

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 10

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Specially Produced for the
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Welcome to Newsletter No. 10 and

what news have we got this month? There was a strong reaction to the "Goodnight Sweetheart" show and several members rang to express their disapproval.

Charles Stewart has done us proud again with excellent articles - old and new from the Blackpool Gazette. We are pleased that more articles are coming in from members, from over the country, who are delighted with the snippets of chit-chat in our N. West Newsletter.

George's light must have been shining for Harry & Lottie Stanford as they are both "On The Mend." The cold weather didn't help but fortunately they have the Spring weather ahead of them. In fact we are hoping that they will be with us on March 19th at the Warrington Meeting.

However, all is not well - read on....

Sad Formby Family News - Jeffrey rang

Brinsworth House and was informed that Louie, (next in line to George) who will be 90 on May 28th, has been struck down with a heart and liver complaint and has had to be rushed off to the West Middlesex Hospital, London.

Ella (next in line to Louie) has had a stroke which has left her blind. Ella lives in Hemet, California and they are hoping to move to Georgia where her daughter Georgina lives. Herb, her husband is 92 years of age but still quite active. More news on Ella as it comes in. Ella has always lead a very active life and she recently wrote to say that she takes part in all the keep fit sessions at her local club.



In 1992 she came over the England to take part in the South Bank Show on TV and she, along with her Daughter, Pamela, enjoyed a great night at the Warrington Meeting. Blindness appears to be weakness in the Formby family - George was born blind, Eliza (mother) went blind, and now poor Ella. Let us hope that George's light is shining for both Louie and Ella.

Three Cheers for the GFS Committee -

Well I'm pleased to report that our little N. West Newsletter packs a bit of punch - which is more than Frank Bruno did!

In the January edition we included a report from Ken Ratcliffe who asked the whereabouts of the GFS Archives, (well why not? As a member he has every right to know!) He was concerned that they were not on show at the Blackpool meetings.

I am pleased to report that, as a result of our enquiry, a member of the committee has set about the task of listing the archives and preparing them for display. Some of the items, mounted in large frames, were displayed in the small room at the last meeting and they looked excellent.

In the past it has always been our concern that some of these valuable items could easily be stolen - in fact, we know for sure they have. However, with this new system they would have great difficulty in removing the huge frames.

So three cheers for whoever worked on these and we hope that the other items will be displayed in a similar way.

and her team for a friendly interview. The Wintergardens venue for our quarterly convention is attended from all over Great Britain and overseas. The hospitality and friendliness found is unequalled anywhere. Charles Stewart, The Blackpool George Formby Soc.

♪ I like Bananas ♪
because they have
no bones ♪



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BBC2 TV - Did anyone watch Today's The Day on March 19th?

This is a quiz game and one of the questions asked by Martyn Lewis was "What was George Formby's job before he was a star on films and radio" One of the panel answered "He was a joiner" while another shouted "He was a window cleaner." "Both wrong" said Martyn, "He was a jockey!"

Blackpool Gazette 24/3/96

GAZETTE TURNED OUT NICE AGAIN

Thank you for the great presentation of the article and photographs (March 19th) Please convey our appreciation and thanks to Elizabeth Gomm

Turned out nasty!



■ **FORMBY FICTION:** The real-life George and Beryl were "a hard working business team."

Members of the North West George Formby Society have enjoyed watching Goodnight Sweetheart and laughed at the hero's escapades and his hatred of George. We don't expect everyone to be a Formby fan. However, members were disturbed by the episode when the BBC took advantage of George's name and plugged it during the

lead-up to the showing, then portrayed George as a drunken idiot and his wife Beryl as a brainless ogre. Of all the reports I have received over the years from George's fans, not one has ever depicted him as a drunkard. He and Beryl were hard working as a business team. This programme was an insult to our members, especially to our many

junior members (from the age of six) who see George (OBE) as the war hero who always won in the end and who sang uplifting comical songs. Goodnight Sweetheart has lost a few thousand viewers.

Stan Evans, Editor, North West George Formby Newsletter, Hall Nook, Penketh, Warrington.

Why Not send a self photo with your article

Ed Bancroft, from the Sale Branch kindly sent in some disturbing editorial from The Telegraph Magazine.

It appears that the Ukulele Society Orchestra, who are a group of Wooden Ukulele performers, (No, I don't mean that the players are wooden) don't have much time for George or his society.

