

London; 20 February 2018

Steve Paget made a welcome return to the Conway Hall with **A Plethora of Miscellanea**, a further selection of records from his collection. He began with some examples of five inch aluminium voice discs, recorded by coin-in-the-slot machines that used to be found on seaside piers and elsewhere. For sixpence, you could record a short message and post it to your friends. The other side of the disc was pre-recorded with an advertisement; a small pack of bamboo needles and an envelope were provided. We heard an advertisement for Voice Records, another for Abdullah cigarettes and three personal messages. Next we had three Durium-style cardboard discs, the first advertising a Pathé film *Spring in the Air*; then a Thomas Cook tour of Germany which at this point in the 1930s could be had for £23; and then hairnets - an instructional piece on their use (read by a man).

Picture records were next, including one of the liner 'Queen Mary' given to first class passengers on her maiden voyage in 1936 and another of Sir Douglas Mawson about his 1929 Antarctic Expedition. The title of this programme then came into its own with an unclassifiable mixture of oddities. It included Joe Venuti and friends having fun with *Non-Skid Manure*; Victor Vorzanger's Band with an unissued Vocalion test pressing of *Buzz Mirandy*; an excruciating piece about Christine Jorgensen, formerly George Jorgensen who had a sex change; and a 33rpm centre start Columbia disc for use in cinemas. There was much else besides including the results of Steve's considerable researches into the origins of some of the records and of the people featured on them. This absorbing evening of rare and largely unpublished material concluded happily with *Love for Sale*, recorded privately in 1934 by the Hotchkiss School Dance Band of Connecticut.

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