

THE

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 113

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We've
lost
our
dear
Eve

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Welcome to Newsletter No. 113

And Oh dear, we've lost another of our Formby Friends.

Eve Stewart, a lover of feet tapping, lively music, and especially George Formby, passed away on Sunday 19th September in the early hours of the morning. Although expecting to hear the news for some weeks now, it still came as a shock when Charles informed us that he had sat with her in hospital for two days before she passed.



THE LIGHT OF BLACKPOOL—How can we ever replace Eve? — we can't! She was the light of the Formby fans who greeted everybody with her bright and breezy Blackpool smile. Nothing was too much trouble for her and especially when she was the Formby Society Secretary. She made every new member—and we had a lot in those days—so very welcome. At the Formby meetings she would invite all to a meal at her home in Blackpool.

She loved all the Formby songs, and nothing pleased her better than to merrily sing along to the artists on stage. She had tremendous guts! During her working life she was a school teacher, including 21 years at Revoc Community Primary School in Blackpool. After retiring she took a piano tuition course. Shortly after, her teacher took ill and was unable to carry on with her teaching. She asked Eve, although still a beginner, if she would take over her pupils. Eve was surprised, but, she took over the teaching and enjoyed every minute. Such was her confidence.



Eve was Charles's life

Eve was extremely ill when she came on the Scotland long weekend trip, and, although Charles tried to persuade her not to take the trip, she was determined to be with us. During the trip she made every effort to enjoy the music and the Formby company. It was her life!

On being interviewed by the press, Charles said, "She was a much loved teacher and I loved her madly. We may not have had children but Eve brought up thousands of them in her job."

Just before her death, Eve received a letter from the GFS committee asking if she would accept Honorary Membership. Eve, still hurt from a past and bitter experience, replied with a firm "NO." **CONTINUED NEXT PAGE**

The Formby Society owe a tremendous debt to Charles and Eve, as it was due to their connections with the Blackpool Council that they received regular free rented accommodation at the Wintergardens; a saving of many thousands of pounds and a most excellent venue.

In September 1989 she was appointed Assistant Secretary to Alan Southworth, and the following year took on the job of Secretary. Due to the vast influx of new members this was a busy time for her but she handled it very well. Many recall how she greeted them as new members and supplied them with literature, tapes, song sheets etc. to get them started. She was a beacon! A shining light for the society that gave encouragement to the many that joined. She never had any children but she treated the Formby fans like they were her family. She was our Blackpool Mother Hen, with open arms ready to welcome all.

"She was Blackpool through and through.
And I'm sure that if you'd snapped her in two.
She would have had Blackpool written right through.
Such was our Eve."

But she thoroughly enjoyed every minute. Her smiles greeted everybody as they entered the meetings. It was her life and it is with very sad regret that George has lost this beacon of light. She loved her coach trips with Formby members and always joined in with the fun. In fact she loved them so much she insisted on going on the recent Scotland trip even though she was in very poor health. Thankfully her friends, Joan Littlewood and Thelma Cartwright, were by her side throughout the trip.

Eve's Funeral — Previously, Charles rang to say that there would be no church service, no flowers, and no hymns etc. Just a basic introduction followed by the cremation. That is the way that Eve would wish it to be and all the singing would be performed at the usual Blackpool meeting, which was that night. The large Lytham crematorium room was filled to capacity with many standing at the rear. Such was their love for Eve.

Many friends came to pay their last respects. Editor Tony Thornton arrived, and told me of the considerable help he received from Eve when he first joined the Society. Dennis Mitchell, Mac McGee and Dickie Speake came to represent the Yorkshire members.

After the very brief cremation service, at Lytham Crematorium, which was led by Charles's friend, David Ackroyd, we met at The Dunes Hotel, Lytham Road, where a buffet was provided.

It is hard to believe that Eve has gone. She was always there at the other end of the line and ready to help. These willing volunteers are so hard to find. She was a treasure to a growing society and George must be looking down from his heavens with his message: "Well Done Eve. You've done a grand job!"

Full Steam Ahead at Crewe - by Brian Edge

68 Attended the September meeting apologies were received from all the Penyffordd members, The Pastits and Angela Phil and Ashley. A period of silence was observed in memory of Eve Stewart and Angela's Mum.



The concert turned out to be enjoyable one and we were pleased to welcome back David Rhodes who is now becoming an excellent performer. Also present was Phil Jones, a specialist performer, and Bryn Evans, a very nice singer who accompanies himself with a wooden uke. Our MC and Concert Producer, Jonathan and Pamela Baddeley, as expected, produced and ran a flowing show and managed to get everyone on stage twice during the evening.

Thanks to our Sound Engineer and his assistant, our Drummer Steve and to Gerald Beadle kindly stood in for Chris Metcalf who was away on holiday.

