

*John Roberts Heritage Fund/ Cronfa Dreftadaeth John Roberts/
Welshengerie Noyelus Kova*

BACKGROUND

About John Roberts Heritage Fund

The John Roberts Heritage Fund is established with the twin objectives of furthering his 200-year legacy of the Roma/Gypsy language and the Welsh TRIPLE HARP to the identity and culture of Wales and beyond for future generations.

The Roberts family were well known in their locality of North Wales, not just as nomadic musicians but also as a Roma/Gypsy family who were fiercely proud of their Romany culture. John Roberts was fluent in Welsh, English and Romany (Kale) that persisted in the remoter areas of Wales.

However, John Roberts was also proud to be a Welshman and for him the Welsh TRIPLE HARP and its repertoire of traditional music were just as important to him as his Romany identity. Thus, it was that he became a leading figure not only amongst scholars of the Romany culture but also amongst the newly emerging movement that was taking an interest in traditional music.

This brought him into contact with Lady Llanover who was very influential in promoting the Welsh identity through music. The Roberts' were part of her inner circle. Nowadays Ril Llanover is commonly performed for dancers by the Llanover Harpists in Wales. Eventually he and his sons were to perform not only for Queen Victoria but also for other crowned heads of Europe as well as for 19th century Welsh gentry and aristocracy.

Subsequent generations of John Roberts' family have continued as guardians of the Welsh and Romany traditions and over the years continue to attract the attention of folklorists, musicologists and artists. For more information see: <https://biography.wales/>

About Robert Lovell Kamulo

Bob is a singer/songwriter, recording artist, social activist and former Vice President of Romani Association of Australasia. He is the first male Welsh Romany Lovell to be born in New Zealand.

His song writing comes naturally from a tune he hears in his head that fits. His efforts have proved successful. Bob entered the Auckland Folk Music Festival Singer/Songwriter Award 1992 and won first place.

While visiting the UK, Bob met a producer, the late Simon Evans from BBC Kent who had launched the UK's first Romany online page. Bob became a contributor. Previously in 2005, he contributed to the Kent BBC Romany site his CD, "Rokkraben O Gillia/Talking the Songs." Each song is introduced in Romanus and English.

In 2007, Bob played live from Cardiff BBC studios on Rokka radio, the UK's first Romany radio program run by Jake Bowers. For many years, he was a regular on the circuits of the Australian and New Zealand folk music scene. He still performs every so often.

Now entering his 70s, Bob's focus is about passing on his Romany legacy to the next generation – his Romanus language, music, guitar style and family stories to name a few. Recently, Bob has turned to social action as an advocate for Romany human rights. Presently, he is engaged with the New Zealand government's Minister for Ethnic Communities on a petition to stop Romany cultural appropriation for commercial gain by non-gypsies.

About Frances Roberts Reilly

Frances was born on the Welsh border and grew up in England. She's of mixed-heritage Welsh Gypsy-English, a direct line descendant of Abram Wood and the notable Welsh Romani family of musicians and storytellers.

She learned to play three musical instruments – piano, flute and harp. It is the harp that is a direct connection to her four times great grandfather, John Roberts Telynor Cymru who played harp for royalty, including Queen Victoria. Her great, great grandmother, Mary Ann Roberts (Wood) was a talented singer and harpist, her great grandmother Winnie Wood sang on the London stage as did her father, a gifted Welsh tenor.

Frances is a full-time writer. She has published numerous short stories, articles and poems and she has been a guest author on CBC Radio telling the story of her Romany ancestry. Frances's recent poetry collection – *Parrishma – Our Stories*, embraces her heritage and Romany life – excerpts of which are soon to be published in *Stone to Stone: Anthology of Romani Women Writers*.

As an independent documentary filmmaker, Frances trained at the BBC and worked for Canada's national broadcaster, CBC. Her documentaries on human rights have been screened across Canada. Her award-winning film, *More than Just a Job* on women's rights was a finalist in the Birmingham International Educational Film Festival.

About Joel Therrien PhD

Joel is an associate professor in electrical and computer engineering at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. When he is not working on his research on advanced materials — following in the footsteps of several centuries of ancestors who were metal workers — Joel is investigating his Romany ancestry through genealogical records.

About Manuka Studios Ltd.

Shikawa Romanus – Learning Romany was recorded at Manuka Studios, Orewa, New Zealand. It has been digitally mastered and edited by recording engineer, Mike McCarthy. Manuka Studios has assisted in recording the Maori language for the same heritage values.