

THE

# GEORGE FORMBY

Vol. 10  
No. 6  
Dec 2004

## Newsletter 114



Specially Produced for George Formby Fans  
by Stan Evans, The Hollies, 19 Hall Nook, Penketh, Warrington,  
Cheshire WA5 2HN

Tel or Fax 01925 727102

# Welcome to Newsletter No. 114

We are now into November and it seems only a few weeks ago we were celebrating Christmas. Doesn't time pass quickly? Fortunately we've had no sad news to report this month, however we have some interesting items to offer. Read On . . .

\*\*\*\*\*

**Louie Formby** - I was looking through some old writing pads the other day and found some notes from Louie. Every time she remembered something from the past she would ring me and keep me talking for an hour or so. It was an excuse to ring.

Here's some of the items: - Frank Randle was eccentric. He would give my brother Frank and I a job in pantomime but he didn't tell us what to do. He said, "You can't play the uke, I do that, and you can't dance, because I have a dancer." When I told him that we are a uke playing song and dance duo, he ignored us. When we went to his house he had a sword hanging on the wall, to chop his wife up.

Beryl used to say: I hope George is not playing cards and losing his money.

At Beryldene the sleeping arrangements were Beryl's Mum & Dad in Bedroom One George & Beryl in Bedroom Two, and Harry Scott in Bedroom Three. Mary, (Louie's sister), toured round the theatres with her son Frank and a boxing kangaroo. Frank used to box it.

George practised the uke very quietly to save his fingers. It was only on stage or in the studio where he bashed the strings. To help George, Louie played the piano for him.



Ella Shields was Ella's (Louie's sister) Godmother. Louie often spoke of appearing on stage with a wonderful dancer named "Snake Hips Johnson" and another dancer named "Peg Leg Bates" who only had one leg. She said he would throw himself all round the stage on his one leg.

Eliza (Mother) was very fit in her younger day. She used to do high kicks. When they went to the Variety Artists Ball, Father would pick out a man for her to dance with because he didn't dance in his later years.

Father was embalmed and put in the vault at the Warrington Cemetery. Mother moved from Liverpool back to Warrington so that she could spend more time talking to him in the vault. The Variety Artists offered to pay £500 for the cost of the headstone but they never paid it.

Beryl had leukaemia. She drank burgundy to relieve the pain. George was a perfectionist. He practised hard to be word perfect before recording.

**Charles Stewart says Thanks.** Over the past few weeks Charles has been overwhelmed by the vast amount of concern coming from Eve's Formby Friends. He rang, "Stan will you please give my thanks to all Eve's friends for all the cards and phone calls received. It was kind of them all to come from such a long way to attend her funeral. She certainly had a lot of friends so please give them my thanks.

\*\*\*\*\*

## John Taylor Remembers Meeting Eve, who was our Blackpool Rock

Hello Stan, what a sad month we've had. I will always remember my first ever Formby meeting. It was at the Wainwright Conservative club on Hornby Road, Blackpool. I walked in, a little apprehensive at first, not quite knowing what to expect. But I had no need to be concerned because I was met by smiling Eve Stewart on the door. She greeted me as I walked in and she radiated Formby enthusiasm. Blackpool's first lady, - our rock! - was always cheerful and smiling. I will always remember her for her warmth. Losing Eve is a tremendous blow, not just to the north west but also to the GFS and all who knew her.

There are still plenty of people left who remember 'The battle of the roses' and that it was mainly Eve who suffered the brunt of what took place. It would have been more appropriate if honorary membership had been offered when she was still enjoying good health. Cheers, John.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Blackpool Night—by Alan Chenery

EVE REMEMBERED—Charles made a short speech on stage explaining that the show will go on every month because that's the way that Eve would wish it to be. So right!!! Eve would be delighted to know that her meeting is carrying on.



Alan Chenery

It all started off quiet and we thought we were in for an early night. However, half an hour into the programme we had a visit from Andy Eastwood who called in straight from the Winter Gardens, where he was performing. Well Andy has certainly matured over the years. He burst on to the stage like a thunderbolt with all the actions of a true professional. He's a perfectionist and it is plain to see that Ken Dodd has well and truly tutored him. Good for you Andy. We are so pleased that we have watched you develop over the years.

It all started off quiet but we went out with a bang. On the door were Pat Chenery and Hazel Astin, Charles Stewart operated the sound and the artists were Ben Halliwell, Don Horton, The Past Its (Stan Watkinson & Stan Evans) Alan Middleton, Alan Chenery accompanied by Hazel Astin doing two songs for our next show. Topping the bill, of course, was Andy Eastwood who received a hearty applause. We had about 40 in total attended and the buffet was supplied by Charles. *Thanks Alan.*

## CREWE Celebrate Ten Years of Formby Magic

It seems just like yesterday since we held our first meeting in 1994 and when we had finished our first night we had the princely sum of twenty pence left in the kitty! We have however, gone a long way since then, our audiences have grown steadily over the years to an *average* of almost ninety and our shows have improved very considerably. We are a unique society, open to all, no subs and the best show in the world for fifty pence with light refreshments thrown in free of charge. Our main objectives apart from playing the ukulele, are to provide a very friendly warm atmosphere where all those that come along feel welcome, amongst real friends and away, for just a while, from all the terrible news we hear each day both local and worldwide. Our shows are somewhere to go, to escape it all, to feel safe and to be able to relax and have fun with the songs that most of us remember from our childhood days. May we long continue - as this is a show that must go on and on....