Again a special thank you for the ladies who organised the refreshments, those who set up in the afternoon and those who helped to clear up at night Artistes taking part in the concert were as follows:-

ALAN NEWTON - Chinese Laundry Blues (Two verse version), Forget-me-not Lane & I'll take you Home Kathleen (trombone and vocal). WALTER KIRKLAND - You Can't keep a Growing lad Down & Bones Medley. VERA JONES - If I had my Way, Bye Bye Blues & Yours. JONATHAN BADDELEY - It Serves you Right, With My Little Stick of Blackpool Rock & Home Guard Blues. BERNARD ASHMORE, DAVE CLEWS AND COLIN WOOD - Putting on the Style. DON CHALKLEY - Licence, Pleasure



Arthur & Mary Newton

Cruise & I Went all Hot and Cold. DAVID RHODES - Little Ukulele, Wigan Boat Express & Granddad's Flannelette Nightshirt. BRIAN EDGE - Daring Young Man & Its another Fellow's Job by Now. CYRIL PALMER - Maggie, Music Maestro Please & What More Can I Say. ARTHUR NEWTON - The Barmaid at the Rose & Crown, I Promised to be Home by Nine O'clock & Down on the Farm. DES REDFERN - Mr Wu's a Window Cleaner Now, Sergeant Major & I am Going to Sit Right Down and Write Myself a Letter medley. GERALD BEADLE - I'm Nobody's Child (accompanied by Des Redfern on Uke) & Scarlet Ribbon (vocal solo). PHIL JONES - Charleston, My Canary has Circles under his Eyes, Whispering, Help, Roll over Beethoven, Top Hat / Cheek to Cheek Medley. BRYN EVANS - Just one More Chance, Got a date with an Angel, I'll see you in My Dreams & Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea. COLIN WOOD and ALAN NEWTON I'm Saving up for Sally (duet). BERNARD ASHMORE & DAVE CLEWS Wartime Medley. THRASH - Leaning on a Lamp-Post. 16 Artistes. Concert ended 11.10pm. *Many thanks Brian. Sorry "The Past Its" couldn't make it. We were involved in a charity do for the Broadgreen Hospital Zipper Club in Liverpool. Thanks for remembering Eve.*

Be Jabbers, We Are Off to Ireland! Alan Chenery has just

phoned with details of the next Coach Trip. From July 8th to the 11th we will be having a four day break in Bray, County Wicklow, Southern Ireland (about 30 miles from Dublin). The price is £210 for full board in a grand large hotel, complete with a hall to hold a concert in, a gymnasium and a swimming pool. Sounds great to me.

More details can be obtained from Christine & Colin Wood on 01270 663558 or Alan Chenery on 01253 681439.

Alas dear Eve Stewart won't be with us this time, or her friends, Thelma and Joan, I assume, so there will be extra seats available.



Andy Eastwood writes in - Dear Stan, please



mention in the Newsletter that on Saturday 6th November we are performing in THE COLIN AREETY SHOW at Floral Pavilion, New Brighton. Starts 7.30pm. It will be a great show because I know the other artists and they are first class.

In the show we have:

John Evans *Comedy Star* - *Safire International Magic*

Colin Areety *Singer* — *Deborah Clarke Dancers*

Danny Mannix *Orchestra* - *Norman Thomas Compere*

and of course myself. Seats are £8 and £10 and the booking office is 0151 639 4360. *Thanks for the details Andy. Good Luck*

N. Wales Christmas Party Tickets at £5 (£2.50 for children)

are now available for the Christmas Party on December 3rd Over 70 already sold. Contact Myra Knight (01978) 358472. Please give your support.

Louie's (George's sister) Story - George, as a child went to Our

Lady's Catholic School in Warrington. If he was naughty, he would be expelled by Miss Delaney. To be the "Cock of the school" George challenged Simon Ackers to a fight. They met after school at the Black Bear embankment and Simon had his sleeves rolled up ready for action. The sight of this changed George's mind. He went to face Simon and said, "I was only kidding."

Postman: Your dog's bitten my leg. Dog owner: Did you put something on it?

Postman: No! he enjoyed it as it was.

Doctor: I've got some bad news and some more bad news. What is it Doctor?

Doctor: You've only got an hour to live, and my watch has stopped.

Young Cliff Reports From N. Wales

A somewhat quiet meeting mainly due to the absence of our friends from Crewe; Brian and Connie Edge being away and others with alternative involvements. However we did pick up one or two new fans in the Osborne and Harris families from Crewe. Then of course we had Birthdays to celebrate; Mary Pugh, Gerald Jones and Tony Elsdon.

FISH & CHIPS—The concert went well in spite of a few delays due to the early arrival of the fish and chips to some players, and eventually time was found for most who had travelled a long way to perform an additional song. M.C.'s for the evening were Jim Knight and Phil Hughes. So what was on offer?



Jonathan Baddeley (Photo In The Press, Fanlight Fanny and Count Your Blessings and Smile accompanied by Wife Pam); Alice Cronshaw (Making Memories With You and Little On The Lonely Side); Walter Smiler Kirkland (Cant Keep A Growing Lad Down, Happy Go Lucky Me, and Tijuana Taxi with his Bones Ensemble); Pam Baddeley (Sang World Of Our Own and Island Of Dreams); Gerald Jones (Oh Dear Mother, Maxie The Taxi Driver, a funny and unusual song, and a Centenary song Good Old Uncle George); Alan Chenery (Princess Lulu From Honolulu Isle and The Boogie Woogie Ukulele Man, one of Frankie Wood's great compositions, and Wigan Boat Express with the Bones backing team of Jim and Walter) and Phil Hughes, on his own at last (The Old Kitchen Kettle and Little Back Room Upstairs). Alison Nadin, apart from acting as Sound Technician, performed her Ventriloquist act with Alf and Charlie. This always goes down well particularly with any newcomers.

There was then the opportunity for our keen learners to have a go by playing War Time Medley on the Mikes with some minor support in the background. Those on Mikes were Ryan Hopwood, Daniel Smith and Russell Davies with Sheila Perry and Charlie Morrison in the background, and a host of mature supporters. We are doing quite well with our learner classes which are held on a monthly basis and they are benefiting from our encouragement. To this end there was perhaps the crowning glory of the evening when Daniel Smith (Aged 9 and Grandson of Phil Hughes) played Back On The Farm entirely on his own on the Mike and really gave a superb performance. On prior occasions Phil has been by his side. Well done Daniel; we were all proud of you. Another from the Hughes "fold" was Carol Brassey who, although rather shy, played San Francisco on a Mandolin; it was excellent and a pleasant change from the Uke.

