

MERTHYR TYDFIL 1955-75

MEMORIES OF POPULAR MUSIC
ATGOFION O GERDDORIAETH BOBLOGAIDD

THE PETE LOVIS SCRAPBOOK

FROM ANTHONY LOVIS - PETE LOVIS' SON



The Billy Evans Band with Frankie Vaughan, who they supported at Penrhys Community Centre. From left to right: Gwyn (vocals), Ernie (bass), Frankie Vaughan, Billy Evans (Keyboards), Pete Lovis (drums/vocals) and Wyndham (guitarist).



Pete Lovis with famous American session drummer Kenny Clare in the early 1960s.



Pete Lovis with Petula Clarke and Rod Stewart on the QE2 in 1994.



During many years of travelling to clubs, my Dad was often offered resident drummer positions and after deciding to leave the New Pence, he became resident drummer at various times in the Martyrs Club, Merthyr Labour Club, the Jubilee Club, Aberfan Social Club and Treharris Welfare Club. During this time he played drums for Emile Ford, Russ Abbot, Lyn Paul (ex-New seekers) and many other well-known artistes.

My Dad says that when he was a young teenager, he was a big fan of the Billy Evans Band so when he was asked to join them, he swapped his residency at the Martyrs Club with Billy's drummer who was suffering health problems. Dad had deputised in dance bands like the Ken Fry Combo, the Jack Leycock Band and resident bands at Bindles (in Barry) and the Double Diamond (in Caerphilly). He fit right in and helped modernise Billy Evans' band to a degree which pleased Billy, as their popularity was rekindled. He loved his last few years playing with the band and apart from a second short stint at the Martyrs Club, he lay down his drum sticks in 1980 when he moved to Pontypool to take up the post of Superintendent Registrar.

My dad became President of the Rotary Club of Pontypool in 1992 and was expected to make lots of speeches, and he found himself in great demand as an after dinner speaker. As such he humorously talked about his experiences over the years as a drummer/ agent/ entertainer because, as he says, "when you're not doing it any more, you can still talk about it" and by gosh, can my Dad talk about it.

My Dad took quite an interest in the "Cheatin' Harts", who did a lot of work through his agency and they recorded many of his songs at Rockfield studios, Monmouth (where Queen recorded "Bohemian Rhapsody"). The lead singer was Lynn Mittell (now Owen Money). In 1966, they recorded one of my Dad's songs "The Bad Kind" and it was released on EMI's Columbia Label. It sold reasonably well but was not 'aired' sufficiently to make it a success. In 2007, a guy in America was putting together a compilation album to represent 'basement beat' which in plain English means raw '60s music and he apparently loved "The Bad Kind", so included it on the album. The album proved to be a massive success topping the American Basement Beat chart for several months and reportedly sold well in many European Countries. Lynn Mittell is lead singer and my Dad and his lead guitarist/co-composer Gwyn Lewis joined in with the Cheatin' Harts.



To listen to 'The Bad Kind' scan the QR Code.



All photographs courtesy of Anthony Lewis.