

Hot Shots Hot To Trot

Review of the Roger Wells New Orleans Hotshots gig held on 2nd April 2006

This was the first visit of the New Orleans Hotshots since the most enjoyable BJC Christmas Party of 2004 and a sizeable crowd was in attendance to witness their return. Visitors came from far and wide and the club managed to sign up six new members as well!

The band went back to the days of WC Handy for their opening number, *Ole Miss*, before turning to a spiritual for their second in *Lead Me Saviour* and then to gospel with *Walking With The King*. The oft recorded *I'm Confessin'* came next followed by Cliff Friend's composition *Yes Yes In Your Eyes*. A traditional New Orleans piece *Uptown Bumps* was performed in the style of Jelly Roll Morton before a number I do not recall hearing before in *Bluebells Goodbye*, although the melody was slightly familiar, the title was not. The set closed out with the ever popular *I Beg Your Pardon* featuring a vocal by banjo player John Baker (who had been called into the line-up at the last minute replacing regular Bill Scott) and then *Moose March* which brought out the brollies for the first time.

Set two began with an unusual number for jazz, *Roll Along Prairie Moon* before a rendition of vaudeville clarinettist Wilbur Sweatman's composition *Down Home Rag*. Next up was Clarence Williams' *Texas Moaner Blues*, very reminiscent of the Red Onion version of 1924. The brollies returned with the old marching band standard *Second Line. Red Sails in the Sunset* followed (I was astounded to learn it was written in 1935, I thought it was a fifties ballad) then the second set wound up with *Magnolia's Wedding Day*.

So onto the final set which began with *Love Song Of The Nile* followed by another of those numbers played regularly by bands that visit the BJC, *Thriller Rag*. The band then gave an excellent rendition of Louis Armstrong's theme tune, *When it's Sleepy Time Down South*. Listening with my eyes closed I was waiting for the dialogue between Louis and Charlie Alexander to begin so close was this arrangement to the original. Brilliant. *Lily of the Valley* followed and then Eugene Bartlett's composition *Just A Little While To Stay Here*. John Baker retuned with another vocal with Isham Jones' *I'll See You In My Dreams*. *Give Me Your Telephone Number* was meant to be the final number but the band, by acclamation, finished up with one final treat playing Ford Dabney's immortal *Shine*.

So a most enjoyable unfortunately came to an end with many favourable comments passed so as to ensure that Roger and Co will be back with us before too long. See you around the gigs.

Paul