The October show was special as we celebrated the 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday of one of our most popular members – that evergreen funster Walter Kirkland. Walter had a military upbringing, his Father being a regular soldier. Walter was born abroad, Malta I think, and he travelled to different parts of the world with his Father. Eventually after completing his military service Walter's Father was engaged by Rolls Royce in Crewe as a Commissionaire and Walter became a member of the Rolls Royce Fire Brigade. He has given great service to the Parkinson Disease Society over the years and he has been a keen restorer of vintage motorcycles. He has been ever faithful to the Crewe Society and he really is a lovely man everyone's favourite. We all sang "Happy Birthday" to Walter and we hope to serenade him with the same greeting for many more years in the future. We had some special cakes laid on to celebrate his special event and we need to thank all our lady helpers for their efforts in this direction.

We were pleased to welcome Mr and Mrs Pete Dodd to their first show and I had a feeling that there were another two or three new faces in the audience. We hope that you all enjoyed the show and we look forward to have the pleasure of your company again soon. It was nice to have Alan and Eunice Evans with us again. Alan has a very big repertoire of songs and he is a very pleasant singer. It was good to see David Rhodes too, he is another up and coming performer with great potential.

Artistes taking part in the show were as follows: ALAN NEWTON - 'Swimmin with the Wimmen' & 'Smile Away Each Rainy Day.' CLIFF ROYLE, COLIN WOOD & DAVE CLEWS - 'With my Little Stick of Blackpool Rock.' DAVID RHODES - 'Granddads Flannelette Nightshirt' & 'You don't need a Licence for That.' JIM KNIGHT- 'Singing the Blues' and Bones Thrash. ALICE CRONSHAW - 'Smile' & 'Too Young.' STEVE HASSALL (uke), ALAN NEWTON (trombone), JONATHAN BADDELEY (clarinet)- Jazz Medley 'taint no Sin to Jump out of your Skin (and Dance around in your Bones etc).' JONATHAN BADDELEY - 'Sitting on the top of Blackpool Tower' & 'Photo in the Press.' CYRIL PALMER - 'Raining in my Heart' & 'Paradise for Three, You, my Uke and Me.' DEG BRUCE & PHIL HUGHES - 'Blackpool Belle,' 'Sergeant Major' & 'Mr Wu's a Window Cleaner Now.' ALAN

EVANS- 'He was Such a Daring Young Man,' 'I Love You Because' & 'Moonlight and Roses.' CLIFF ROYLE- 'Chinese Laundry Blues' & 'Matchstalk Men.' ALISON NADIN presented 'Alf.' WALTER KIRKLAND (Birthday Boy LXXX) - 'Aint She Sweet Medley' & Bones Bash. BRIAN EDGE ( His Tribute to Frankie Woods) - 'That Ragtime Girl of Mine.' PAMELA BADDELEY - 'When I fall in Love' & 'Around the World.' COLIN WOOD & ALAN NEWTON - 'I Wish I could Play the Ukulele' & 'The Whole World in His Hands.' STAN EVANS - 'Stay In Your Own Backyard' & 'The Soldiers Dream' with Ashley Caldicott.  
The emcee for the night was our Newsletter Editor, the popular, Stan Evans. B.E.

BILL TURNER - Just had a call from our pal Bill Turner who has had quite a spell in hospital. It was really a special treat to hear his voice so loud and clear. Bill told me that he was home and feeling much better apart from the 25 tablets that he has to take each day. Bill is a proud old soldier who wears his medals with pride. He was one of the many who landed on the Normandy Beaches on D. Day. Bill ran the old Werrington Branch where we had many happy hours and we wish him well on his road to recovery. We have a lot to thank him for.

### CREWE SOCIETY'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

By the time that you read this the Crewe Society will be ten years old. It has been a very special ten years that has brought pleasure and friendship to so many people. It has always been our intention to create a a society with happy and friendly atmosphere and with everyone's co-operation we have achieved just that. It has been a memorable ten years and we have enjoyed it immensely. Of course our success could not have been achieved without you all; our artistes, our concert party, our sound engineers, comperes, the ladies who look after the refreshments, Chris who meets you at the door, those who set up the show and those who help to clear up after the show is over. Our success is due to you all. We hope that our success will continue for many years and knowing you all we are confident that the show will go from strength to strength. Thanks to you all. Brian and Connie.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Email from Arthur**- Hello Stan, I've been asked to sing "You Made Me Love You" at a Christmas party. I know the tune but need the words. Please email them to me, if you know them. *No problem Arthur. Here they are.*

You made me love you, I didn't want to do it, I didn't want to do it.

You made me want you, and all the time you knew it, I guess you always knew it.

You made me happy sometimes, you made me sad.

But there were times dear, you made me feel so glad.

You made me sigh for, I didn't wanna tell you, I didn't wanna tell you.

I want some love that's true, yes I do, deed I do, you know I do.

Give me, give me, what I sigh for.

You know you've got the kind of kisses that I'd die for.

You know you made me love you.

That OK for you Arthur? Let me know how you go on. My favourite singers for this song are Al Jolson and Judy Garland. They put it over very well.

## Super Cliff reports

-Another night with a difference at Penyffordd. Birthdays galore and hopefully a new star in our midst. The main celebration was for Walter Kirkland — 80 on the 9th. November. The Branch presented him with an engraved Tankard; the presentation being by our two Lady Bouncers Margaret and Myra, and everyone tucked in to a Celebration Pastie in the interval. Other Birthdays were; Greg Simister (8th); Val Woods (10th) Cliff Royle (13th); Pam Baddeley (22nd); Brian Edge (26th) and Jack Davies (end of month). So it seems that if you were born in November you could well be a Formby Fan.



Eleven year old Simon Hughes from Frodsham on his first visit played When I'm Cleaning Windows showing no inhibitions with the mike or the audience. He was accompanied by his mentor (me) and was well presented in a posh waistcoat. I am sure he will manage on his own next time. He got the best applause of the evening, and I am sure that his Mum was proud of him Keep it up Simon, but do not neglect your school work.

