

MIDLANDS GROUP MEETING

Wolverhampton, 15th September 2018

Phil Bennett presented his **Fiftieth Anniversary Selection** - a re-creation of a talk he gave to the newly-formed Midlands Group in September 1968.

Although he had not kept his original notes, the *Hill-and-Dale News* had provided a review that included details of six of the records played; so Phil started with these -

From the very start of jazz recordings, we heard the first release of *Dixieland Jass Band One Step* by the Original Dixieland Jass Band, recorded February 1917. Two fine early recordings by Wilbur Sweatman's Jazz Orch. / Original Jazz Band followed; *The Darktown Strutters Ball* (May 1918) and *Rainy Day Blues* (January 1919). The Mayfair Dance Orchestra, although a 'house' band, gave us a spirited performance of *Fidgety Feet* (October 1919). John Pidoux, a banjoist who lived in the Birmingham (UK) area, played *Whistling Rufus* on a Popular record of c1911/12. The last of the six was *Wang Wang Blues* by Jack Hylton's Jazz Band (July 1921), a performance obviously inspired by the arrangement used by Paul Whiteman's Band.

Phil continued with records that he believed that he had purchased before 1968, and so may well have been included in the original talk -

Staying with Hylton, we heard *Grieving for You* by Jack Hylton's Rhythmagicians (November 1927) and from May, the same year, was *Whiteman Stomp* then *Copenhagen* (October 1924), both by the Fletcher Henderson Orchestra. An excellent version of *Black Bottom* followed, played by Johnny Hamp's Kentucky Serenaders (June 1926). Lavinia Turner & Her Jazz Band recorded *How Many Times* in March 1921 for Pathé's Actuelle label and Clarence Williams' Washboard Band, *I've Got What It Takes* (October 1929), for Parlophone.

My Blue Heaven by Don Voorhees & His Orchestra (September 1927) was followed by *Smiling Joe* by the Plantation Orchestra (December 1926). The 'Plantation Orchestra' was a Columbia pseudonym for Pike Davis' Orchestra, an African-American jazz band who were playing at the Pavilion Theatre, London in Cochran's *Blackbirds* musical revue. On the rare Bell label from the USA, *Virginia Blues* was played by the Superior Jazz Band (April 1922).

Beatin' the Dog by Joe Venuti's Blue Four (June 1927), *Tin Ear* by Jan Garber & His Orchestra (February 1928) and *Scatter Your Smiles* by the Gilt Edged Four (October 1926) were followed by the Duke Ellington Orchestra playing *Black Beauty* (March 1928)

and American jazz tenor saxophonist, Coleman Hawkins, *Lost In A Fog* (November 1934).

Who's That Knocking At My Door? by Five Omega Collegians was on a Winner record of January, 1928 and *What Makes My Baby Cry* by the Five Harmaniacs, on an Indian pressing of a Zonophone from February 1927.

The Waffle Man's Call by Johnny Bayersdorffer and His Jazzola Novelty Orchestra (March 1924) and *Git Wit It* by Monk Hazel's Bienville Roof Orchestra (December 1928) concluded the presentation.

Many thanks to Phil for playing so many fine recordings. Thanks also to Marilyn for tea, coffee, cakes and biscuits at 'half-time'.

Richard Parkes