

## Midlands Group Meeting - September 21<sup>st</sup>

The regular Midlands members met in Wolverhampton when Mervyn Srodzinsky said "Let's Dance" with a selection of dance band recordings which started with a cakewalk – "The Brooklyn Cakewalk" played by the London Orchestra and issued on the Cinch label in 1913. Mervyn then moved swiftly on to 1926 with one of the dances that became synonymous with The Jazz Age – "The Black Bottom". The version that we heard was a 1927 HMV issue from a Victor master recorded by Johnny Hamp's Kentucky Serenaders in the previous year.

Mervyn invited us to take to the floor for a foxtrot (a rather swift paced foxtrot - almost a quickstep) – with music from a 1939 recording on HMV of "Dippermouth Blues" by Muggsy Spanier and His Ragtime Band. It was then time for a more relaxing item, a waltz to the strains of "It's Time To Say Goodbye" as recorded by Henry Hall and the BBC Dance Orchestra for Columbia in 1934.

Mervyn then came up with a trio of foxtrots, the first a 1926 Brunswick recording of "Washboard Blues" by Red Nichols and his Five Pennies, the second a vigorous 1946 version of Shelton Brooks' 1916 composition "Darktown Strutter's Ball" recorded by Bunk Johnson's New Orleans Band and issued in the UK on HMV. The third foxtrot was another HMV issue, this one being a 1939 recording of "Deep Purple" by the Artie Shaw Orchestra with an un-credited vocal by Helen Forrest.

By way of a change Mervyn played a UK quickstep recording on HMV from 1946 of "Gotta Be This or That" by the Joe Loss Orchestra with a featured vocal by Elizabeth Batey. In complete contrast we then heard the UK Brunswick issue of "Blue Tango" by the American composer Leroy Anderson, who recorded this piece with his Concert Orchestra in 1951. Mervyn described the next disc as "wartime swing" but the 1944 Brunswick recording of Louis Jordan's 1943 song "Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby?" was more like a quickstep.

At this point my wife Marilyn and Mick Knowles' wife Julie appeared with tea /coffee and an assortment of cakes and biscuits so we took a break from the music. When we started again it was a couple of Bill Haley recordings of jive type numbers that set our feet tapping. Both were recorded by Bill Haley and his Comets for Decca in 1956, the first was "Rip It Up" which was featured in the film "Don't Knock The Rock". The second disc was "See You Later Alligator", which was written and originally recorded by the Cajun singer/songwriter Bobby Charles.

Mervyn finished his recital with a late night dance hall "smooch" tune This was the 1957 Capitol recording of "When I Fall In Love" by Nat "King" Cole, a nice relaxing end to a very enjoyable afternoon with a well researched and varied programme of modern dance music. Thanks also to Julie and Marilyn for keeping us supplied with the light refreshments.























