So what about the show. Well Alison has produced some rousing start up music for each session which even introduces each M.C. in an unidentifiable voice which is actually hers. Yes she is much more than a pretty face. Jim Knight was M.C. for the first half ably supported by Concert Organiser Alison Nadin. The latter of course is an important job in the smooth running of an evening.

Performers were Alan Chenery (Princess Lulu and Lamp Post); Gerald Jones (It A'int Nobody's Business What I Do and a funny Medley based on Formby Songs); Walter Kirkland (An Old Time Medley and Tijuana Taxi with his bones ensemble); Alan Newton ( You Can't Love Two Girls At The Same Time and I Can't Live Without You); Brian Edge (Give Me A Chance To Be Twenty Again and That Ragtime Girl of Mine-a Frankie Wood's Composition); Pamela Baddeley (A medley of Alf Johnson's sorry Al Jolson's songs. Her words not mine); Jim Knight dressed in Wild West Hat and with Banjo, played Never Going To See No Unicorns Again and then played Do Whacko Do accompanied by the usual Bones ensemble). Following this Jim kept Walter Kirkland on the Stage and said some nice words about him to lead up to his Presentation. Walter responded in the jovial manner we have come to expect.

Following the interval I was honoured by being asked to present a cheque for £50 for the British Legion Poppy Appeal to Mark, the Steward at the Penyffordd Legion. Mark in turn thanked us for our support to the Club and for the donation which would go to a very worthy cause. Deg Bruce took over as M.C. for the second half assisted by Phil Hughes as Concert Organiser. Deg announced that there were a number of ladies present who were organising a Charity Night in Johnston British Legion on 13th November in aid of the Glan Clwyd Cancer Unit, and our Branch would be performing at the event Tickets available at £4 which included a buffet. The ladies made a special request for "Cleaning Windows" which was performed by some ten players.

The Three Tenors, Deg, Phil and Frank sang Our Sergeant Major and Mr. Wu's A Window Cleaner Now; Alison Nadin with ventriloquist Dummy Alf who was able to get away with skits about a number of the members; Jonathan Baddeley (Pleasure Cruise and Running Round The Fountains In Trafalgar Square, by kind permission of Connie Edge); Vera Jones another singer from Crewe (If I Had My Way and Yours); Self - CONT P7

## It's Confirmed! - Women Can't Organise Like Men!

There's no doubt about it but women are the greatest when it comes to selling and folding raffle tickets, preparing and setting out sandwiches, and washing up in the kitchen, etc. They are the champions and no man can ever take the title from them.

But when it comes to organising a concert programme - HOPELESS! And we have evidence to prove it. At the Crewe October meeting I was M/C for the night and, apart from arriving late due to very heavy traffic on the M6, everything was going very well. Brian issued me with instructions, which included announcing Walter Kirkland's 80th Birthday and inviting him up on stage to receive the usually embarrassing, birthday treatment.

Half the crowd were singing Gracie Fields's "Walter, Walter, Lead Me To The Altar." when suddenly there was an uproar from the other half of the crowd. This was followed by a stampede of 300 women coming towards me. "No ladies, I'm not Tom Jones." I thought they were about to tear my clothes off. Connie was ranting and raving: "Men—they are hopeless!" "What the \*\*\*\*\*?" I thought, "What's all this about?"

SECRET TRIBUTE—Apparently the ladies had secretly planned a special surprise for Walter which included singing "Walter, Walter" but unfortunately they didn't tell the organisers. Oh dear, it was chaos. They burst into the unrehearsed song and immediately went all wobbly. They were all in a different key and some had finished while others were only half way through. But smiling Walter was as chuffed as little gum drops with all the attention he was getting. Surrounded by a stage full of ladies, he was loving every minute and he got two tributes for the price of one.

Anyway, it was a happy night with plenty of fun, and the Danish Pastries tasted grand. Walter told us he'd been up all night baking them but we don't believe him. Many happy returns Walter for November 9th. And many more to follow.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Wistaston Memorial Hall Concert.** The Committee of the Memorial Hall, where the Crewe Society hold their monthly meetings, held a fund raising concert on Friday the 29th October. The concert consisted of monologues, a performance by a young Drama Group, a Ladies Choir and The South Cheshire "George Formby" Ukulele Society. The event raised £200 which will go towards improvements to the hall.  
\*\*\*\*\*

CONT FROM PAGE SIX—(Back On The Farm and War Time Medley). Alan Chenery ( Mississippi Song accompanied by Jonathan Baddeley on the Ukulele Banjo; a lovely song) and the Illy Gilly Song about a house by the sea.) (My report writing is of course made quite difficult when I get titles like these). Walter Kirkland (They Call It The Isle Of Man and Happy Go Lucky Me) Yes he is always happy; Alan Newton another man with flair (Wunga Bunga Boo and Living Doll), Jim Knight and Frank Humphrey (When I'm Sixty Four?), and then the final Thrash. The good news is that Connie Edge is slowly improving and we were delighted to have her with us again. Our thanks go to all those who have donated raffle prizes over the year, and I apologise if I have left anyone out or misquoted them. *Thanks Cliff—sorry I had to edit it to squeeze it in.*

## Chris Webster Emails from his

**new bar in Spain** - Hello Stan, Thank you for letting me know about Eve. How very sad. I liked Eve an awful lot and have some very happy memories of time spent in her company. I'm so glad I was able to see her and catch up a little recently as prior to the Wigan Day I don't think I'd seen her or Charles for nearly ten years. I'm not able to send a card at present (I don't even know where I'd get one or where I'd post it from), but of course this doesn't mean that I don't care or can't be bothered so please pass on my deepest sympathies to Charles for me.



