

The story of Injaroc starts with another band, Edward H. Dafis. Edward H. formed in 1973, and over the next three years the band proved to be a huge success. They enjoyed a fan base that was both enthusiastic and faithful. The band's last performance at Corwen was a huge event. Thousands came to the town hall venue on a wet and windy night, which was filmed for posterity by HTV. That's the way it was in '76, bands were worthy of media interest. Dozens of articles written in the press in lament of the demise of Edward H. Injaroc's experience was to be very different.

Charli Britton was working in London at the time; he travelled back and forth to Wales to drum for Edward H. at weekends. He was also playing in a band in London with Geraint Griffiths. Occasionally Geraint would travel back with Charli to play guitar for Edward H. He was an old friend of Hefin's and a cousin of John Griffiths. Geraint had recorded with the band on their first album '*Hen Ffordd Gymreig*' and their last '*Sneb yn Becso Dam*'. Caryl Parry Jones and Sioned Mair were both members of the band Sidan; Hefin Elis had produced their album '*Teulu Yncl Sam*'. Endaf Emlyn was an established solo recording artist; his album '*Salem*' was considered a classic. Endaf had never actually played in a band up until this point. Charli, Hefin, John and Cleif Harpwood were members of Edward H. of course. After discussing the possibilities during the summer of '76 they decided to form Injaroc.

The hype that surrounded the band started early. A photo session was arranged at the Cliff Hotel in Gwbert near Cardigan town. The band members were filmed on a sunny day sitting around the hotel pool. Ken Davies, the cameraman, managed to make the location look almost Californian! It made the television as a news item. It's hard to imagine that happening today.

Geraint moved back to Wales to live in October 1976; Charli moved back soon after. The band started to rehearse at the end of the month. Whole weekends were spent rehearsing in a variety of locations, the Urdd Centre in Cardiff, the village hall in Dihewid, the village hall in Penrhyndeudraeth, but mainly on the university campus at Aberystwyth. Bryn Jones, who was a sound engineer with Sain Records, organised the sound system. Sain had shown an interest in the band and had already offered them a recording contract for an album.

The band's musical influences were eclectic, but the Eagles and the west coast of America was the main influence for the majority of the members. Charli and Geraint were into 'Orleans' the American funk-rock band. This influence became more apparent as time went by. Here's the list of members and their contribution at the time:

|   |                   |   |                              |
|---|-------------------|---|------------------------------|
| * | Charli Britton    | - | Drums, vocals.               |
| * | Hefin Elis        | - | Guitar, piano, vocals.       |
| * | Endaf Emlyn       | - | Guitar, vocals.              |
| * | Sioned Mair       | - | Vocals, percussion.          |
| * | Geraint Griffiths | - | Guitar, pedal steel, vocals. |
| * | John Griffiths    | - | Bass, vocals.                |
| * | Cleif Harpwood    | - | Vocals, percussion.          |
| * | Caryl Parry Jones | - | Vocals, piano, percussion.   |

The press were beginning to take an interest. Here's *Y Cymro*:

“ Endaf Emlyn to join a new group and to appear regularly in concerts all over Wales...It'll be the biggest group of its kind, in terms of numbers, in the history of popular Welsh language music...all the members of Edward H. Dafis except for Dewi Pws Morris...”

After all the rehearsing the band was eager to perform. The first opportunity came during the Aberystwyth inter-college eisteddfod on the night of March 11<sup>th</sup> 1977. This is the set list, if memory serves correctly:

**Halen Y Ddaear**  
**Blodau'r Ffair**  
**Llithro Mas**  
**Ffync Yw'r Pwnc**  
**Swllt A Naw**  
**Pwy**  
**Capten Idole**  
**Ledi**  
**Tyrd Efo Mi am Roc a Rol**  
**Calon**  
**Cefn Gwlad**  
**Fenyw**  
**Paid Edrych 'Nol**  
**Eryr**

According to the band, the night had been a success. The audience appeared to have enjoyed the new music and the Welsh language papers were full reports during the following week:

“During the evening the afternoon competitors saw the standards to which they should aim for in the concert / dance by the Heather Jones Band and Injaroc..... the show was slick and went smoothly..... There was a light show, and the name of the band was flashed across a screen at the back of the stage. The audience watched a show that didn't drag for a second, just like the prominent English language bands that preceded them on this stage. The standards were the same.....it would be difficult to say who should receive the most attention, Injaroc or Racing Cars, if they were to share the same stage....Small wonder that Mr. Hefin Elis was grinning like a Cheshire Cat and moving more on stage in two hours than he did in three years with Edward H.”

The press even showed an interest in the rehearsals. *Y Cymro* again:

“...The eight will be spending as much time as possible rehearsing in some village halls in the Ceredigion countryside.”

