

WEST OF ENGLAND GROUP MEETING, WESTHAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2018.

For the second year in succession Anne and Bernie Brown hosted the Group AGM, at which Roger Mackey and John Hart were re-elected as Chairman and Secretary respectively.

Bernie's presentation "Everybody's Favourites" comprised a selection of Blue Amberols played on his Amberola 75. Classic palm court melodies included "The Glow Worm" (1807) "Aisha Intermezzo" (23157) and "Secrets Intermezzo" (23186). Livelier numbers included the ragtime "Silvery Bells Medley" (1937) "Hula Hula Medley" (1859) and the piccolo duet "Will o' the Wisp" (2359).

"The Horse Trot" (2076) belonged in the demonstration class, a perfect example of just how good a directly recorded Blue Amberol can sound.

After Anne's magnificent tea we enjoyed a completely different presentation. Several of our members also collect mechanical music, and had assembled a small gathering of organettes. We heard and compared three of them, a Musical Casket No.2, a Gem Roller Organ and an Ariston, all of which aroused much interest and discussion.

Normal service was then resumed with members records, which were played on Bernie's HMV 156. In memory of our long standing member Peter Curry, who passed away recently, we heard "Song of the Thrush" sung by Stanley Kirkby on the Curry label.

Given the date of the meeting, records relating to the First World War featured prominently. We heard "Arrival of the British Troops in France" on a 1915 Regal, the peerless Caruso singing "Over There" on a 1918 Victrola, "A vision of Victory : Flanders 1914-1918" sung by Peter Dawson, and on the Unison label a live recording of community singing in Trafalgar Square on Armistice Day 1928. In lighter vein, but also of the period, was "Paddy Maloney's Aeroplane" sung by Jack Judge.

There was so much to see and hear that the meeting continued well into the evening. We thank Anne and Bernie once again for their generous hospitality and memorable entertainment.

Roger Mackey.