On a happier note, the bar opens very soon now, though we've been living in a weird, but exciting and fun bedlam world for months not knowing what problem was just around the corner or how and if we could solve it, though most of the time we have. We've certainly been kept on our toes, and are likely to be just as busy once we open as we're open 14 hours a day, seven days a week.

When I have time I must send you a few anecdotes of some Formby related things that have happened at this end which I think you'll find amusing and which might be suitable for the mag. All the best for now, Stan. Regards Chris

\*\*\*\*\*

### AND THERE'S MORE from Chris—Hi

Stan, I don't know whether this photo might be too dark to republish in the newsletter. We had a really hot night here recently in the bar in Spain ("Music Hall" with lots of Formby memorabilia on show and the songs going down well every night) and I went to give a song and picked up my Abbott but it sounded rotten, so after I came off stage I had the dubious brainwave of putting it in the drinks chiller for a few minutes. It worked because afterwards it sounded fab !!

CHRIS enclosed a photo of the Abbott uke inside the cooler fridge, which would have fitted nicely in this space. Unfortunately it was too dark to reproduce.

It was only when I went to take it out that I realised how funny it looked and what a good photo it might make for your mag, though if you do print it I'd suggest adding the disclaimer "Don't try this at home!! Chris Webster accepts no responsibility for frozen ukes"

Thanks for newsletters 112 and 113. I was touched to see that you'd used my 'Holland' photo of Eve in both, especially when you used it for the front cover. It's such a happy photo of her and a nice way to remember her and it's great that, through you, I've been able to share it with others. My thoughts, of course, continue to be with Charles. *Thanks Chris. We look forward to hearing more of your experiences in Spain, and especially when your bar is open. Who knows? A coach load of Formbys might turn up when you've settled in. We are always looking for more places to visit. Yes, I agree, your photo of Eve taken during the 1980s Dutch trip is excellent. It's the first time we've been Formby—less on the front cover but Eve has earned it: She was our Blackpool Rock.*



## (Mr Blackpool Was Born in Yorkshire

### Article from The Weekly News

Although born in Sheffield, on October 16th 1904 (same year as George) it was Reginald Dixon's long association with Blackpool that resulted in him receiving the accolade "Mr Blackpool". However this might never have come about had he not lost his job at Preston's Victoria Picture House in 1930.



Visiting Blackpool with his girlfriend, Vera, he popped into the Tower Ballroom and learned that a new organist would shortly be needed. A huge big Wurlitzer had just been installed and was proving difficult to handle. Reg decided to audition and having got the job, soon mastered the mighty instrument. To give full reign to his talents, a bigger and better organ, built to his own specifications, was installed in the mid 1930s.

Following service in the RAF during the Second World War, Reg was soon back at the keyboard and presenting his famous Blackpool Nights broadcasts during the 1950s and 1960s. By this time, at the height of his popularity, he even took part in the 1955 Royal Command Performance, when his playing was relayed from Blackpool Opera House.

Originally only booked for one season, Reg was still hugely popular when he retired aged 65 in 1970, after 40 years as resident organist. Reg died May 6th, 1985 and, in this, the centenary year of his birth he's still affectionately remembered in Blackpool, where his famous signature tune "Oh I Do Like To Be Beside The Seaside," brings back memories of the town's golden era.

\*\*\*\*\*  

## Digswell Trip Abandoned

— Last May, Stan Watkinson, Bob Muirhead and myself did the trip to Digswell to the Ukulele Soc of Gt Britain Meeting and thoroughly enjoyed the day out. They made us very welcome at Digswell. Stan W kindly provided the 8 seater transport and the journey was excellent. When we arrived back home we told the Liverpool gang how we'd enjoyed the trip and immediately we were inundated with calls, "Put me down for the next trip."



Stan W

Came October, we were all set to go with the extra travellers: Phil Jones, Bryn Evans, and Wilf Murray—plus picking up Christine Booth and Janet Hawkins at Milton Keynes. Excitement was growing and butties were almost packed, when Stan W rang. He'd been suffering from knee trouble and was unable to risk the 400 mile trip. Stan, a very experienced long distance ex-coach driver, felt that the long journey is too big a task if in pain. Sorry Digswell. Maybe next time.

By **Richard Morlarty**

AN anti-litter campaigner was rubbished yesterday after insulting the town of Wigan.

Sue Nelson, assistant chief executive of the Keep Britain Tidy charity, was forced to apologise for remarks she made to urban regeneration experts and civil servants at a conference in London.

She told them: "I would like to start by saying that Wigan is the a\*\*\* end of the world."

And she added: "London is the financial capital - Wigan is the pie capital. The two hubs of employment in Wigan are JJB Sports and the Heinz factory."

Ms Nelson, a Londoner, has now apologised to the people of the Lancashire town after Keep Britain Tidy, which is based in Wigan, received complaints.

The charity has also launched an internal investigation into her comments which could result in disciplinary action.

A spokesman said the remark was made during light-hearted banter and was not meant to be taken seriously.

"Wigan does have many wonderful things," he added. "The remarks were taken out of context. Sue made a number of humorous and light-hearted things and just to focus on a couple is wrong. It was at a con-

# Rude to Wigan Pier

Picture: NICK FAIRHURST



Seats available for Ireland  
Coach Trip. Ring  
Christine Wood on  
01270 663558  
Bring your swimming  
trunks

**IN DEEP WATER:** Keep Britain Tidy executive Sue Nelson - who is a Londoner - in Wigan, the town which she insulted while speaking at a conference

## 'It's the a\*\*\* end of the world'

ference which was very high-brow and she wanted to lighten the mood a little bit by making a few off-the-cuff remarks.