Cyril Palmer from Sale sang What more Can I Say I Love You I Do, and then excelled himself with a song he had written about an episode which took place at a recent Warner Holiday when Walter Kirkland got caught in a state of undress in the changing room of the Pool. The song was to the tune and style of Cleaning Windows, and contained inferences to other GFS members. It brought out a lot of comical twists and much backchat from the audience. Well done Cyril, it was great. Walter is now open to offers; with or without a towel. Jim Knight played Lads Of The Village Get Cracking and then sang Smile All The Time accompanied by his fellow Bones players and Charlie Morrison on the Bodhran Drum. Apparently they are in future to be known as the "Skin and Bone Group". This just leaves me. I, acting as assistant M.C., had to make a dash to the stage to fill in when it was found that a number of players were still eating their chips. I did Andy the Andy Man and Bless 'Em All. *Thanks Cliff, you're the fastest news reporter in the West.*

George's Motor Bike - Just been looking through some old files and found a letter from G. A. Whittaker, Motor Cycle Dealers, 4 Leicester Road, Blackpool and dated 3rd May 1991. "Dear Sir, Do you have, or do you know who has the Vincent HRD Black Lightning motor cycle reg, CFR 871 which I sold to George Formby (Mr Hoy Booth) after I rode it in the 1947 I.O.M. Senior TT races? The receipt would be in the name of Whittaker's Motor Stores, Topping St, Blackpool. Thanking you in anticipation." George A Whittaker.
So does anyone know anything about George's Vincent bike?

GEORGE WAS A VERY KEEN MOTOR BIKE FAN. *Way back in 1991, when we were working the GF exhibition at Warrington Museum. We met a lot of motor bike fans, and a party of fans from the I.O.M Trials. They came over for the day to see the show. Anthony Mason sang TT Races a dozen times over that afternoon for the lads.*

One eager 80 year old visitor told me the story of when George lived at Mere Corner, near Knutsford. He visited George to have a look at a motor bike he was selling. He went into George's double garage and found it jammed full of motor bikes.



He bought the lot from George and offered to send in a article for the Vellum. Alas that was the last we heard from him.

Many were fooled into believing that this Shuttlesworth Special was the original from the film. We didn't enlighten them.

Alan Chenery on Blackpool . . .

Charles was extremely brave, setting up the equipment and holding this event on the night of Eve's funeral, but, as he said, "It is what Eve would wish and we can't have people turning up from many miles away only to find that the night had been cancelled. Very thoughtful Charles.

We had about 35 in attendance excluding members of the club. Pat Chenery was on the door helped by Eileen Abbott, Charles Stewart on sound, the artists were Mac Magee from Leeds who opened the show for



The D.I.V.O.R.C.E twins Des Redfern & John Taylor.

us, John Mason, John Taylor, The well & truly Past Its (Stan Watkinson) & Stan Evans, Cyril Palmer, Phil Jones, Bryn Evans. Fran Collins, Alan Middleton, Paul Kenny & Des Redfern and MC yours truly Alan Chenery. The buffet was supplied by Eileen & Steve Abbott there was a lot left over so people were asked to take some home so it wasn't wasted Hope to see you all next month. *Thanks Alan.*

John Taylor Emails— Hello Stan, Glad you both enjoyed your weekend. For me it was a weekend I will never forget, from the moment it kicked off in the "packed to the rafters" Smugglers Den on Thursday evening through to Sunday afternoon. The highlight being my half hour spot on stage at the packed Dome theatre during the 1940's Ball during which the audience clapped, cheered and sang along to a number of Georges songs with me with many people coming up to me after the event and during the rest of the weekend telling me how much they enjoyed it and the many happy memories it brought back. This will always stay with me as a cherished memory for life, I sincerely believe I did George's memory very proud not just on the centre stage but over the entire weekend and loved every moment of it. The veterans and their families who came in from all over the country also I believe had a wonderful weekend which will not be forgotten in a hurry, despite the weather.

Next magazine should be a bumper packed edition which hopefully everyone who receives a copy should enjoy reading.

Good For You Beryl - Beryl had a reputation as a bit of a dragon in the film studio and it has been said that at times she was barred from the film set. Well this letter to her friend in Bolton, Hilda, explains why she argued with the film bosses.

"My dear Hilda, I was more than delighted to get your letter, and to know that you are still in the land of the living along with us.



Beryl wasn't keen on Florence Desmond taking over her leading lady role.

So you don't like "No Limit" as "Off The Dole" I wish you would write to me again to that effect and state just what you don't like, because I want to show the letter to all the clever know-alls down at the studio. I would like you to say that the comedy was not as good and that the songs were not a patch on the other picture. Also he didn't do enough songs and that you didn't like the duet as it was not like the George Formby that you like.

THEY SAID "FORMBY SONGS ARE NOT WANTED"—You can say that the production was better than the other one. So now you've got the dope, do your stuff. Why I'm asking you to do this is that they are going to do another picture and believe me, if I don't have my way there won't be any songs in it at all. They can see no further than their nose ends down here at the studios and they think that the songs are not wanted. Well there is no more news at the moment so I must close with best love. Beryl Formby.