Their second appearance was in Llangadog. This was also a memorable night with buses organised to bring in people from a wide area. There was an emphasis on staging a show rather than just performing a set of songs. The band had quality equipment and a professional sound system. They had a lighting rig for the light show to create the required mood. The songs used harmonies which were sometimes, quite complicated and ambitious.

The presence of two attractive young girls and the wearing of stage clothes was a new phenomenon in Welsh language music scene.

On the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 1977 the band travelled to the Sain recording studio in Llandwrog near Caernarfon to record their first album *Halen Y Ddaear*. The intention was to include most of the stage set. At that time the studio was situated at Gwernafalau, Sain's original studio. The band's home for a week was the Dina Dinlle Hotel, near the beach. The recording went well; chiefly because the band were well rehearsed and had performed the songs live on stage. Also, Bryn Jones, their stage engineer was at the recording consol. Things were looking good.....

Back on the road, and still in Carmarthenshire. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of April they played Trinity College in Carmarthen town. Then three gigs in May:

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| May 7 <sup>th</sup>  | Prestatyn (A Good Night!)                        |
| May 13 <sup>th</sup> | Theatr Felin Fach (A very good night!)           |
| May 21 <sup>st</sup> | Gwauncaegurwen (A good night. Filmed by the BBC) |

On the night of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June the band were given the whole of Twndish, the first programme in a brand new music series televised by the BBC. A half hour set. Again it was well received, but there were dark clouds on the horizon, with out a doubt!

An indication of what was to come came with a gig in Portmadog on the night of Saturday the 11<sup>th</sup> of June. The town hall was far from full. A disappointing night and a new and unexpected experience for the band. Things were a little better at the Rhydycar Centre in Merthyr on Saturday the 9<sup>th</sup> of July. Here are the observations of Dafydd Saer who was at the gig 'just for fun' as he put it:

"...music of an unusually high standard...from the perfect harmony of the two girls (not only do they look good – they can sing as well) to the fullness of Cleif's voice, which has improved of late...considering this was only their eighth gig, there is great hope for Injaroc."

Phew! Thanks Dafydd, the train's back on track, isn't it? Well yes, until it reaches the station at Pontrhydyfendigaid anyhow!

Twrw Tanllyd (Fiery Noise!) was an event; Edward H. had great success there. Geraint had gigged with them during their last appearance there, an experience he enjoyed greatly. This night was going to be different. To start with, 'Shwn' was going to end the evening as the headline act. Fair enough in retrospect. They had been performing together for a considerable time, and had earned their popularity. They had a considerable fan base. Perhaps some Injaroc members saw things differently, but there was no bad feeling what so ever. But the from the moment Injaroc walked on to the stage some people in the audience started heckling. Shouts of "Edward H!" and "Dewi Pws!" was heard, and eventually "Shwn! Shwn! Shwn!" Injaroc continued their set manfully but the heckling became more personal and insulting, aimed at mainly Hefin but also at the girls. By the end of their performance a guitarist or two, not to mention any names, were furious and were eager to convey to members of Shwn, who were on their way to the stage, of their displeasure! Oh dear! A night to forget!

Forgetting was to prove difficult, as the gig at Top Rank in Swansea the following week was another opportunity for the vociferous minority in the crowd to scream their

abuse. In spite of Injaroc head-lining the evening, it was the other bands, namely ‘Bran’ and ‘The Heather Jones Band’ who received the loudest acclaim. After all this, the Wrexham Eisteddfod was waiting like a wolf for the innocents.

Before the end of July the band released their album.

### **HALEN Y DDAEAR – Injaroc (Sain 1094M)**

**Halen Y Ddaear** (Salt of the Earth)– Endaf Emlyn.

**Blodau’r Ffair** (Flowers of the Fair) – Endaf Emlyn.

**Llithro Mas** (Slipping Out)– Hefin Elis.

**Ffync Yw’r Pwnc** (Funk is the Subject)– Endaf Emlyn.

**Swllt A Naw** (One and Nine)– Endaf Emlyn.

**Pwy** (Who)– Geraint Griffiths.

**Capten Idole** – Geraint Griffiths.

**Ledi** (Lady)– Geraint Griffiths.

**Calon** (Heart)– Caryl Parry Jones.

**Fenyw** (Woman)– Geraint Griffiths.

**Paid Edrych ‘Nol** (Don’t Look Back)– Hefin Elis a Caryl Parry Jones.

**Eryr** (Eagle)– Endaf Emlyn.

Here’s what was written in *Y Cymro*:

“...The colourful design of the sleeve is based on the eponymous opening track of the album – ‘Halen Y Ddaear’. On the front we have a picture of an attractive young blond girl in the 50s style, and on the back we have two boys in leather motorcycle jackets.