"She now sincerely regrets that she would have caused any offence to people in Wigan. That is the last thing she would have wanted to do.

"She is really, really sorry that people have been upset, and has apologised."

The Lancashire town, famous as the birthplace of George Formby, has struggled to shake off its Orwellian cloth-cap image of northern deprivation.

A spokesman for Wigan Council said: "It's very disappointing to see such derogatory comments. It will do nothing positive for the borough's image, and the description of Wigan is patently untrue.

"If the comments were made

then they are regrettable, since the council has worked closely with the charity, both in assisting it to stay in Wigan and in trying to improve cleanliness.

"We're very keen to continue to do so. We know it's not perfect but there has been a marked improvement in recent years.

"We're sure that they regret what were hopefully intended as light-hearted remarks."

Ms Nelson refused to comment last night.

Teacher: What's the opposite of Happiness Johnny?— Sadness Miss

Teacher: What's the opposite of Depression Johnny?—Elation Miss

Teacher: What's the opposite of Woe Johnny?—Giddy up Miss.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Teacher: What's a Zebra Johnny? - 26 sizes bigger than an A Bra Miss  
\*\*\*\*\*

Notice on Spiritualist's door: "Please Don't Knock, It Causes Confusion."  
\*\*\*\*\*

CLIFF sends in this typing error: Just a little snippet handed to me by your friend Pauline Spark from a recent copy of the local "Guardian" under the heading of "Electrical Goods for Sale". Large George Formby Grill, only used twice, as new. £20. Tel 01925 819530. How about that on a Warrington Number? *Great Stuff!*

## Paul Woodhead on How To Make a "One—Man—Band"

I am of course playing the banjo uke. On my right hangs my Martin Backpacker travelling guitar & above it you can see the black rubber "honker" of a bicycle horn. On MY left is my mandolin & just inside it hangs a silver "mouth truss" which incorporates a harmonica, orange whistle, yellow kazoo & a length of black flexible drain hose.

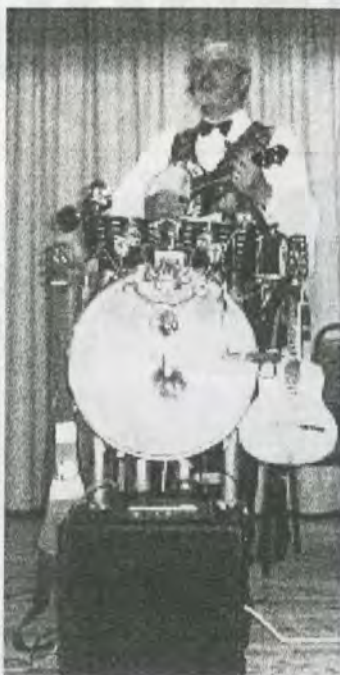
On the centre music stand is a small keyboard though it is out of sight. In front of the music stand is a red tambourine and a cowbell. Attached to the tambourine via a plate hanger & a wire coat-hanger, is "Fred" my flightless ostrich. Behind Fred is an "egg shaker" attached to a drum stick which is then attached to a frying pan egg flip via a string which goes over a pulley & eventually loops around my right shoe.

As I tap my right foot the drum stick beats the bodhran (Irish drum), shakes the tambourine & cow bell & then on it's return strikes the ostrich with the shaker (up his bottom), whereupon he dances!

The whole contraption is on wheels, on a sack truck & the black amplifier keeps it weighted down so that as the drum plays the whole thing doesn't fall over. It goes in the back of the car, as it is except I remove the amp for easier lifting. The next project is to attach another pulley system to play my washboard on the rear the trolley. If you look carefully to the left you will also see the "appearing rose" stem, same as yours.

I should add that the music stand has holes in it which house my bones & spoons. The metal spoons beat, by reverberation, against the cowbell as the whole thing moves to the beat of my foot. It sound very complicated but if you could see it, it's quite easy. A few local musicians have expressed great interest and complimented me on it's performance, simplicity & uniqueness. I should add that the whole sack truck is clad in plumbers pipe lagging to stop boom & shake feedback to my radio mike (worn round my head). It also stops reverberation other than that I choose. Gaffer tape & electrical ties hold the whole thing together.

To Sum Up:—Uke Banjo, Guitar, Bike Horn, Mandolin, Mouth Truss, Harmonica, Whistle, Kazoo, Irish Drum, Hose Pipe, Keyboard, Tambourine, Cowbell, Ostrich Shaker, Bones, Spoons, Amplifier, Microphone, which is all attached to a Sack Truck. *Thanks Paul. You've worked hard. What does it all sound like? You must give us a demo. I'll bet Jill is dead chuffed at having all that stored n the house.*



## What A Grand TV Day!!! - Warrington based ITV

Producer, Dave Warwick, rang asking me to organise an army of George Formby players for a TV programme "Everything Must Go" which will be screened in December or January. "No trouble" I thought until it came to gathering names, and then it appeared that the Formby players had gone all camera shy, because nobody responded to the call.

However, Stan Watkinson, Alan Chenery, Phil Jones, Jed Gennet and Greg Simister (plus our fan club, Pat Chenery and Bob Simister) saved the day when they turned up for the filming at St John's Church Hall on Tuesday 26th October.

I arrived at 10am to set up the sound equipment and found the hall empty—not a soul. I set up the sound system—PERFECT—and returned back home to meet the gang, who were all wound up ready for action.



We arrived back at the hall and found it full of sales staff, tables and loads of antique articles for sale. It was a charity event in aid of M.I.N.D. which is an organisation for mentally handicapped people, - a worthy cause.