Good for you Beryl, just because you were a woman they thought they could boss you about, but you had none of that nonsense. You did a fine job keeping George's songs in his films, and we have a lot to be thankful for. His films wouldn't be the same without songs. Just imagine "Let George Do It" without those great songs: Granddad's Flannelette nightshirt - Count Your Blessings and Smile - Mr Wu's A Window Cleaner Now - and Oh Don't The Wind Blow Cold. Great songs!!!!

(Our Gracie Fields - Did

anyone see the Gracie Fields biography on BBC on Saturday night 25th September? It was great coverage of Gracie who was a working class girl, made good, and well worth watching. Much loved Gracie, - with a big heart - was great at getting the audience to join in with her singing. She loved her fans and was an expert at coming down to the common level with songs they can relate to. Songs like: Walter, Walter, lead me to the altar, and I'll show you where I'm tattooed." And brilliant lines like: "So she tapped him for a tanner for a pint of old and mild, Oh I Never Cried So Much In All My Life. Cliff Richard couldn't sing songs like them.



CHARITABLE—She gained a reputation for giving her money to deserving causes. For over 30 years she financed an Orphans Home in Sussex and Rochdale MP Cyril Smith recalled having received several donations from her. On one occasion he was handed an envelope and told not to open it until she'd gone. It was a cheque for £10,000 - a lot of money in those days.

There's no doubt about but she was a bigger star than George, with her international appeal. But then she took ill with cancer of the cervix and had to have an operation.

Soon after, disaster struck when war was declared and she lost favouritism with the nation for marrying film producer Monty Banks, (who produced George's "No Limit"). Monty was Italian and his country was at war alongside the Germans.

Gracie appealed to her many fans saying, "I am entertaining the British troops on the war front" - but this didn't wash with the public. She was badly hurt and Winston Churchill made a special appeal supporting Gracie for her war work.

She was invited to sing at the London Palladium and Roy Hudd appealed to her saying "Make sure that your first song is accepted by them otherwise it will be a disaster. She walked to the front of the stage and opened up with, "Take Me To Your Heart Again," and there wasn't a dry eye in the house. Of course they accepted her again. A great star! Before her death she was created a Dame.

1940s Newspaper Cutting to revert to the

Lancashire Lad, he's one of the few to come back from France who has a good word for the ENSA organisation. He thinks they do wonders, considering all the difficulties. And if George permits himself that decision, I am ready to accept it. He and Beryl did dozens of concerts, many of them impromptu affairs. Judging by some of the newsreel shots I saw, Formby didn't shirk anything and duly fulfilled his ambition of singing in the Maginot Line.

Morecambe 40s Weekend—John Taylor of Morecambe entered George Formby players to take part in the 1940s Weekend on the 11th & 12th of September and expected at least one or two players to respond. Unfortunately, not one uke player—apart from John himself—stepped in to represent George Formby. Reliabilities such as Alan Chenery were unable to attend due to it clashing with the Blackpool Weekend. However, John did solo performances on the Saturday, and The Past Its (Well & Truly) came to the rescue, - like Batman & Robin— for the Sunday performances, along with John.

Morecambe was filled to capacity over the two days with World War Two memorabilia from every country. The Americans were well represented along with the British and the Germans. A.R.P Wardens were patrolling the streets telling em to “Get that light out.” I saw at least two Adolf Hitlers and a Mussolini in the crowd, Winston Churchill was there, and Al Capone

with broad shoulder pads, accompanied by a dizzy blonde. Tanks, army trucks and American jeeps drove through the streets, making it a grand weekend with loads of enthusiasm.

Our performances were held at the War Veterans Club and we were very fortunate to find an empty car space right in front of the club. As soon as we walked into the club we were greeted by very friendly faces making us most welcome. “Come in and grab some sandwiches and cake.” Which we did. The club was packed solid and bursting at the seams. At the side of the stage we were greeted by Vera Lynn impersonator, Jill Daniels, who also made us very welcome. “Don’t bother to get your equipment out, you can use mine.” It’s a good job she did because we didn’t have any equipment with us, - apart from a mini disk. Jill jumped up on stage to start her spot, and what a great artist she is. She stayed on stage for at least an hour and, with contagious beaming smiles, sang every WW2 War song written, - and she looked as if she enjoyed every minute of it. Below is an article on Jill which was published by The Weekly News on June 12th this year.

Jill blitzes out the hits

by Russell Stoddart

SINGER Jill Daniels is helping to preserve the legendary spirit which helped raise morale during the war years.

Jill is regarded as the country’s top performer of favourite wartime tunes and patriotic anthems from such greats as Dame Vera Lynn, Anne Shelton and Glenn Miller.

Audiences at her *Hits Of The Blitz* shows turn up in fancy dress as Winston Churchill, Lily Marlene, Adolf Hitler, and even Captain Mainwaring from *Dad’s Army*.

She started performing in the late 1970s as support to such stars as Marty Wilde, David Whitfield and Malcolm Vaughan, but soon found a niche on the wartime nostalgia circuit.

‘Born in the wrong era’

“I used to end my act with *We’ll Meet Again* and sometimes *The White Cliffs Of Dover*,” said Jill, a mother-of-two from Leicester.

“People told me I sounded just like Vera Lynn. Every week, I’d add another wartime song to my repertoire.

“I did my *Hits Of The Blitz* show for the 50th anniversary of VE Day and, before I knew it, I was being asked to perform at reunions, wartime anniversaries and theme nights.

“My family are always telling me I was born in the wrong era. They say I should have been entertaining the troops back then.

