

Another of our bi-monthly Saturday evening meetings in Wolverhampton at which long time group member Richard Parkes was the presenter. Richard's programme was entitled "Family Favourites" and was based upon favourite recordings and musical selections of members of his family.

Richard commenced his programme with a 1929 Victor recording of "*With a Song in my Heart*" by the Leo Reisman Orchestra from the Rodgers and Hart musical show "Spring is Here". This tune brought back memories for Richard of Sunday lunchtimes listening to Family Favourites on the BBC Light Programme a long running record request programme which linked families in distant parts of the British Commonwealth with their family and friends back in the UK. The song, although not this version, was the theme tune for the programme.

Richard moved on to his family and specifically his maternal grandparents. One of his grandmothers' favourites was "*Leave a Little Glimmer in the Fanlight Dear*" which we heard sung by the prolific recording artiste Stanley Kikby on a Jumbo recording from about 1911. His grandfather was a fan of the leading music hall star Billy Williams and in particular his 1910 Zonophone recording of "*When Father Papered the Parlour*" surely a music hall classic

In complete contrast was a c.d transcription from a QRS piano roll "*Poor Cock Robin*" played by Lee S Roberts a prolific American composer. This tune brought back memories of his paternal grandfather, while his grandmother was particularly fond of Dame Clara Butt singing "*There's a Land*" which Dame Clara recorded for Columbia in April 1923.

Richard dedicated a couple of discs to his father, one of which was the 1937 Parlophone recording of "*Pennies From Heaven*" by Nat Gonella and his Georgians, Mr Parkes senior being a big Nat Gonella fan. While his father spent much of the second world war as a prisoner of war, Richards' mother was employed as a product inspector at the Vickers Armstrong factory in Birmingham and her earnings gave her the opportunity to purchase a wide range of gramophone records. These were many and varied and the first one of his mothers' records that Richard played was a 1939 Decca by Ambrose and his Orchestra. Simply titled "*Adolf*", it was a comedy fox-trot written by Annette Mills the sister of actor John Mills. This was followed by another Decca recording from 1939, this was the spirited "*Wings Over the Navy*" by Lew Stone and His Band.

Richards' mother must have had a varied record collection as Richard continued with a 1940 Brunswick recording by the Canadian born bandleader Guy Lombardo which was followed by a 1941 Columbia disc of "*The White Cliffs of Dover*" performed by the Afro-American singer/songwriter Turner Layton who was resident in the UK from 1924 until his death in 1978. In complete contrast was the 1942 Parlophone Odeon of Richard Tauber performing "*Your Love Could be Everything To Me*", which was in complete contrast to Betty Bolton singing "*She Jumped on Her Push Bike (And Pedalled Away)*". This somewhat risqué recording was made for Imperial in 1931.

Richard continued with a 1930 Columbia recording by the now largely forgotten English tenor William Heseltine performing "*Beneath Thy Window (O Sole Mio)*" and closed this fascinating presentation with a track from a present day c.d. of Paul Morris performing "*With a Song in My Heart*" on an Aeolian Pipe Organ.

Our thanks to Richard for what proved to be a different and fascinating style of programme and also to my wife Marilyn for providing the tea, coffee and the delicious homemade cakes.

























































