

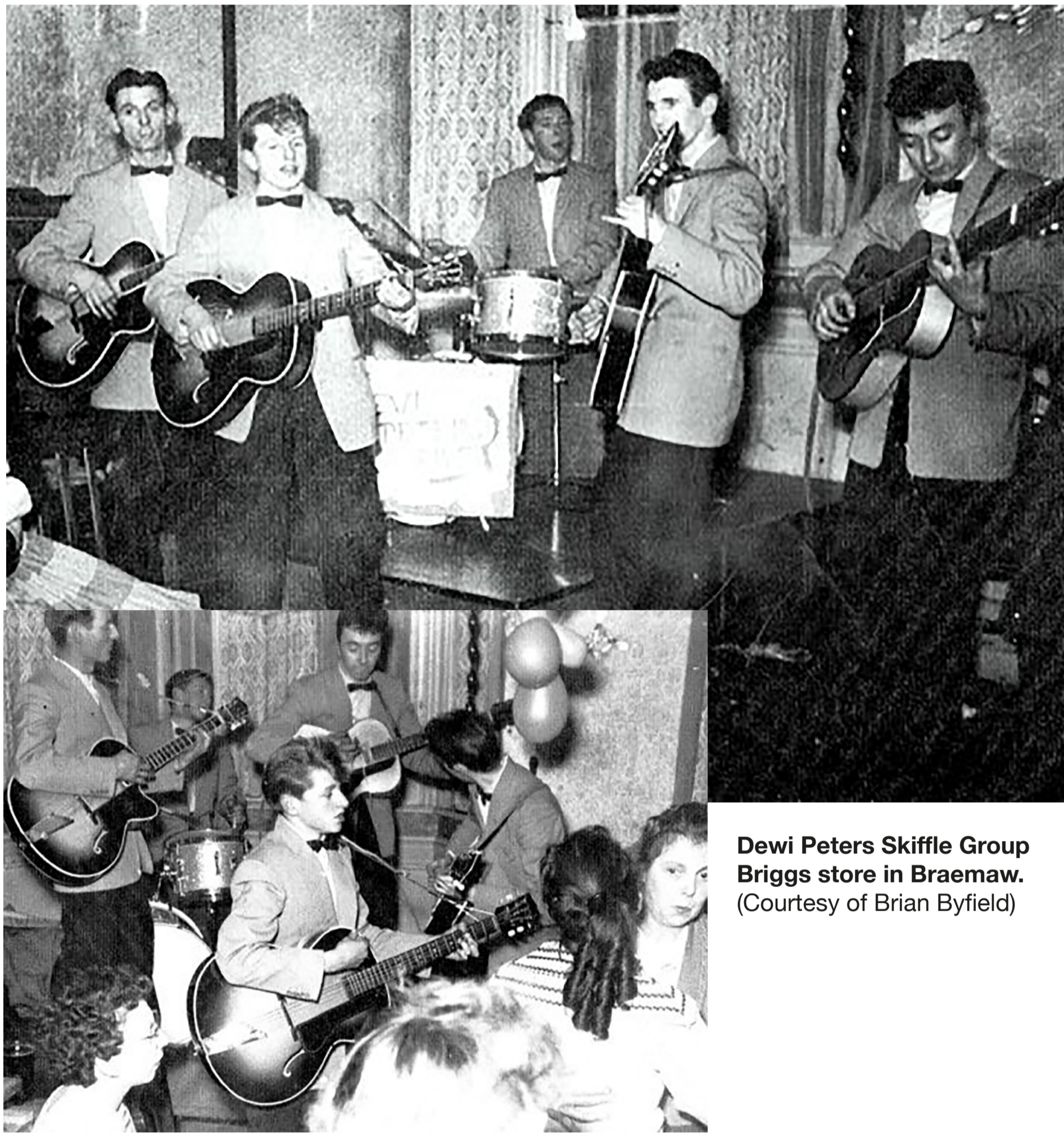
MERTHYR TYDFIL 1955-75

MEMORIES OF POPULAR MUSIC
ATGOFION O GERDDORIAETH BOBLOGAIDD

SKIFFLE BANDS IN MERTHYR TYDFIL



Dewi Peter's Skiffle Group outside Kayser Bondor, Pentrebach C.1957.
Back Row L-R :- Ron Jones, Dave Francis, Dewi Peters
Front Row L-R:- Brian Byfield, Ray Sullivan.
(Courtesy of Clive Morgan and Old Merthyr Tydfil)



Dewi Peters Skiffle Group
Briggs store in Braemaw.
(Courtesy of Brian Byfield)

Made popular by artists such as Lonnie Donegan, the skiffle craze hit the UK in the 1950s. The music is a mix of blues, jazz and American Folk music and unlike the musical expertise required by many Big Band musicians, skiffle proudly celebrated its amateurism, with washboards and tea chest basses being common. Like most other parts of the UK, Merthyr also had its own skiffle Bands, with the Dewi Peter's Skiffle Group and the Hill Billy Skiffle Group being two of them. Dewi Peter's Skiffle Group would eventually merge into Pete Lovis and the Tremeloes.

👂👂 I Knew the chap in the middle, David Francis from Luther Street, Twyn. He was a very good guitar player as well. Dave had group of friends including guitarist Len Stubbs and drummer Roger Walker. They used to play the clubs & pubs in the area. 💡💡

👂👂 Ron Jones is my uncle. I was brought up listening to them practising in my grandparents house in Twynrodyn. 💡💡

👂👂 You'll often see Dewi in the background of Eastenders, usually in the Queen Vic. He's been an extra on the show for years. 💡💡

👂👂 I was invited to see them in Rhydycar, they were brilliant. Ron Jones was a top yodeller with a unique sound. PS – I also won the raffle. 💡💡

👂👂 Dewi used to live in Dixon Street opposite the Wellington pub in Georgetown. He was a panel beater by trade. 💡💡

👂👂 Back in 1957/8 not long after we added a banjo to the line up, a show called Noson Lawen was airing on Welsh television. Anyway Merthyr Tydfil was being represented on this entertainment show, it was being organised by Glynne Jones, who some years later became Musical Director for BBC Wales. We were asked to play backing music for a local lady called Gloria Dean who would sing 'Putting on the Style' in Welsh. They only wanted three of us so Dewi opted out & the three selected were Dave Francis, Ron Jones & myself. I seem to recall we attended a studio in Pontcanna Cardiff. It was quite an experience as I was approaching 17 at the time. I remember Harri Webb, a well known local poet & Welsh nationalist also appeared. 💡💡



To hear Brian Byfield talking about his experiences with The Dewi Peter's Group, scan the QR code above.

