

July 16

As we continue to celebrate the Society's centenary year, it is appropriate to acknowledge that 1919 also saw the introduction of jazz to the United Kingdom. Mark Berresford brought us **Jazz, Sex and Spies – the musical invasion of 1919**, an account of the arrival in London of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band - the ODJB. Mark explained how, emerging in Chicago, jazz was a new kind of music. The ODJB were among its leading exponents. Following their move to New York and successful first recordings, they came to London in 1919 appearing initially in the revue *Joy-Bells*. They were an overnight sensation, moving to the London Palladium and soon making their first records for Columbia. Later they moved to the Hammersmith Palais where they performed to audiences numbered in their thousands. While their legacy is considerable, their immediate influence was minor, soon giving way to the symphonic jazz style of bands such as that of Paul Whiteman.

Mark's thoroughly researched programme was profusely illustrated with photographs, posters, advertising leaflets and other memorabilia much of it seldom seen. The records included examples of pre-jazz American music (Versatile Four, 1916), early use of the word 'jazz' (Scrap Iron Jazz Band, 1918) and adoption of the symphonic style of jazz in the UK (Jack Hylton, 1921). But most of the music was reserved for the ODJB, notably *Livery Stable Blues*, *At the Jazz Band Ball*, *Ostrich Walk* and *Tiger Rag*.

Assiduous readers might notice that I have not yet mentioned the sex and spies. Well, Nick LaRocca, the ODJB's cornetist, was a ladies' man, attractive to the opposite sex, a source of scandal and (as would emerge later) the father of at least one illegitimate child; and the ODJB's Larry Shields gave clarinet lessons to the spymaster Maxwell Knight, a fan of the Band and thought to be a model for "M" in the James Bond books.

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