In fact, the spokesman for the Orchestra, George Hinchcliffe, claims in the two page spread

that, "the Japanese have proved impervious to the influence of George Formby" and "The buck-toothed Lancastrian has done more than anyone alive or dead to make the ukulele a laughing stock in Britain." He goes on to say: "It's all about watching ladies undressing through windows."



He also complained that he, unwisely, attempted to impress the members by going on stage at the Digswell meeting of the Ukulele Society of Great Britain and demonstrating melody playing. Unfortunately his act went down like a lead balloon and he wasn't given a mention in the society magazine. He claimed also that the society is made up of "Old Buffers and frightened nine year olds."

Well, personally I think that the reason why the Japs don't have much time for George, is because they are probably jealous of Mr Wu being a Chinaman. And, if your act goes down like a lead balloon then you should improve your act.

For the benefit of those who don't know, the USGB set out some years back to promote the use of the wooden ukulele and the playing of melodies. Unfortunately, due to the shortage of players, and support, it had to cease all operations. Some years later it was re-formed with the cooperation of many GFS members. It is now considered as a 50% GF meeting with pleasant dashes of melody playing. They produce their own Synopator Magazine and the yearly subs is about £8.

Now it's a shame that The Ukulele Orchestra don't like us because I personally think that they are a great bunch of players and there's room for us all to play together - in perfect harmony.

In our society we have some wonderful Melody Players like John Shreeve, Anthony Mason, Peter Moss and Dickie Speake who will match any talent the Orchestra can offer. They can also play Formby.

I must add that there is possibly a touch of madness within the Orchestra as I have a recent video of them claiming that they are on the best of terms with the GF players. Sounds odd!!!! Perhaps screaming for publicity?

6 Paul Hyam writes in -

Dear Stan, Thank you for your prompt service and advice on how to fit the new Polyskin to the East German "Musima" uke banjo.

I started the task of converting the instrument by cutting off the 17th fret, as you described, then removed the old plastic skin from its moulded ring and placed the Polyskin over the drum, pushed the 1/4" moulded ring over, and down, the height of the Bezel, which held the new skin in place fairly tightly and quite neatly. I then cut the new skin in to a saw tooth around the ring and dabbed each "tooth" with Evostick hard plastic superglue and bent around the plastic ring - which held them in place. I then stretched a piece of cream coloured PVC electrical tape around the ring which neatly covered the three sides of the ring. Reassembled the new strings and new bridge and the tone is now much more mellow having lost all the harsh "tinniness." All I've got to do now is learn to play it. Paul Hyam.

George & Beryl's Houses - Since the news of the sale of "Hillcrest" the Formby Family home in Stockton Heath Warrington, there has been quite a bit of interest in the number of houses G & B owned. Well here's some of them:-

House No.1

was in Fulwood Rd, Preston, a semi-detached house they bought in 1929.

No.2 was "Beryldene" at Little Singleton, nr Blackpool. They bought this on Sept 9th (Beryl's Birthday) 1937.

No.3 was in 1947 when they moved to Mere Corner, Cheshire

After George's heart attack in 1952 they moved to Eire where they paid £20,000 for "Aldon" in Knocksinna, Foxrock. It was originally built as a Club House but never granted a licence. It had twenty four rooms!

Their final home was "Beryldene" Inner Promenade, Lytham St Annes.

Now, they also had two other houses in Blackpool. "Fairhaven" and also a large house that has since been converted to flats. Where do these fit in?

And of course, there was the house at Wroxham near Norwich.

Michael Barrymore Show, 23rd Mar - Michael introduced

Peter Elliot who is the Manager of Brinsworth House where George's Sister, Louie is living. It is a home for past stage artists. Peter claimed that the "Michael Barrymore room is occupied by Doreen Harris - which is not correct. Jeffrey (Formby) Booth, George's Nephew, visited the home and reported to us that Louie is currently occupying Michael's room, and has been since she was taken there.

John Hickinbottom

Many of the George Formby members have met John at the Alliance Social Club where he often plays the organ and keyboard backing for us. Well, believe me, John is a man of many talents and possibly the best accompanist in the area.

As John says, "Once I know the tune I can do anything with it!"

It all started when he plinked on his Aunt's piano as a young child, about 5 years old. His Aunt wasn't amused with his plinking away so she kept the piano locked up whenever he arrived on the scene. John's screaming was far louder than his noisy tinkling so they had to come to an agreement.



If he went for lessons she would allow him to use the piano and also pay the fees. This was to set him off on the road to success for the future.

