

## Stomping up a Storm

### Review of the Dart Valley Stompers gig of 1st March

We don't normally have a capacity audience on successive gigs, well we do now! The top local band The Dart Valley Stompers packed them in and in the process gave us a really top evening of jazz.

They began with a storming version of the old ODJB number At the Jazz Band Ball. This was followed by George Gershwin's Swanee with the Irving Caesar lyrics sung by trombonist Ron Milford. (Not to be confused, by the way, with Stephen Foster's famous Way Down Upon the Swanee River). Next up was Kid Valentine's Algiers Strut before Ron returned with another vocal on Abe Olman's 1915 composition Down Among the Sheltering Palms. Leader & clarinettist Jeremy Huggett then supplied the vocal on Chester Cohn's Too Busy before cornettist Graham Trevarton came to the fore with the Bert Kalmar lyrics on Bud Cooper's 1915 classic I've Been Floating Down that Old Green River. Next came a piece I had not heard before although written by a prolific composer of the twenties Joe Burke, Painting the Clouds with Sunshine. Ron then sang the Benny Davis lyrics to Harry Akst's famous Charleston era composition Baby Face before the band signed off the first set with Hoagy Carmichael's classic Georgia on my Mind which featured Jeremy with the vocal.

With the absence of Graeme and Gill, Anne and Di kindly volunteered to sell the tickets for the evening's raffle and it's good to see Anne coming to more and more gigs again as she regains her fitness. Good on yer girls!

Set two began with the oft played Down in Honky Tonk Town then Jeremy gave us the first vocal of this set on Cliff Friend's When My Dreamboat Comes Home. It was then time for the obligatory broly parade to the strains on Roland Seitz's Salutation March from c1910. Then came Neil Moret's 1908 piece You Tell Me Your Dream, another number popular with the New Orleans parade fraternity followed by a more modern composition as recently as 1966, My Memphis Baby. Keeping up with the times was Hello Dolly with the vocal by Ron before the band signed off the second set with Kid Ory's classic Savoy Blues, Ron giving us a fine tailgate performance on trombone.

The final set began with a Frank Melrose composition from 1929, Forty and Tight which featured a fine banjo solo by John Whitlock, who performed well all evening often adding some amusing interjections between numbers. Graham gave us the vocal on Cliff Friend's and Lew Pollock's I'll Do Anything For You before it was the turn of Jeremy to sing on Henry Creamer and Turner Layton composition Way Down Yonder in New Orleans from 1922. The very melodic Bye Bye Blues is usually played in a steady tempo but the Stompers decided to slow things up considerably with great success. John laid aside his banjo in favour of his guitar and his superb gentle strumming gave the number something extra. Ron Berry showed us his prowess on drums when he did a solo on James Scott's 1914 classic Climax Rag before Ron Milford returned with another vocal on the Harry Barris composed Wrap Your Troubles in Dreams from 1931. Then it was on to the composing genius of the pioneering jazz icon Jelly Roll Morton when the boys played one of his most famous pieces, Wolverine Blues. (Not really a blues at all, Morton wanted to call it The Wolverines but was overruled by the publishers as the word Blues was in fashion!). The final number from the evening was Sam Stept's Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone, which is just what those attending the performance by the Dart Valley Stompers will be doing after this most enjoyable evening.

It was certainly a pleasure witnessing this most excellent local band, I particularly liked Graham's use of the wa-wa mute on many numbers as he bounced on his feet to the beat. Roll on their next visit.

See you around the gigs...

Paul