

Just leaning on a lamppost at the corner of the street

Fans will turn out nice again

GEORGE Formby comes to Portsmouth today to perform in front of fans who include ... George Formby.

Alan Randall stars as the comedian, singer and film star in *Turned Out Nice Again*, a musical based on Formby's life.

In the Kings Theatre audience will be two particular fans - George Formby and pensioner Dorothy Johnson.

George, aged 54, of Penhale Road, Fratton, was born Sternn Riggs, but changed his name by deed poll.

He did it to honour his boyhood hero, the grinning gap-toothed singer.

Ex-Tiller Girl Dorothy (76), has an even stronger Formby connection. Her husband Jack Cottrell wrote many of the Wigan singer's most successful songs.

"I met Jack when I was about 15 in a show called *Just Plain Folk*," said Dorothy.

Jack Cottrell created the legendary character of Mr Wu, in *Chinese Laundry Blues*, in 1930, but received only £4 and little recognition.

A string of hits and film screenplays followed throughout the 1930s for which Formby took the credit and the bulk of the money.

Jack split with George Formby to tour with Dorothy, but died of cancer in 1947, leaving Dorothy penniless with four young children.

Dorothy, who married twice more, now lives in St George's Square, Portsea. She has seven surviving children.

