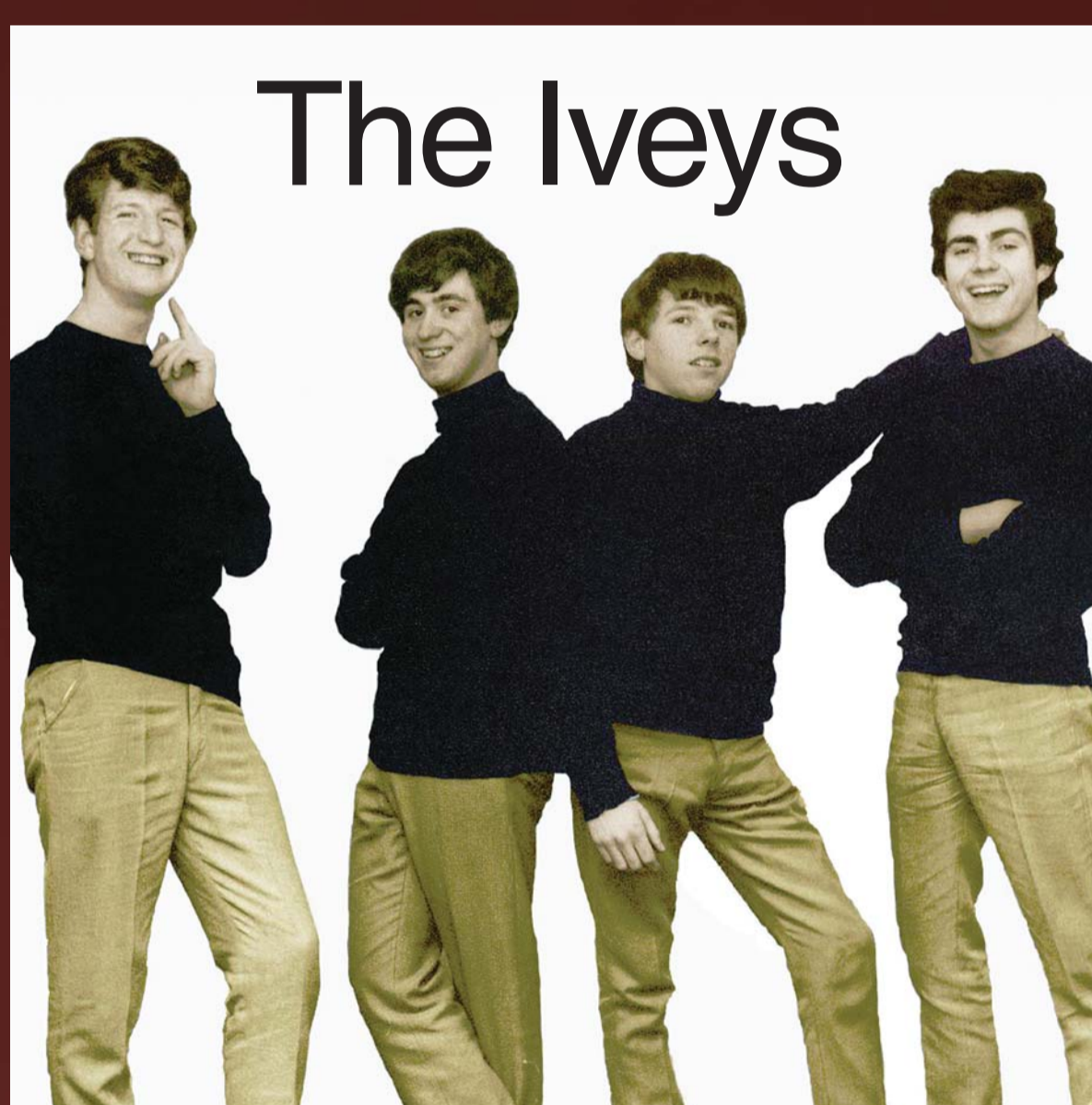


Pete Ham

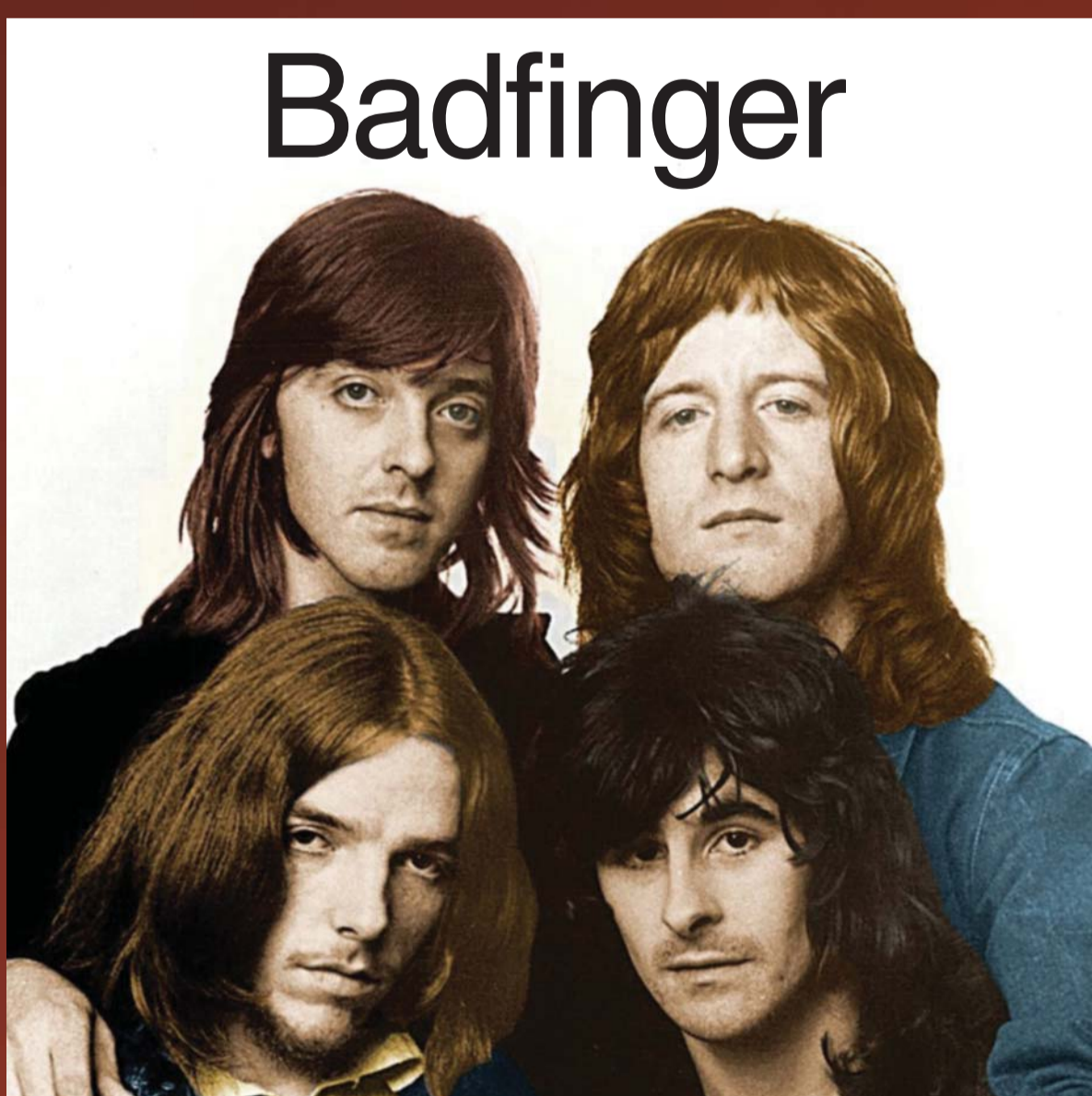


Swansea's Master of Melody

Pete Ham (Peter William Ham) was a Swansea-born musician whose major achievement was co-writing the emotional ballad standard *Without You*. He was a member of *Badfinger* in the 1970s, and wrote three of their major hits: *Day After Day*, *Baby Blue* and *No Matter What*. A cover of *Without You* became a worldwide number one hit for Harry Nilsson in 1972. Ham, with co-writer, Tom Evans, was honoured with the Ivor Novello Award in 1973 for Best Song of the Year. This iconic ballad has been covered by hundreds of artists including Mariah Carey, Shirley Bassey and Il Divo. It has been performed by tens of thousands of singers including Frank Sinatra, Leona Lewis and Chris de Burgh. It was voted in a nationwide poll as Britain's Greatest Love Song of All-Time. Ham was also an accomplished musician, cited by George Harrison as "a fantastic guitarist and singer". Harrison recruited Ham for an acoustic duet of *Here Comes the Sun* at the 1971 Bangladesh Charity Concert in New York City. His talents were also requested for session work with Ringo Starr and Harrison's *All Things Must Pass* album. Known for his sweet and humble nature, Ham was born to William and Catherine Ham of Townhill on April 27, 1947. He had a sister, Irene, and a brother, John - a local jazz musician who also managed a Swansea musical equipment and repair shop, John Ham's Sound Studio Ltd. Ham tragically took his own life on April 24, 1975. He was just 27 years old. He had one daughter, Petera Ham, born May 31, 1975



Swansea's *The Iveys*, named after Ivey Place, were Pete Ham, Ron Griffiths, Mike Gibbins, and David Jenkins. This band developed in the local 1960s music scene when Swansea was the thriving centre of South Wales for young people showing their wares through performances of the popular rock, soul and pop of the era. The musicians covered many styles, including the big hits of groups such as *The Who*, *The