The producers, Jim Brown and Clayton Riches, plus the presenter Jamie ???????? certainly made the day a great success as they bounced around the hall to the sound of the Formby songs. "More" they shouted as soon as we came to the end of a song, - and the lads were pleased to oblige. The M.I.N.D. staff, all attired in "Everything Must Go" yellow tee-shirts, thoroughly enjoyed the music and showed their delight as they danced around the hall, setting up their stalls.

The doors were opened at 4pm to the large crowd that had gathered outside, and in minutes they were purchasing items from the stalls. The staff members were delighted with the result. Well the lads certainly did George proud as they sung all his popular songs: - Lamp Post, Windows, Blackpool Rock and Mr Wu, never sounded better. We told the crowd that the reason for Formby music is because we are in George's second home town and the Formby family grave is only a few

hundred yards down the road. "Great idea" said one couple, "We never knew that his songs sounded so great. Many thanks to all who supported on the day.



Phil, Jed, Alan, Jamle, Stan W, and young Greg

## Sale Report by Hilda and Vera

The evening commenced on a sad note as we remembered Eve Stewart who passed away on 19<sup>th</sup> September. Eve will be greatly missed as she was loved by so many members of the GFS. Her lovely smile and her enthusiasm was infectious and she never missed a chance to attend our meetings. Our condolences go out to Charles. On a happier note it was good to have



Vera

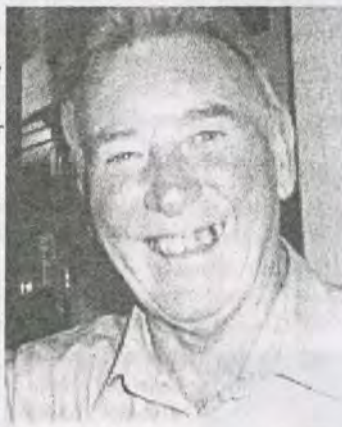
Hilda

Sheila Palmer back with us, looking much better. Walter Kirkland was shortly to celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday and the evening was a party night for Walter.

After the initial Thrash Dick Eaves was our jovial M.C. Eddie Bancroft was the first artiste with *Chinese Laundry Blues* and *The Lancashire Toreador*. Pamela Baddeley followed with a lovely song made famous by Petula Clarke *My Love* and a song from the 50s *Around the World*. Roy Brannan performed *Fanlight Fanny* and Brian Edge sang one of Frankie Woods' compositions *That Ragtime Girl of Mine*. Brian White ably performed *Old Pendle* and *Wigan Pier* followed by Alan Newton *Isle of Man* and Cliff Richard's *Living Doll*.

During the interval we all tucked into Danish pastries and huge muffins provided by Alice and Walter and then Walter was presented with a 'ukulele' cake full of candles and he actually managed to blow them all out even though the candles were supposed to re-ignite. The raffle was drawn and Walter won the star prize, a Mini-Cooper car! Unfortunately it was matchbox size but nevertheless a beautiful car!

Les Pearson was our M.C. for the second half and, after the Thrash, Greg Simister gave us *Home Guard Blues* and *T.T.Races*. Jonathan Baddeley was next with *Photo in the Press* and *Sitting on the Top of Blackpool Tower*. Walter, in his usual jolly mood, did *Happy Go Lucky Me*. Alan Chenery, Frank Humphreys, and Jim Knight joined Walter in a bones medley *Tijuana Taxi* and then Alan Chenery performed the popular Lonnie Donegan *Putting on the Style* and *The Little Back Room Upstairs*. The other performers were Cliff Royle *Andy the Handyman* and *Granddad's Flannelette Nightshirt*; David Rhodes *He Played His Ukulele As The Ship Went Down*. Alan Southworth *Oh Dear Mother* and *Baby Face Medley*; Jim Knight *You Can't Stop Me From Dreaming* and a bones medley *Does Your Chewing Gum Lose It's Flavour*; finally Frank Humphreys and Jim Knight *Let Me Call You Sweetheart*.



Walter looks far too young to be 80.

This was another enjoyable evening and we all wish Walter a Very Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday. *Thanks Ladies, very prompt as usual. How many birthday parties is Walter having? He's had about six in this issue. Hee you do remind me of Cagney & Lacey.*

## Clever Clogs from Brian Edge—

Arthur Newton was herding his flock in one of his remote pastures when suddenly a brand-new BMW advanced out of a dust cloud towards him (his is a dusty road). The driver, a young man in a Brioni suit, Gucci shoes, Ray Ban sunglasses and YSL tie, leans out the window and asks Arthur, "If I tell you exactly how many sheep you have in your flock, will you give me one?"



Arthur looks at the man, obviously a yuppie, then looks at his peacefully grazing flock and calmly answers, "Sure. Why not?" The yuppie parks his car, whips out his Dell notebook computer, connects it to his AT&T cell phone, surfs to a NASA page on the Internet, where he calls up a GPS satellite navigation system to get an exact fix on his location which he then feeds to another NASA satellite that scans the area in an ultra-high-resolution photo.

The young man then opens the digital photo in Adobe Photoshop and exports it to an image processing facility in Hamburg, Germany. Within seconds, he receives an email on his Palm Pilot that the image has been processed and the data stored. He then accesses a MS-SQL database through an ODBC connected Excel spreadsheet with hundreds of complex formulas. He uploads all of this data via an email on his Blackberry and after a few minutes receives a response. Finally, he prints out a full-colour, 150-page report on his hi-tech, miniaturized HP LaserJet printer and finally turns to Arthur and says, "You have exactly 1586 sheep."

"That's right. Well, I guess you can take one of my sheep," says Arthur. He watches the young man select one of the animals and looks on amused as the young man stuffs it into the trunk of his car. Then he says to the young man, "Hey, if I can tell you exactly what your business is, will you give me back my animal?" The young man thinks about it for a second and then says, "Okay, why not?"