“Songs like *Harbour Lights* and *He Wears A Pair of Silver Wings* have such emotional lyrics. My

favourite is Anne Shelton’s *Lay Down Your Arms*.

“They’re not easy songs to sing because they pull at the heart-strings. I can see the audience dabbing tears from their eyes.

“While many of the songs are very sad because they remind people of loved ones who fought and died in the war, the anthems are rousing and morale-boosting.

“When I sing *There Will Always Be An England, Land of Hope And Glory* and *Rule Britannia*, the flags come out and everyone stands up to sing along.

“I have a replica 1940s army uniform, an original army uniform given to me by a colonel and I’ve just picked up a white sailor’s outfit.

“Audiences also turn up in 1940s clothing or as characters from the wartime era.

“Winston Churchill can be seen many times at my concerts with his trademark cigar and hat.

“There have been a few Adolf Hitlers with a funny moustache, frightening-looking Gestapo officers, and even children dressed as evacuees in little jumpers and long shorts.

“There’s a bloke who turns up dressed as Captain Mainwaring in *Dad’s Army* shouting ‘Stupid Boy’.

“In fact, I had so many requests to

sing the *Dad’s Army* theme, *Who Do You Think You Are Kidding Mr Hitler?* that I’ve added it to my repertoire. Some of the younger ones even get up and dance to it.”

Jill has a full diary this summer performing at various nostalgia events up and down the country.

“I wasn’t in Normandy to commemorate the D-Day Landings because I was in North Yorkshire performing for those people too old or ill to make the trip,” she said.



Above, Jill in one of her military outfits, and right, Vera Lynn in her heyday.



Richard & Judy TV Reporter, Mike McClean, didn't do

the GFS any favours with his four minute showing of the Blackpool Wintergardens September Meeting. It was easy to see that he had absolutely no interest whatsoever in George as he cynically poked and prodded around asking members "Why George Formby?"

One of his ports of call was the shop where he asked the ladies to tune his wooden uke for him. He was met with a negative "I can't play," which is a great pity because if he'd asked one of the players he would have had a tuned up, ready to play uke, and maybe joined in the fun.



One member gave a demonstration of "Showing off" (his own words) when he bashed the guts out of his uke strings, creating the most terrible din. Not a good example for viewers or future Formby fans.

Mike McClean is so sad - not the Lancashire Formby image.

Mike McClean's doubting, tongue in cheek, approach to the members appeared to upset the whole rhythm of the society. As he walked in, the bright and breezy Blackpool image flew out through the windows and we were left with an air of gloom. Ted Formby, George's brother, said, "There is so much doom and gloom about today" - well he didn't have to go far to find that on the day.



Some years back, Formby fans were considered to be nut cases. One prominent member once told me, "I hate carrying a uke case because people think we are cranks." However, we held an Exhibition at Warrington and the huge amount of publicity brought in new members from all over the country, and from abroad.

Tony Marshall raised a happy smile for George

From then on it was no longer considered Crankish to be a Formby fan and members wore their Blazers, Ties and Badges with pride. Any doubtful news reporters, who entered the Wintergardens meetings were immediately overwhelmed by the gush of George Formby atmosphere that domineered the whole room. They were bowled over by the aura of enthusiasm and consequently had no alternative but to report back with a First Class, Top Marks result. Sadly it wasn't there this time.



However, I'm sure that the GFS will benefit from the TV show. Let's hope so, for George's sake.

Smile all the time

Pam Baddeley Emails—Dear Stan, I

thought that this recently discovered information might be of interest to the readers of the newsletter.

Whilst on holiday in Guernsey this year I bought a book called "There is an occupation" which gives an account of what life was like in Guernsey during World War 2 when the Channel Islands were occupied by the Germans.

In one chapter, The author tells of a group of men from Guernsey who brought back goods from Alderney for use by the Guernsey people. (Everyone from Alderney had been ordered to leave by the Germans). On returning, one man brought the film projector from the Alderney cinema and all the films that were there. These films became very popular and he was invited to various homes to give film shows at private parties. The Germans were unaware of these activities

until late one night the German patrol discovered a group of islanders having an all night party and laughing uproariously at the antics of George Formby "strumming his banjo." The noise was deafening, the Germans charged in and marched the projectionist off to prison for five days while they examined the films.

The man was subsequently released, the Germans decided that the films were old and harmless and gave him a permit to continue showing them, but not after curfew. The man happily wheeled his equipment home in a handcart and, ignoring the threat, continued to show the films to all who invited him. Isn't it great to think that George brought laughter and happiness to those who were forced to face such difficulties and hardships during the war? Pam Baddeley. *Thanks Pam. Very interesting story.*

Young Cliff Royle reports - Hi Stan,

Some time ago we were asked to take part in a Retirement Party for one of our ardent supporters, the Rev Roland Crook, Vicar of St. Pauls in Helshy. The occasion took place on Friday 24th Sept. when we entertained perhaps about 150 guests.

Roland did not know that we would be present and was taken aback as we played "Blackpool Rock" as he and Wife Linda entered the Hall. The evening was followed with us singing songs, playing bones and Alison doing her "Living Marriettes". The acts were interspersed with Roland's family members singing there own version of "Window Cleaner", and their Dad's "This is Your Life".