According to the Sain Record Company, the record’s publishers, this song will appeal to Will Sam, (Welsh motor cycling author), as it’s about motorcycles!? Variety is the hallmark of the record according to Hefin Elis – ““It was significant that when we took the album to be cut in London, one of the engineers asked if it was the same band performing on all the tracks””!

...Twelve songs were selected from about two dozen performed on stage by the band; they were confident that releasing the L.P. before the Wrexham Eisteddfod would enhance sales, and increasing the offer of gigs.”

The article continued without mentioning the actual music at all. Oh well!

### THE WREXHAM EISTEDDFOD 1977

Four gigs were arranged during the Eisteddfod week:

Tuesday night, August the 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Thursday night, August the 4<sup>th</sup>.

Friday night, August the 5<sup>th</sup>.

Saturday night, August the 6<sup>th</sup>.

The Eisteddfod Pavilion – ‘Cyffro Cyn Clwydo’.

The Race Course – ‘Crani’.

Theatr Clwyd, Mold.

The Odeon, Wrexham.

It was with mixed feelings that the band travelled to Wrexham, especially after the mixed reception received by the new album and the very mixed reception received at the live gigs! The Eisteddfod pavilion was the first venue, undoubtedly a soulless building as far as rock concerts were concerned. It's difficult to describe the acoustics of the place with out being negative. It's also a huge place to fill, but on the night there were about two thousand people there. There were only a few hecklers, but they were as vociferous as ever. They shouted for 'Bran', 'Shwn', 'Edward H.' and even 'Dewi Pws', any one except Injaroc! The band demanded the audience's attention and performed with determination, bordering on aggression at times. Yet, ultimately, it was a sad night for the band members. The writing was on the wall with two gigs to go.

"Fyddw chi'n CRANI?", "Will you be at the CRANI?" declared the posters. The Race Course football ground (CRANI) was full and ready to party. Injaroc's attitude had hardened since Tuesday night, and the band was determined to prove their mettle. Enough was enough, and the Race Course was the perfect arena for a big show, the kind of show that Injaroc knew they were capable of. That was the band's feeling anyhow. The 'Disgo'r Ddraig' disco had warmed up the crowd nicely and there were several other bands on the bill. Bran, Crysbas, Seindorf, Hergest, Josgin, Madog and Shwn. But there was some thing else waiting in the wings, the weather. It poured. It poured so heavily that the evening had to be stopped, just before Injaroc was to take to the stage. There was a real danger that with all the equipment exposed to the elements that some one would get electrocuted. This was a huge disappointment to the band, and the feeling was that a golden opportunity had been stolen by the weather.

The gig at Theatr Clwyd went well. It was held in one of the smaller function rooms and had a cosy nightclub feel. This suited the band. Also the hecklers didn't show, and the evening went well. The Odeon gig was also successful, with no hecklers. The band gave a good performance, but it had come too late. Not for the audience but for the band members. Before checking out of their hotel, The Chainbridge in Llangollen, the decision had been made; Injaroc had disbanded.

## **THE GIGS**

|    |        |      |                          |                    |
|----|--------|------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1  | March  | 11th | Inter College Eisteddfod | Aberystwyth        |
| 2  | April  | 1st  | Village Hall             | Llangadog          |
| 3  | April  | 29th | Trtinity College         | Carmarthen         |
| 4  | May    | 7th  | The Camp                 | Prestatyn          |
| 5  | May    | 13th | The Theater              | Felin Fach         |
| 6  | May    | 21st | Workmen's Hall           | Gwauncaegurwen     |
| 7  | June   | 11th | Town Hall                | Porthmadog         |
| 8  | July   | 9th  | Rhydycar                 | Merthyr            |
| 9  | July   | 16th | 'Twrw Tanllyd'           | Pontrhydyfendigaid |
| 10 | July   | 22nd | Top Rank                 | Swansea            |
| 11 | August | 2nd  | Eisteddfod Pavilion      | Wrexham            |
| 12 | August | 5th  | Theatr Clwyd             | Mold               |
| 13 | August | 6th  | The Odeon                | Wrexham            |

If Injaroc had played at the Race Course in Wrexham, they would have played fourteen gigs. As it was, they played thirteen. Unlucky for some, so they say.

Thank you and good night!

### **POST-MORTEM**

Here's Hefin Wyn's epitaph in *Y Cymro*:

“In the fullness of time the high lord said let Edward H. be silent. Let them disperse and after six months reform as a new musical band. For Wales is ready for a grand group which shall be a mixture of pretty girls and glorious guitarists. And let them call them selves – Injaroc.

Let Injaroc tour in the south, mid-Wales and the north and their talents shall be used to charm themselves amongst the youth of Wales. Fear not for they shall not know financial nor technological problems. This shall be done and successful shall their LP be. Bright as a star shall they shine upon the heath land.

The above instructions were carried out, but unfortunately, something went amiss – the preordained success didn't materialise.”

