn.

Some notable artists were Count Basie's tenor player Buddy Tate and trombonist Al Grey, Basie's trumpet stylist Harry 'Sweets' Edison (he also one of Frank Sinatra's' favourites) as well as famous big band Jazz trombonist, Urbie Green.

Famous jazz guitarists who played there were Barney Kessel, Herb Ellis- Howard Alden- ace gypsy style guitarist Fapy Lafertin, from the Netherlands.

Great traditional style trumpeters who played there were Wild Bill Davison, Yank Lawson.

Al Cohn the great American Be -Bop tenor player Woody Herman fame played there also.

Others were pianist Art Hodes, one of the really great early jazz pianists.

Dick Wellstood a great stride style piano player from the USA and a friend via the telephone of Irving Berlin. Mr Berlin who was nearly 100 at that time would



only converse with friends by appointment via the telephone so Dick told us at the gig.

Another great pianist Oliver Jones this time from Canada played there and as a youth was taught by Oscar Peterson's sister to play jazz piano - an Oscar mark two I think. The venue deservedly won itself a big reputation for music excellence.

At our Tuesday evening slot at the FBI we presented many great traditional jazz bands from all over Britain, Europe and the USA with full support from our audience. At this time Alun Jones took over the role of organising and booking the bands as well as publicity and publication of the Foottappers News at the PJS a role which he does to this day.

The Venue at the 'Four Bars In' came to end and so in 1995 the Welsh Jazz Society and the PJS moved to the 'Cafe Jazz' at Sandringham Hotel in a joint venture with the Hotel owners - the Dutton Family.

With their support the downstairs Restaurant was adapted to provide a small stage, stage lighting and sound system. This enabled the Jazz audience to dine and enjoy great music in comfortable surroundings.

During the opening week we had Spike Robinson an internationally renowned American Be Bop Tenor Sax player on one night, on another night we had the well known British tenor sax player Art Themen, and the next Cardiff's favourite new Orleans Jazz Band the Icon Jazz Band.

'Cafe Jazz' was officially opened in 1996 by Iris Williams the well known Welsh Jazz singer who now lives in New York I believe.

Very many internationally famous jazz musicians have since played at Cafe Jazz including, Warren Vache, the brilliant jazz cornet player - Scott Hamilton, a sumptuous tenor sax ballad player from America, Kenny Devern, a wonderful clarinetist from the USA, Bobby Shew, a top Big Band trumpet player from Canada.

Marty Grosz, Jazz Guitarist, raconteur and wit and son of the famous German anti Nazi cartoonist and painter from the Weimar era also played Cafe Jazz and the FBI



Ken Peplowski a top American tenor player- Stan Tracy, a top British Be Bop pianist, Alan Barnes one Britain's leading saxophone players, Bruce Adams top jazz trumpeter from Scotland and Kirk Lightsey one of the early Be Bop Pianists to name a few,

John Gibbon, the Jazz promoter and drummer organised tours in the region with leading Jazz musicians from Britain and 'Cafe Jazz' was always included on the tour venues with many top musicians including Julian Marc Stringle, British tenor player, Dick Pierce, Ronnie Scots trumpeter and many many others.

At our PJS traditional Jazz night held each Tuesday evening we regularly presented 'The Icon Jazzmen' the six piece band who helped found the Society and who first formed in the early 1960's The 'Icon' were well known traditional Jazz Band who played at many festivals across the country and Europe first got together at the famous dockland pub the 'Quebec' which has a jazz history of its own.

New Orleans Heat, a well known traditional jazz band throughout Britain and Europe have visited us numerous occasions and played to a packed house on each occasion

The late Norman Thatcher, one Britains' premier New Orleans style trumpeters gave full and invaluable support to the society and was a regular visitor with his own band and other bands

Other regular visitors were the renowned west Wales band 'The Memphis 7' always a great gig and a full house.

Notable guests have been Sammy Rimington the Internationally famous New Orleans style clarinet player.

The Phil Masons' Traditional Jazz Band with Christine Tyrrel from the UK played for us many times . This band were well known throughout Europe.

Rod Mason's Hot Six Jazz Band from Germany- Rod was an outstanding Louis Armstrong Style trumpeter and had a big reputation throughout Europe

Sweden's top trad band, Mistos Hot Lips Jazz Band' visited us and a really great night was had by all !

Jeff Barnhart one of the worlds leading and most dynamic modern day stride style and ragtime pianists has visited us several times and given some memorable concerts.

We were fortunate to have visit us the great Tommy Burton and his Sporting house Band in a never to be forgotten side splitting night. Besides being a wonderful Jazz pianist, Tommy was stand up comic par excellence.

Other notable musicians were the late John Barnes, a great British tenor player and raconteur and entertainer . Roy Williams one of Britain's all time great trombonists, both he and John Barnes visited us separately with support from the Keith Little Band.

We also had another visit from Canada's Grand Dominion Jazz Band.

Charlie Clark's 10 Avenue Jazz Band a band well known in California and festivals in the UK paid us several visits with Charlie on Piano entertaining and six piece band playing traditional and mainstream favourites. Always a great night.

Jim Beatty a traditional style clarinettist from Seattle well known on the Jazz Festival scene in the UK and Europe paid us several visits and sat in with Top line local musicians and entertained us all with his powerful playing and 'his own songs'

We are privileged to have living locally some great musicians, New Orleans clarinet and Saxophone player John Scantlebury is a regular visitor, John is playing is well known throughout the country and Europe and is a class player in the New Orleans style.

Other local musicians of note are the very entertaining and outstanding violinist Heulwen Thomas, talented vocalist Jane Williams and with her band, Donnie Joe Sweeney and his American Swing, The Wessex New Orleans Jazz Band and the John Davies Quintet amongst many more.

We were also fortunate to have playing for us until recently a great British trombonist Paul Munnery of 'Harlem' Big Band fame. This remarkable band toured Britain and Europe at top venues playing classic jazz music of the 1920's Paul was a really top player and loved playing at Cafe Jazz with its friendly family atmosphere.



Notable bands from Bristol have visited including the Blue Note Jazz, band, Henry's Hot Six, The Titanic Tea Room Ensemble, The Old Malt House Jazz Band and from the midlands the Zenith Hot Stompers, from north Wales the legendary Keith and Marcia Pendlebury and guests.

All this of plus the best of local jazz through out the week and a regular blues night each Friday evening and a Jazz Session on Saturday night plus a disco to late.

Since its inception in 1989, The Preservation Jazz Society with the help of its supporters have financed and presented live traditional jazz on Tuesday each week a total of over 1500 hundred gigs not including many Christmas Specials at other venues.

Dutton Hotels have given excellent support to the PJS during our stay at Cafe Jazz.

**Written and compiled by Paul Dunleavy 6th July 2020 (Cardiff)**  
**For Brecon Jazz Festival 2020**