

London; 19 December 2017

This members' meeting began with a brief AGM. Our officers were unopposed and unanimously re-elected: Robert Girling, chair; Mike Clements, vice-chair; Tim Wood-Woolley, treasurer. Bill Dudman will continue to operate the turntable and Bob Carlisle will usually write the reports.

We had been invited to bring a record related in some way to **Europe**. First off was an obscure Excelsior cylinder about *Der Räuberhauptmann* (robber baron) *von Cöpenick*, a late 19th / early 20th century criminal imposter who in Germany today is seen as something of a folk hero. Later we would hear of Johnny Canuck, another hero but this time Canadian and fictitious, re-invented in 1942 to advance the war effort. We listened to part of a Johnny Canuck revue on a recently discovered BBC disc probably unheard since its broadcast in 1943.

The largest category of recordings was of pieces with something European in the title: *Goodnight, Vienna*; *The French Girls have got something*; *Oh how I love Bulgarians*; a selection of *Breton folk songs*; *50 Million Frenchmen can't be wrong*; and *Lady of Spain*. A second category was of pieces written and/or performed by Europeans: Charles Trenet's *Boum* and the waltz from Lehar's *Merry Widow*. Some offerings embraced both categories: part of Bizet's *Spanish Serenade* and Tchaikovsky's *Capriccio Italien*.

Finally, we enjoyed song titles which might be applied to the current state of relations between the UK and the European Union: *Looking at the World through rose-coloured glasses*; *the Final Countdown*; a witty compilation concluding with *the Road to Nowhere*; and *I want to go home*. Bill Haley summed up proceedings with *See you later, alligator*, the continuing relationship suggested by the title rather dashed by the concluding lyric: "so long, that's all, goodbye".

London Reporter