“After a glittering performance in Aberystwyth, and an exciting performance at ‘Roc ar y Waun’ in Gwauncaegurwen, the glitter dimmed like a dusty light bulb. They had to yield the top slot at ‘Twrw Tanllyd’ in Pontrhydyfendigaid and yield the plaudit to the other bands at Top Rank, Swansea. The wind was taken from their sails at Wrexham. It was a weeklong wake. No tears were shed.”

### **INJAROC**

“There was no central character or image for the listener to identify with. Consequently the audience had difficulty in deciding how to react, it had to be a conscious decision, it didn't happen instinctively. Who or what should applaud? The softness of the song ‘Halen y Ddaear’ is a nightmare. Injaroc represented nothing.”

### **Ability and Personality**

“What the LP ‘Halen y Ddaear’ showed is that we have artists that have the ability and personality to lead their own bands and their own individual musical careers. Endaf Emlyn has already proved this. So has Cleif – and he doesn't have a single composition on this album. The record's liner notes shows that this is also the case for Geraint Griffiths. A career and an album of disco music await Caryl and Sioned. What is required is a group of musicians to back them in their individual careers.”

“Injaroc failed not because they lacked musical ability but because they lacked personality. It is on stage, in front of an audience, that a band wins admiration. Injaroc's performance at the Pavilion showed their inability to handle an audience. Dafydd Iwan would have given the hecklers short shrift. It is well known that the best place for the audience to be is in the

palm of the performer's hand. That's the golden rule. It wasn't the hecklers that were made to look foolish at the Pavilion gig."

### **Pushing back the limits of Funk**

"It's easy to understand the reasons behind forming Injaroc. They are outlined in the paraphrasing of Hefin Elis' words in the Christmas edition of the magazine '*Swn*'. An attempt at musical development. Pushing back the limits of Funk. It's also easy to understand the failure of Injaroc and in the words of columnist 'Edward H. Dafis' in *Y Faner*, August 1973, referring to the formation of the band of the same name:

"It's a part of stage-craft. For songs to work and to win success and popularity it is necessary to have strong personality behind them." Edward H. had two front men that filled this roll; the principle was forgotten in the formation of Injaroc. Not one of the band's personalities was allowed to come to the fore. More often than not, Cleif Harpwood seemed a lost soul on stage.

Injaroc's failure in communication was confirmed by studying the comments of its oldest member when he was asked for his comments on the band. "I have nothing to say in light of the current state of the Welsh language music press.", he said. He didn't expand. Steve Harley would have talked himself hoarse under the same circumstances.

From the point of view of resources, ability and ambition, Injaroc was comparable with many English bands. Their efforts therefore must be judged by the same standards. "A mixture of West Coast / MOR / Country Rock / Disco played with no real conviction, despite mastering of technique.", would have been the judgement."

### **Looking forward**

"Injaroc were wise to disband. Another album of tasty songs would have been good. But having said all that, I look forward to hearing records by the individuals as members of their own bands, and to records by a solo Endaf Emlyn. They all have important contributions to make in the fullness of time."

### **Individual talent**

"In spite of tight playing and the variety of styles that was skilfully woven, did they succeed in the experiment to form a 'super-group' by combining the talents of eight artists that were considered at the time to be amongst the most talented in Wales? No. What Injaroc proved was that the sum was parts were greater than the whole.

What was Injaroc? A funk band? A heavy rock band? A band that used the sexiness of Caryl and Sioned with vivacious disco music to win success? The Geraint Griffiths Band? The Endaf Emlyn Band? Or The Caryl Parry Jones Band?

**Hefin Wyn**

### **Letters to the Press**

### **‘Political’ comments?**

“...How much longer do we have to suffer this kind of article? Why do we, Welsh pop music fans, have to be influenced like this? Why do we have to read articles full of personal opinion rather than articles that offer fair criticism of the musical standards of grwps / artists?”

M. Williams.

### **The stubbornness of the youth of Wales**

“...As one of the organisers of the dance in Merthyr Tydfil, July 9<sup>th</sup> in the company of Injaroc, I would, on behalf of my fellow organisers and local youngsters, many of whom, are not Welsh speaking, like to thank and congratulate Injaroc on their polished performance and their tasteful songs, which were of a particularly high musical standard. Well done to all the members of the group and best wishes for the future.”

Malcolm Llywelyn.

### **At least Injaroc were original**

“...Injaroc did not have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. They were not given the chance. They were destroyed by deaf fools and drunken yobs who refused to listen. Neither was the press blameless. Our foremost journalists played to the gallery. Judging the band after only four months. Incredible.”

Alun Lenny.

### **The last word**

Injaroc’s story began with Edward H. Dafis and it concludes in the same way. But not with that band alone. The story ends in the music and success of several other bands, namely, Bando, Jip and Eliffant. It ends with all the concerts, dances and albums that came in the wake of Injaroc.