There was an excellent Buffet, and we were made very welcome indeed. Our thanks to the organiser, Sidesman Brian Kenyon, another of our supporters. *Thanks Cliff.*



Revved up Formby fan

Sale Report by Hilda and Vera

Cyril welcomed three new visitors – Mervyn Kaye and his wife from Northwich and Hazel Astin who came with Alan and Pat Chenery. Sheila was unable to come owing to illness and Eve Stewart was very poorly and had to go back into hospital. Pam and Jon Baddeley had family commitments, Marjorie and Gerald were on holiday and Margaret and Les were doing some charity entertainment. Although there were only a few members present



Vera

Hilda

at the beginning, the room gradually filled up almost to capacity. After the thrash Dick Eaves opened the first half of the evening and, on behalf of the Sale Branch, congratulated Alan Southworth on being awarded Honorary Membership of the G.F.S. at the recent Wintergardens convention.

As usual Eddie Bancroft opened the show with *Windows* and *Lampost* followed by Alan Southworth singing *Blackpool Rock* and *Hindoo Man* to backing tapes of Denis O'Connell at the piano. This made a pleasant change and took us back 20 years or so when Denis used to accompany all the artists on the piano. He could play any song, in any key, whilst smiling at the audience. Jim Knight did *Mr. Wu* and was then joined by Frank Humphreys, Alan Chenery, Walter Kirkland and Alan Newton, all playing the bones, to *Smile All the Time*. Arthur Newton, always very jolly, did *T.T.Races* and *Sitting on the Top of Blackpool Tower*. Connie Edge reminisced about the time she and Brian lived at the railway station where Brian was the station master and, with Brian, sang *I Like Riding on a Choo Choo Choo*.



Frank Bennett, belying his 80+ years, dared to sing *England's Not England Any More* which was co-written by Frank and G.F.S. member, Terry Wallin, many years ago and *Put Another Log on the Fire*. Then it was the turn of Alice Cronshaw, our only female entertainer of the evening singing, full of passion, *You Made Me Love You* and a Billy 'Uke' Scott's song *I've Got a Boyfriend*. Frank Humphreys put his uke down and sang *Bring Me Sunshine* and, with Jim Knight on the tenor banjo, *When I'm 64*.

During the interval Anne Ratcliffe provided us with a welcome cup of tea, cakes and biscuits and Jean Brannan and Dick Eaves drew the raffle.

After the second thrash, Dick, in his own inimitable way, opened the second half of the evening with Roy Brannan playing *Grandad's Flannelette Nightshirt*, then Brian Edge *Nobody's Sweetheart* and *Put Your Arms Around Me Honey*. Alan Chenery, with a sweet sounding wooden uke played *I Love To Play My Ukulele* and *Mississippi*. Alan Newton was *Trailing Around in a Trailer* followed by the lovely *Lullaby of Broadway*. The Past-its (Well and Truly) did *Baby* and *You'll Never Find Another Fool Like Me* medley. Bryn Evans, on his wooden uke, did *Just One More Chance* and *I'll See You In My Dreams*.

Phil Jones delighted us with *Charleston* and a Fred Astaire medley *Putting on My Top Hat*, *Putting on the Ritz*, *Cheek to Cheek* and *Heaven*. Next was John Taylor, all the

way from Morecambe, with *Smile All The Time* and *D-I-V-O-R-C-E*. *The Isle of Man* was performed by *Walter Kirkland* and then he *Rocked Around the Clock* with *Frank Humphreys* and *Jim Knight*. *Paul Kenny* was next with *Auntie Maggie's Remedy* and *Horo-scope*, *Jack Valentine Licence* and *David Rhodes Wigan Boat Express*.

No matter how many or how few people are in attendance we always have a full evening's enjoyable entertainment. *Hilda and Vera*. (We've never heard of the *Dolly Sisters*, *Stan* - We must be too young !)



Thanks Girls. You must have heard of the Dolly Sisters. Here they are on the left—very well known. In 1945 (before you were born) the Americans made a film of them with Betty Grable and June Haver playing the lead parts.



I'm pleased that Alan has received honorary membership of the Formby Society, he deserves it. Also Kitty Barrett who

has raised thousands of pounds for the society with her raffles. They both deserve recognition for their devotion to George. Denis O'Connell was a great character. He challenged the members to name any Formby song that he couldn't play, and it was very rare that they beat him. Great Chap! Very talented, and extremely pleasant!

Brian Edge Emails—Sorry no luck in the Duck Race, but thanks to all those at the Wistaston Society who bought tickets for the Annual Duck Race. Unfortunately none of our ducks won any of the prizes this time, but the Memorial Hall Management Committee have asked me to thank you all for so generously supporting the event. All the money raised this way is to be spent on repairs and maintenance of the Hall. The Duck Race is the only event in the year that our George Formby Group ask our members to support as the Hall Committee is always very supportive of us and in addition we all get so much enjoyment in holding our meetings here. Thanks everybody.



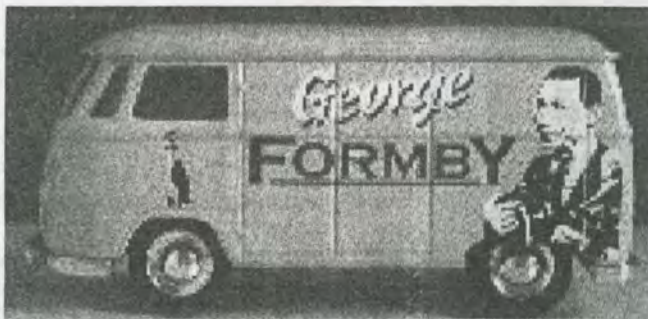
Anatoly our Russian Formby Friend replies to a letter of condolence sent to him after the Beslan school tragedy—

My dear friends, I received some e-mails from Arctic Convoy veterans of the USA, Kanada, UK and other Allied countries with condolence to Russian people and to parents who lost chylidren and relatives in Beslan massacre, Tomorrow, at 09.09 (Moscow time), Thursday they will give me possibility to pass these condolence of all AC veterans via Russian branch of radio "liberty Life" to all Russia into open air. Your friend Capitan 1-st rank (Rtd) Anatoly Uvarov.

