

JONES, GWILYM GWALCHMAI (1921 - 1970), musician

Name: Gwilym Gwalchmai Jones
Date of birth: 1921
Date of death: 1970
Parent: Miriam Jones
Parent: William Tomley Jones
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician
Area of activity: Education; Music; Performing Arts
Author: Huw Williams

Born at Llanerfyl, Montgomeryshire, 4 January 1921, son of William Tomley Jones and his wife Miriam. He was educated at Llanerfyl primary school and at Llanfair Caereinion secondary school, and studied music privately with [Maldwyn Price](#), Dr. Calvert (organ) and Powell Edwards (singing). He later followed a course in music at the Royal Manchester College of Music (1950-53) where he made a name for himself as a singer and won the college's Curtis gold badge, its highest honour for singing. He went on to study in the college's opera dept. (1953-54), and won the Imperial League of Opera prize (1954).

He taught (part-time) at Llanfair Caereinion secondary school (1954-57) before being appointed (1957) to the staff of the Royal Manchester College of Music. He was awarded an honorary fellowship by the college a few weeks before his sudden death (at Llanerfyl), 12 January 1970. A memorial fund, bearing his name, was set up to enable promising Welsh singers to receive tuition at the college in Manchester.

He is remembered particularly as a successful teacher of singing, and as one who was enthusiastic for raising performing standards. After winning prizes himself at the national eisteddfod and the International Eisteddfod, Llangollen, he opened a studio for singing at Rhyl, Caernarfon and Wrexham (1954-57), and several of his pupils became well-known figures in *eisteddfod* and concert circles. Many of the students who were taught by him at the college in Manchester won international acclaim in the field of opera.

In the midst of his great activity as a college lecturer, he was much in demand throughout Wales as a conductor of singing festivals and as an eisteddfod adjudicator. He was also the founder (in 1959) of Cantorion Gwalia, which was regarded as an interesting experiment as every member of that party was an experienced soloist.

Author

Huw Williams, (1922 - 2002)

Sources

Personal research

Additional information from Mrs. Glenys Jones, his widow, through Gwyn Erfyl, his brother

Further reading

Richard Elfyn Jones, 'Jones, Gwilym Gwalchmai (1921-70)', *Cydymaith i Gerddoriaeth Cymru* (Talybont 2018), p.280

Additional Links

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