"You're a consultant," says Arthur. "Wow! That's correct," says the yuppie, "but how did you guess that?"

"No guessing required." answered Arthur. "You showed up here even though nobody called you; you want to get paid for an answer I already knew; to a question I never asked; and what's more you don't know beggar all about my business. Now, will you give me back my dog!"

---

**ALAN NEWTON** rang to say that he thoroughly enjoyed the Ken Dodd visit to Crewe Lyceum, and highly recommends seeing the show. The audience certainly took to Andy Eastwood and clapped and shouted for more, but he was limited to a 20 minute spot. He spoke to Andy after and found him just as friendly and approachable as ever. Andy is now offering his latest CD Ukulele Mania. 45 minutes of entertainment which you'll enjoy. P.O. Box 5004 Christchurch BH23 5WD. [www.andyeastwood.com](http://www.andyeastwood.com)

Ken Dodd (known for long shows) was funnier than ever, and the highlight was in the last spot when he walked on stage carrying a pack of sandwiches and a flask. Great

**Concert at Haslington by Brian Edge**—The South Cheshire Branch gave a concert on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at the Yoxall Hall, Haslington in aid of funds for the St. Michael's Church at Crewe Green. The hall was approximately three times wider, 3 times longer and three times higher than our usual monthly concert hall at Wistaston. In such a room our sound engineer Colin Wood had problems getting the sound and backing right but he answered the challenge.

Our Concert Party was Jonathan and Pamela Baddeley, Colin Wood, Angela Caldicott, Alan Newton, Arthur Newton, Cliff Royle, Walter Kirkland, Bernard Ashmore, Des Redfern, Don Chalkley and Steve Hassall (drums). What no Brian Edge? — He was away on business.

The M.C. Was Jonathan Baddeley who made the audience feel they too were part of the entertainment by getting them to sing along. With a new audience, not used to a Formby Concert, our songs which we have sung many times seemed fresh and alive as they raised the roof with "*Bless 'em All*", "*Out in the Middle East*," "*Wartime Medley*," and "*Leaning on a Lamp-post*" and the other Formby favourites.

In the interval of the concert our players were allowed free access to glasses of wine and food so our performance seemed even better in the second half! Approximately 100 people listened to our concert and at the end of the night we received many thank-you's before putting our ukuleles back in their cases and heading home, feeling happy and satisfied with playing and waving the George Formby flag. *Thanks*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**The Liverpool October Meeting** was most different this time. Normally we kick off the concert with a small crowd and the audience slowly builds up to a packed house. At the end nobody wants to go home. However, this time we started off packed—with every seat taken—but by half time more than half the crowd had gone home. Most unusual.

**STARVED OF VISITORS**—It was nice to greet Alan & Pat Chenery on the night because it is a very rare occasion when we get a visit from other clubs. However, thanks to sturdy stalwarts like Phil Jones, Bryn Evans, Tom Meredith, Greg Simister, Stan Watkinson, Joe McCaffrey, and Dicky Hart and the Pacemakers, we always manage to provide a good night's entertainment.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Just watching the **Tommy Cooper Show** on Sky TV and on walks Tommy with a uke banjo singing "*She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain*" - not playing of course, only miming. It was a small uke made by SAGA of Japan.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**GEORGE** pops up on Richard & Judy 3rd Nov 04. In the regular tea time TV programme, they hold a "You Say, We Pay" quiz when an object is shown on screen and the contestant has to describe it to R & J for them to name. The contestant mustn't give the name. On this occasion a wooden ukulele popped up and the lady said: George Formby played one. Immediately they both shouted: Ukulele.

**The Past Its** have been performing a monthly show at the Warrington Blind centre for the last 4 years and sometimes it is difficult trying to vary the programme each month so that we are not singing the same songs over and over again. It's a two hour show so finding different songs each month is a bit of a task.

On one visit, I was considering asking the blind centre manager if he could get some other act to fill our Thursday afternoon spot, to give us time to get more songs together. As I was walking to the office I was stopped by one of the carers: "Stan, would you come over to talk to this lady? She wants to speak to you."

I walked over to the old lady, who was completely blind. She reached out, feeling for my hand, took hold, and gripped it very tight. "Hello" she said, "I would like to thank you for such a wonderful afternoon. It has been such a long time since I've heard all the old songs and you've brought them all back to me." Her friend said, "She's sung all the songs with you and enjoyed every minute."

I felt terrible at the thought of considering depriving the blind old lady of enjoyment for a few months, while we gathered a few new songs together. The poor old soul was still grasping my hand. I said, "You keep coming along every last Thursday in the month and we'll be here to sing all your old favourites."

On another occasion we did a BBC Radio from Manchester and we were displeased with the interview. It was on George 100th Anniversary and they knew absolutely nothing about George. The whole thing was a farce.

The following day we went to the blind centre and as we walked in, one of the completely blind ladies grabbed my hand. "Hee," she said, "I thoroughly enjoyed listening to you on the radio, and I rang them up to thank them." Again I felt terrible. What right have I got to criticise the BBC when they are doing so much good for people who have no sight? It must be a very lonely world for them and the radio is one of their few comforts. Never again will I complain about the BBC. They are doing a grand job, and what might seem rubbish to us is heaven to the unfortunates.

Many thanks to Ged Jenet for stepping into Jim Bramwell's place. Jim had to retire to care for his wife, Joan.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**YOU CAN'T BEAT THE IRISH FOR JOKES!** - John Dancy,

from Northern Ireland, has you rolling in the aisles with these two jokes—

"Why does a dog have so many friends? *Because he wags his tail and not his tongue.*

You've got em going John! - they're laughing.

And here's another:

Manager to employee at Xmas party: "Would you like a drink?"

Employee: I am okay thanks.