At the age of seven he joined the Warrington Parish Church Choir and it was there where he discovered a huge church organ. He wasn't allowed to play on this but they found him a smaller one to practise on. The Headmaster of his school was so delighted with his playing that he negotiated a place for him in the Royal Northern College of Music at Manchester.

At 15, John left school and immediately started working at Dawson's Music in Warrington. Here he learned to play and demonstrate the popular organ and keyboard. He would also occasionally fill in at various functions. At the age of 16 he took his first job at the Bickershaw Labour Club, Wigan, with a drummer and compere. Three years later he joined Billy Forris World Wide Entertainment's which was a travelling show working full seasons in Jersey. This involved playing at 14 hotels each week. There he backed stars like, Cannon & Ball, Little & Large, The Crankies, Richard O'Sullivan and hundreds more, too many to mention. After this, he toured over all parts of the world entertaining and backing the stars. He obtained work on the Cruise Liners, played in Spain, Portugal, Italy. He also toured with Helen Shapiro for three months and Karl Denver for two years.

John is keen on all types of music, including: Philharmonic, Church, Classical, Pop, Sing - along, and good old George Formby.

Apart from playing, John teaches piano & organ, builds church organs, reconditions pianos, arranges shows. You name it - in music - and John knows all about it!

Don't Forget Your Rentlestew

George Formby To Take Advice

A Gramophone Session Comment

Mr George Formby, stage and radio comedian, is so annoyed that the BBC should censor one of his records during a gramophone programme last night that he stated today: "I shall certainly take advice about the whole matter. It is certainly not going to end here."

Mr Formby takes exception to the comment made by Mr Dick Bentley when compering the gramophone session. Mr Bentley said there had been a lot of requests for George's song, "When I'm Cleaning Windows." He then made a comment on the number and concluded with the remark that he would try to find a Formby record for next week.

200,000 COPIES

"It is a damaging thing to say about any artist," stated George afterwards, "and I am quite definitely taking legal advice on the matter." The record, added the comedian, had sold 200,000 copies and if it was famous the public had made it so - not he. "The song is always in great request." He went on, "and I have broadcast it dozens of times.

"Why, I sang it before the King & Queen at the Royal Variety Command Performance, and I have sung it almost every Sunday at charity performances sponsored by hospitals, churches and other organisations."

"Recently I went to hospital to sing to sick children from about 5 to 15 years of age. They wanted 'When I'm Cleaning Windows.' Afterwards I was told that the nurses played it on the piano and all the kiddies sang it in chorus. Even the Matron approved."

The song was one of Mr Formby's most popular numbers when he headed the cast of 'King Cheer,' the seasonal revue at the Blackpool Opera House during the 1937 season.

Explaining the comper's comment, a BBC official stated: "George Formby has broadcast this song several times himself, but there are one or two verses in the gramophone version which are not suitable for broadcast."

Don't Forget Your Wreelstent

S. O. S. from Bob Drinkwater.... Has anyone got a Martin "O" Model (wooden) Ukulele that they wish to sell? If so, please ring Bob on 01384 395918.

WF Singleton wrote in - When George was in hospital, in Preston, a frequent visitor was Pat Howson who was befriended by a lady who worked there. After George's death Pat kept up the friendship with the lady and gave her a quantity of George's 78 rpm records and masters. Some time later she passed the records to him and they have been in his care ever since. They are Decca or Regal Zonophone recordings and some are 33 1/3 rpm.

St Helens Hospice Charity Show

We have been invited to perform in a Charity Show at the Rainhill Village Hall, on Tuesday and Wednesday nights, 16th & 17th April, for the St Helens Hospice. The show will consist of various artists, including members of the George Formby Society.

More From Brian Edge - Master of Ceremonies Can Be A Tough Job! Quotation Sale M.C. Cyril Palmer

"Ladies and Gentlemen, You will, I know, be sorry to hear that Stan Evans is in hospital. He has had a - err - a 'small gentleman's' operation. Well - err - perhaps in Stan's case I should have said a 'large gentleman's operation. It gets worse doesn't it? Well whether it's large or small can I ask you to please, all sign Stan's Get-well card?" *Thank you Brian. Possibly Cyril means 'large when you go in but small when you come out' or something like that!*

Derek Ball - Crewe Branch - sends in a few **Anagrams** for you to work out - All are George's songs.

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. I is a lank bean | 2. They wash Rob | 3. Cruel sea uprise |
| 4. Canine drew owl | 5. Trick egg can | Loping Iama Anne |

ANSWERS ON PAGE 18 - Cheat Fair.