Hollies* and *The Spencer Davis Group*; some of whom they supported when they played in the area. The Iveys were discovered in 1966 by *The Mojos'* manager, Bill Collins, who moved them to London. Encouraging them to write songs, Collins pushed them to record hundreds of demos. Ray Davies of *The Kinks* became keen to produce them. In 1967, Tom Evans of Liverpool replaced David Jenkins. The Iveys continued to dazzle crowds at clubs around the UK. In 1968 they were discovered by *The Beatles'* roadie, Mal Evans, who led them to Paul McCartney. The group became the first band signed to *The Beatles'* new label, Apple Records. Their first single, *Maybe Tomorrow*, had minor success, but is considered a classic today. Ron Griffiths left in 1969. With a replacement needed, the stage was set for their eventual evolution to becoming *Badfinger*.



Badfinger's accomplishments came in the early 1970s. The group members were Pete Ham (Swansea), Mike Gibbins (Swansea), Tom Evans (Liverpool) and Joey Molland (Liverpool.) Their first single was *Come And Get It* (written by Paul McCartney). Released on *The Beatles'* label Apple Records, it became a worldwide success. Their following three singles: *No Matter What*, *Day After Day* and *Baby Blue*, also struck major success around the world. An album track entitled *Without You*, as covered by Harry Nilsson, became a number one international hit. The song eventually claimed two Ivor Novello Awards and a Grammy nomination. The band was now primed to become a major force in music, especially after the entrance of a fifth talented member, Bob Jackson, in 1974. Sadly, management issues and bad luck ended their expected path to stardom. In 1975, the band's founder, Pete Ham, committed suicide. Tom Evans never got over Ham's death and he committed suicide in 1983, which tragically fulfilled the chorus prophecy of *Without You* - "I can't live, if living is without you". But through their sterling compositions and hit songs, their musical legacy will continue to live on.

