

DAVIES, ALUN WYNNE GRIFFITHS (1924-1988), musician and critic

Name: Alun Wynne Griffiths Davies
Date of birth: 1924
Date of death: 1988
Gender: Male
Occupation: musician and critic
Area of activity: Literature and Writing; Music
Author: Rhidian Griffiths

Alun Davies was born 6 January 1924 in Llandybie, Carmarthenshire, the son of William and Emily Davies. When he was three the family moved to a milk business in Tooting and he was raised in London. His interest in music was fostered by the musical activities of the Welsh Independent chapel at Radnor Walk which his family attended, but as his father died when he was twelve he was unable to pursue his education.

After a period helping in the family business he joined the civil service in London and served in several ministries. During the Second World War he served in the Royal Air Force Photographic Unit, and retained an interest in photography throughout his life. In 1976 he joined the Welsh Office and moved to Cardiff. While in London he had pursued a course of study at Trinity College London and in 1962 gained a University of London external B. Mus. degree, as well as other music diplomas, specializing in conducting. He conducted more than one choir in London, particularly the London Welsh Youth Choir from 1963 to 1976, and he formed a choir at the Welsh Office after his move to Cardiff.

He acted as chief music editor of *Caniedydd yr Ifanc* (1980), the youth hymnal of the Welsh Independents, and also edited the Union of Welsh Independents' biennial cymanfa ganu programme. A number of his arrangements of Welsh folk-songs were published and several of his tunes and harmonisations appeared in denominational collections. He was an active member of the Welsh Folk-Song Society and treasurer of the Welsh Hymn Society. He was also a knowledgeable and constructive critic who contributed reviews to numerous journals, including *Y Ddinas* (the journal of the London Welsh), *Musical Opinion* and *Welsh Music*. At the time of his death he was the music critic of the *Western Mail*. A genial man, he enjoyed a wide circle of friends and acquaintances.

In 1976 he married a member of his London choir, Margaret Watts from Craig Cefn Parc, and they had two sons. He died suddenly in Cardiff on 12 June 1988. His funeral was held at Minny Street chapel and his remains cremated at Thornhill Crematorium.

Author

Rhidian Griffiths

Sources

Welsh Music, the journal of the Guild for the Promotion of Welsh Music, Spring/Summer 1988, Winter 1988/9, Spring/Summer 1989

Personal knowledge

Information from his family

Additional Links

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