Manager: I know you are Okay, I asked if you wanted a drink.

Well that's done it John. They are in stitches laughing.

Has anyone got any more side splitters? Thanks John.

Seats available  
for Ireland Coach  
Trip. Ring  
Christine Wood  
on  
01270 663558



## Martin Thomas Emails an Advertisement on Ebay

I am advertising this vehicle registration UKE 1 on behalf of my father who has owned it for over 30 years. Currently on a 1983 Mercedes 500SEL with current mot available. Free with reg if required. Possible George Formby interest or UK company. This is a serious auction and all enquiries will be treated with strictest confidence. In the first instance please contact by email. The location is somewhere in the Midlands. You can BUY NOW for £20,000.00  
*Thanks Martin. The owner of the car is Alan Randall who lives in Coventry.*



\*\*\*\*\*

**Olwen Gale** writes in - Dear Stan, during my reading this week I spotted this advert asking for a set of pegs for a ukulele banjo. But I wonder why the person hasn't bought the pegs from a music shop?

"Pegs wanted to fit a George Formby model banjo—K Stockdale, 3 Sackville House, St Leonards Road, Bexhill TN40 1HH"

*Thanks Olwen. The problem is that if you go into a music shop asking for ukes or uke parts, they look at you as if you've just landed from another planet. Around our area, there's only Sully of Macclesfield, who sells uke parts. Sully's number is 01625 610849. You can pay over the phone by credit card and delivery is prompt.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Bob Hodson** Editor of the Ukulele Soc, of Great Britain comments on the Richard & Judy TV report in the last Newsletter.

Dear Stan, thank you for your Newsletter No. 113, I found myself concordant with the article on page 12 "Richard & Judy" TV Reporter Mike McClean. Whoever wrote the article did a very good job, and I hope your members read it in depth.

I too, saw the television report and was thoroughly disgusted with the way it was presented. Had that report been in respect of the Ukulele Soc, of Gt Britain I'm sure that our members would be up in arms about it. It made most of the performers look like "pilllocks," except for one. Mr McClean will be kept at "punting poles" length, should he show his face anywhere near Digswell.  
 Plonkin'ly Yours, Bob.

*Thanks Bob, yes it was a very disappointing report. Apparently it was filmed very well with plenty of good quality action, but at the studio they chose dabs of negative stuff to make Formby fans look like idiots.*

\*\*\*\*\*

Mummy, mummy, quick, daddy's on fire. Quick, fetch the sausages.  
 Mummy, why am I running round in circles? Shut up or I'll nail your other foot down

**Doreen Crosby**—The older members will be pleased to know that Doreen is still active and still playing her uke. Some years back she was quite a popular member at the Sale meetings, digging out all the songs that are suitable for the ladies to sing—there's not many— but due to ill health she had to give up attending. However, she's just sent me a tape of herself performing all her songs. *We are very pleased for you Doreen and look forward to you appearing at the Sale Meeting sometime.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**Byegone Times** - John Mason of Wigan rang to report that anyone looking for old sheet music can go to Byegone Times, The Green, Eccleston, near Wigan, where they have loads and loads of sheet music to sift among. There's lots of it there complete with uke chords.

It's well worth a visit to Byegone Times. You can spend a day there looking at the large exhibition of memorabilia from the past. Quite a lot of it is flown in from American film studios. They charge £2.50 for the first visit but this gives you free entry for the next 12 months. *Thanks for the information John.*

\*\*\*\*\*

**David Rhodes** by Jon Baddeley - It always good to see a player improve. At the October meeting at Sale, David Rhodes sang the song HE PLAYED HIS UKULELE AS THE SHIP WENT DOWN. This is not an easy to play or sing and I thought that his performance was superb. It is obvious that David has worked hard to get to this standard and I thought that this really showed.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Song from Boots, Boots**—Did anyone see the Frank Skinner Show on TV on Wed night 20th Oct? His second guest (couldn't get his name because the credits shot past like a bullet ) came dancing on the stage to the rousing George Formby song, "Why Don't Women Like Me," played by the backing band of old staggers. It sounded really great and all agreed it was good lively introduction music. However, he ruined his spot by finishing with one of these modern rubbish songs that has plenty of beat but no sensible lyrics.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Beware of "Auction World"** In July this year I bought a digital camera from Auction World who advertise on SKY TV. The price was £158 inc. pp. Two weeks later I rang them and was told that they would be dispatching at the end of the week. Four months later and I'm still waiting for the camera to arrive. TVs "Watchdog" featured them, claiming that more than 400 complaints about the company had arrived in the studio. SO BEWARE of AUCTION WORLD They take the money and don't supply the goods. Yet they are still advertising.

**Email List**—If you use Email 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 Charles Stewart on 01253 768097. Wonderful Buffet—Always in need of players.

## Wintergardens George Formby Society Meetings:

- 12th & 13th March 2005 following Liverpool
- 2nd & 3rd July 2005 following Penyffordd
- 10th & 11th Sept 2005 following Liverpool
- 3rd & 4th Dec 2005 following Penyffordd

Concerts usually start around 1.30pm each day.

Ring the Secretary, Pam Walker on 01142 888199

Email is [ian@formbytowers.co.uk](mailto:ian@formbytowers.co.uk) for details on the GFS or Wintergarden meetings.

**Web Site** —Two Lancashire Lads:

[www.stanevans.co.uk/formby](http://www.stanevans.co.uk/formby)

**E Mail:** [stan@stanevans.co.uk](mailto: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 £3. 75 to receive issues up to June. Cheques payable to S. Evans - Address Front Cover.

Heard in the pub "That's him he's had his toes amputated so he can stand nearer the bar"  
Never try to keep up with the Jones's - Drag em down to your level.