

JONES, ENOCH ROWLAND (1912-1978), euphonium player and singer

Name: Enoch Rowland Jones
Date of birth: 1912
Date of death: 1978
Spouse: Roseann Jones
Child: Sally Reburn Jones
Child: Sybil Roishna Jones
Parent: Annie Jones (née Lloyd)
Parent: Timothy Jones
Gender: Male
Occupation: euphonium player and singer
Area of activity: Music; Performing Arts
Author: Trevor Herbert

Rowland Jones was born on 19 July 1912 in the village of Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen in the Amman Valley, Glamorganshire, the son of Timothy Jones, a coal miner, and his wife Annie (née Lloyd). He had a younger and an older sister: Peggy and Nellie Bronwen respectively.

He demonstrated some musical talent as a child, and at the age of twelve, three years before he started working in the local coal mine, he joined the village brass band. It was conducted by his grandfather and was one of the better bands in Wales. As was the case in brass bands at that time, his learning was through imitation rather than tuition. He settled on the euphonium and his talent on the instrument soon came to the fore. His performances with the band in national contests in London displayed his talents and brought him to the attention of Arthur O. Pearce, the renowned conductor of the Black Dyke Mills Band. In 1934 Pearce trekked to Wales to recruit him. Players in sponsored works bands were provided with a job, and during his period at the Black Dyke Mills in Queensbury, Yorkshire, he was described as a 'gasman'. He was at Queensbury until 1939, when he was attracted away by a better offer from the Bickershaw Colliery Band in Wigan, which was in the midst of its golden period of success. Here he was given work in the colliery pay office.

By this time Jones was developing a second career that was to bring him even greater celebrity. He had always been known as a talented singer, and his tenor voice was regarded as being so attractive that he was invariably listed as the vocal soloist with the bands with which he played euphonium. Despite his obvious facility as an instrumentalist, he started to become a major attraction as a vocalist. The conductors of both the Black Dyke Band and Bickershaw Colliery Band had encouraged him to take voice lessons with the well-known singer and teacher Tom Burke.

In 1947, as London's post-war musical institutions were being re-assembled, he successfully auditioned as a soloist at the Sadlers Wells Opera, and was immediately given major roles, including Rodolfo in *La bohème* and Lensky in *Yevgeny Onegin*. In 1951 his reputation was further enhanced by his performance as Boris in the first UK performance of Janáček's *Kát'a Kabanová*. In the 1960s he left Sadlers Wells and worked prolifically at Covent Garden, in various concerts and for the BBC. He also appeared regularly as a soloist on Victor Silvester's radio shows.

He met and married his wife Roseann in Leigh in 1941, and the couple had two daughters, Sybil Roishna, born in Leigh in 1945, and Sally Reburn born in 1952 after they had moved to Ealing. They later lived in Ruislip, and moved in 1971 to Llanrhaeadr-yng-Nghinmeirch in Denbighshire. Rowland did some teaching and took parts occasionally with the Welsh National Opera. He died at the age of 66 on 28 August 1978, and was buried in Old Carmel Cemetery, Gwaun-Cae-Gurwen.

As a singer he was always credited with having a fine lyrical voice, and while he sang most of the great tenor roles he was especially popular for his lighter singing. Indeed, one of his most famous performances was in *Die Fledermaus*, which he sang when Sadlers Wells moved to the Coliseum Theatre and adopted its new name, English National Opera. His celebrity as a singer, however, should not overshadow his euphonium playing, which was technically faultless, and his lyrical phrasing, obviously influenced by his vocal skills, was stylish and nuanced: as touching as the instrument had ever sounded.

Author

Trevor Herbert

Sources

Birth certificate

Chris Helme, '[The Prince of the Euphonium](#)', 4BarsRest.com website

Phyllis Kinney, *Welsh Music, the journal of the Guild for the Promotion of Welsh Music* 6/1, 1979

Personal witness of his playing

Additional Links

Wikidata: [Q35695307](#)

Published date: 2017-08-08

Article Copyright: <http://rightsstatements.org/page/InC/1.0/> 

The Dictionary of Welsh Biography is provided by The National Library of Wales and the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. It is free to use and does not receive grant support. A donation would help us maintain and improve the site so that we can continue to acknowledge Welsh men and women who have made notable contributions to life in Wales and beyond.

Find out more on our [sponsorship page](#).