George's (missing) Volkswagen is Found

In last month's issue, George's Dinky Volkswagen was offered for sale through Ebay Auctions, and a photo of the van was included in the article. However, after printing the books I discovered that the van had disappeared from the page and was nowhere to be seen. The good news is that the van has suddenly turned up and here it is.

Details are: 1/43 metal diecast model of the classic split screen Volkswagen van featuring an advert for the ukulele player, singer and actor George Formby. Designed in Britain by Oxford Diecasts only a limited number of these attractive models have been



produced and each comes with a numbered card. Our model is mint and boxed.

John Mason sends a Fax—Hello Stan, just

going through my cupboards the other day and it's surprising what you accumulate over the years. How's these for old keepsakes?

A record of "Gracie's and Sandy's Party" with Gracie Fields, Sandy Powell, Charlie Kunz, Joe Peterson, Reginald Dixon, Jay Wilbur, Larry Adler and Primo Scala. REX 8905 - Signed by all artists.

George Formby Senior Jumbo Record: Send For John Willie and Taking My Father's Tea. Signed by George Sen.

Formby Film Favourites REGAL ZONOPHONE MR 2599

When We Feather Our Nest, - Our Sergeant Major, - Isle Of Man, - Hitting The High Spots Now.



MR 3039—Hitting The High Spots and Tell It By My Horoscope.

MR 2399—Lancashire Toreador and The Window Cleaner No. 2

MR 3147—Blackpool Rock and Lancashire Hot Pot Swingers.

MR 3329—Wigan Boat Express and Old Coal Hole.

Decca F 3752—My Ukulele and I Went All Hot and Cold.

Decca F 3099—Chinese Laundry Blues and Do De O Do.

Unfortunately I don't know what condition they are in because I haven't got a 78 rpm gramophone to play them on. *Thanks John. You are doing very well with your singing.*

Teacher: Johnny, who knocked down Adrian's wall? Johnny: Do you know?

Teacher: Of course I know. Johnny: Well what are you asking me for?

Alan Southworth replies to Albert's query

Dear Stan, A few years ago I was with Billy 'Uke' Scott at a G.F. Convention and someone was singing T.T. Races. Billy asked me why people were singing the wrong words to T.T. Races. The performer had just sung "With the women posed on the pillion seat" and Billy said it should be "With the winning post on the pillion seat". When I got home I did a bit of research and Billy was proved right. In the film "No Limit" and the record from 28th November 1935 George does sing "Winning Post".

When the music was printed in The George Formby Complete and the G.F. Songbook (two books well known for mistakes) they printed "Women posed on the pillion seat", so maybe this is where the confusion arose. I print "alternative words" on my chord sheet so that people can use whichever they like. Personally I prefer "Women posed on the pillion seat". I think it is more humorous thinking of someone riding in the T.T. races with a lady on the pillion seat!

Now to the matter of "Lampost" - The original sheet music and the G.F. Complete and the 1936 recording of the song use "Wonderful and marvellous and beautiful" but on the 1950 recording and on the Friday Show George sings "Beautiful and marvellous and wonderful". So there you have it, either was acceptable and used by George. Perhaps it was a slip of the tongue or a lapse of memory, who knows? I think the original 1936 version flows better. Alan Southworth.

Thanks Alan. Albert was bit concerned because George sings "With the WOMEN posed on the pillion seat." meaning at least two women. Now, as Albert said, "You can't have two women sat on a pillion seat." Sort that out—I've give up. P.S. Anthony's just butted in with "Apart from being dangerous, it would be illegal" - Gerroff.

George Formby Song Books

—Alan Southworth mentioned the two GF Songbooks being well known for mistakes. Some years back I went to London with the Channel Four TV cameras to challenge Campbell Connelly—who control George's songs along with EMI.

My question to Campbell Connelly was "The two books you produced are too confusing for basic uke players to follow, so why don't you produce a simple, basic GF music book similar to what the GFS produce? Surely it would create more sales, and, after all, you do produce many simple popular song books. Some with only three or four chords"

Their answer was "First, the two books were produced for pianists, and not for ukulele players. And secondly, if your society creates the demand for simple GF books, we will print them and sell them in the shops." Well that's a good way of popularising George's songs, and I'm sure it would be appreciated by George's fans.

They've produced easy Hymn and Pop Song Books (On the right) so why not George Formby songs?"

blue could help Love lift and me

In Charge of Supplies from Martin Thomas

An Italian, a Scotsman and a Chinese man, are hired at a Construction site.

The foreman points out a huge pile of sand.

He says to the Italian chap, "You're in charge of sweeping."

To the Scotsman he says, "You're in charge of shovelling."

And to the Chinese chap, "You're in charge of supplies."

He then says, "Now, I have to leave for a little while. I expect you men to make a dent in that pile of sand."

So when the foreman returns after being away for a couple of hours, the pile of sand is untouched. He asks the Italian, "Why didn't you sweep any of it?"

The Italian replies, "I no hava no broom. You saida to the Chinesea fella that he a wasa ina charge of supplies, but he hasa disappeared and I no coulda finda him nowhere."

Then the foreman turns to the Scotsman and says "And you, I thought I told you to shovel this pile."

