Music and All that Jazz

We meet on alternate Fridays at 10.30 in Hinchley Wood. There are 15 on roll and usually about 12 attend each meeting. The group was formed about 2012 when a request was made for someone to run it. The topics are convened by the leader of the group after discussion with the members.

In the autumn of 2018 some of the topics we covered were different interpretations of the same tune, Dexter Gordon, the Atlantic record label, and Johnny Hodges. We shall continue to look at member selected topics and hope to explore closer links with the Elmbridge 'Jazz and All that Music' group.

As perhaps the most remarkable musical phenomenon of the last century, jazz has developed rapidly since the Original Dixieland Jazz Band made the first recordings of the music in 1917 in New York. From its simple beginnings as popular entertainment, it progressively and rapidly became a respected art form which is played, listened to and admired all over the world and widely taught in universities. Once described as America's classical music, it has both influenced and been influenced by other music genres from across the spectrum.

In the course of its history it has produced a vast legacy of recordings which continue to inspire and thrill listeners. It is recorded jazz that forms the basis of our group's meetings. At each session, a group member will choose and play a selection of recordings which we then talk about. There is no expectation that everyone will like everything: it's important that the music should excite, engage and even on occasion provoke. By making available to members the widest range possible of jazz and its derivatives, we seek to broaden group members' exposure to the seemingly limitless range of the music, backing this up with insights into the music's history and the remarkable characters - players, producers, writers, record company owners - who have shaped its development.

Our group does not have a definition of what constitutes jazz. If you think something is jazz, that's fine by us. Bring it along, let's all listen and talk about it. Inclusivity is the name of the game.

Allen Cooper