The Scotsman replies, "Aye, that ye did laddie, boot ah could nae get meself a shoovel. Ye left th' Chinese gadgie in chaarge of supplies, boot ah couldna fin' him neither."

The foreman is really angry now. He storms off toward the pile of sand to look for the Chinese gent.

Just then, the Chinese man leaps out from behind the pile of sand and yells, "SUPPLIES!!!!"

Harry Boffey—Harry,

who regularly attends the Crewe meetings, was a very keen fan of Sam Bass's, who sadly passed away last year. Whenever Sam appeared at the theatres, around the area, or North Wales, he would make the journey to go along to support him.



Sam Bass and Harry Boffey

During Harry's working life, he was a Cinema Projectionist at the Palace Cinema, Crewe.

Thanks for the photo Harry. I also was a Cinema Projectionist some 58 years ago at the Grand Cinema, Warrington. Due to the war there was a shortage of men to do these jobs, so I was thrown in at the deep end without any experience. It was at the time when cinemas were allowed to open on Sundays and the Chief Operator had to have a day off during the week. He chose to be off on the quietest day: Tuesday, so I was in charge on that day.

The first Tuesday went great!!! It was an RAF film called "Target For Tonight" and I handled it very well. The Chief Operator was dead chuffed that I'd done such a good job with so little training, and had no fears of leaving me in charge during his day off.

However, the second Tuesday was a disaster! It was a full length Laurel & Hardy film consisting of 4 double reels. At around 9.30 pm I suddenly noticed that we were nearing the end of the film, and "THE END" was due up on screen! I was shocked to find that I'd left reels 5 and 6 out. I thought "Any time now there will be an uproar."

With seconds to spare I very quickly laced up the missing reels and we were back on course again. The middle bit was shown near the end, and the amazing thing was that no-one complained. This was possibly due to it being a slap-stick comedy film, without a definite story line. How lucky I was to get away with it. Mind you, the audience was full of courting couples so I don't suppose they'd be bothered about watching the film.

The following day the Chief Operator was full of praise again, and no-one was any wiser. But I couldn't help thinking how lucky I was to get away with it. Just imagine if it had been a murder film. The audience would have known who did the murder before the crime was committed. Makes me sweat even today to think of it.

I was in trouble at the Sale Meeting. Connie Edge made a vicious attack on me: "You didn't put my Thank You Note in the last issue!" Er, er, er, er, well it didn't arrive in time. "Oh yes it did!!!" Brian was keeping silent and saying nowt because no doubt he'd forgotten to send it in on time. My God, you can tell she's getting back to normal again. So here it is Connie.



Connie Edge Wishes to Thank Everyone for their good wishes, cards, telephone calls and flowers that she received during her illness. She's not sure about Doctors, but is sure that all the kind thoughts from her friends have made her feel a whole lot better than the pills. She sends her love and many thanks. You are a tough nut Connie.

BRIAN HAS A SPELL CHECKER

Eye halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marques four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.
Eye strike a quay and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait a weigh.
As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee four two long
And eye can put the error rite
Its rare lea ever wrong.
Eye have run this poem threw it
Eye am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My chequer tolled me sew.

Email List—Emails are extremely simple to use and very useful for contacting other Email users, - especially at times of emergency. I have a list of Email users and with one or two presses of the button, the whole list can be reached within seconds. It is taking over from normal GPO post which possibly may not exist in few years time. The system came in extremely handy in informing Formby fans of the loss of dear Eve Stewart. Within minutes the news was quickly spreading through the grape vine.

If you are an Email user and wish to be kept informed, please forward your Email address—by Email of course. My address is: - stan@stanevans.co.uk

George Formby Meetings

North Wales Branch - British Legion, Penyffordd (10 miles from Chester) Every 1st Friday in the month. Tel Jim Knight 01978 358472 Adm 50p.

Liverpool - Broadgreen Conservative Club, Every 2nd Friday in the month - Ring Tom Bailey on 0151 289 1711 - Bring Your Uke

Sale —Timperley Liberal Club, 43 Park Road, Timperley. Every 3rd Friday in the month - Ring Cyril Palmer 0161 748 6550 Adm £1. Inc. Tea & Biscuits.

Crewe Branch - Wistaston Memorial Hall - Every 4th Friday in the month - Brian Edge on 01270 569836.

Westhoughton - The Red Lion Pub (Opp. Police Station) Ring Gerry Mawdsley on 01942 817346 - Every last Wednesday in the month. Uke Tuition.

Blackpool. SOUTH SHORE CRICKET GROUND, Common Edge Rd, Blackpool. Every last Monday in the month -Tel Eye & Charles Stewart on 01253 768097. Wonderful Buffet—Always in need of players.

Wintergardens George Formby Society Meetings:

13th and 14th November following Liverpool

Concerts usually start around 1.30pm each day.

Please Ring the Secretary, Sylvia Roe on 01142 846245 for details on the GFS or Wintergarden meetings.

Web Site —Two Lancashire Lads:

www.stanevans.co.uk/formby

E Mail: stan@stanevans.co.uk

The George Formby Newsletters finish June 2005. To receive by post please send a cheque for £2.25 for 3 months, or £6. 75 to receive issues up to June. Cheques payable to S. Evans - Address Front Cover.



Got a book out of the library on keeping moths. It's called "Advice To Young Mothers."
Wife: Yes Officer, I found him dead in bed. It's his own fault, if he'd got up when I first shouted him, he'd have been in work now.
Policeman: You're going down a one-way street. Didn't you see the arrows?
Driver: Arrows? I didn't even see the Indians.