BBC2 TV. Have you tuned in to "The Village" yet? It is a countryside type of show which is filmed in the village of Bentley in Sussex and it goes out every Monday & Tuesday at 5.30. Our members are interested because in some episodes George is singing Tan Tan Tivvy Tally Ho in the background.

George's music appeals to all ages. Alongside George we have Mark Gibbons aged 11, Andy Eastwood aged 16, [redacted] and Bob Allen aged 81 who attended the March Meeting in Blackpool. 70 years between Mark and Bob - Wonderful advert for enjoyment.

From 11 to 81 years young



11
Due to space shortage two members were unfortunately cut out of the picture

Our George will live forever
'Formby's music is magic. It's fun, full of life and never sad...'

Crewe Society are Missing the Earlestown Punch

The South Cheshire (Crewe) February Branch meeting was 'reet champion' with 40 attending and everyone without exception seemed to go home thoroughly happy which is our main objective. We were pleased to see Stan Evans back after a short spell in hospital. It was his first night out after his ordeal. We were sorry to hear that Harry was still under the weather. All our love to both Harry and Lottie xxx of course. Actually Harry, Anthony Mason told a joke for you but between you and me it did not have that "Earlestown Punch". Whilst Anthony may not have been a hit with Harry's joke he certainly gave a great performance on the uke. It is a pleasure for us all to have him entertain us.

Steve Hassall has done a great job on our sound system and together with our growing library of backing tapes (by Dickie Speake) we are really buzzing.

Des Redfern was cross with himself at forgetting his lyrics at the January meeting and he spent the next week or so experimenting with an autocue or lyric monitor which Des calls a Kareuke machine! The idea is that the backing tape is played onto a video tape and Des types in the words to appear on the television screen at the appropriate moment. The idea has much merit and Des gave us an introduction to his system during the meeting. Keep working on it Des. During the month we purchased a combo-amplifier which we are using on stage as a fold back speaker so that the artists on stage can hear their performance better. It seemed to work very well. The system will also be used for our practice sessions and when we do small concerts rather than having to carry the larger equipment about.

Des who specialises professionally in Wedding Videos produced an excellent video of our 1st Anniversary meeting. The tape runs for about 2½ hours and costs just £5.

Colin Wood and Derek Ball are rapidly gaining confidence and it will not be long before we see them making their debut at Crewe. Derek writes good monograms too so we will get him onto the stage by hook or by crook!

Our M.C. Jonathan Baddeley is developing a polished act his individual performance improving all the time. Pamela also entertained by blowing a whistle so loudly that I thought it was a police raid!

Thanks to all who supported our raffle both by donating prizes and buying tickets and thanks to to Tom Peddie and Peter Healey who collect the money and sell the tickets. Whilst dishing out thanks we must not forget the ladies who help with the refreshments, Connie, Barbara, Christine and Pamela. Its great to have such an excellent allround team.

It's Somebody Elses Job By Now

By A Staff Reporter

Gareth A.Davis writes recently in the Telegraph Magazine about Terence Gower, an abseiling London Window Cleaner. Terence abseils such buildings as Canary Wharf and claims that the only thing that he hasn't seen whilst working is childbirth! It seems that when one lives so high up one rarely bothers to draw the curtains. (Our George would have had a field day wouldn't he? Hee-Hee! On second thoughts he would have had Beryl with him so he wouldn't have been allowed to linger!) However, one of the snags of abseiling is that should you pass something of interest, you cannot abseil upwards to get another look! Terence wears a crash hat for his job and is strapped into a leather harness. His bucket is securely attached but one piece of equipment is noticeably absent - a ukulele! George Formby was the highest paid "window cleaner" in Britain for many a year but Terence doesn't do too bad either with £35,000 per annum for a six day week!

Good News From Harry - He's been for an X Ray to the hospital and the Doctor has confirmed that he is in the clear - Unfortunately he didn't give much hope for his 5 string banjo.

Anyway Harry, we are looking forward to seeing you back at the meetings - we've had a lot of imposters trying to take your place but they were soon dealt with. We are all very sorry to hear about the 5 string banjo - take my advice and leave it tucked up at home.

GFS Membership - received a letter from the Secretary stating that we should give our N.West members a gentle jog to remind them that possibly they have not paid their subs. Well I agree! It is the duty of each of the Branch Organisers to support the GFS and recruit as many members as possible, but, how on earth are we expected to know who are members or not if we don't have a membership list to work from?

14 UKE WANTED - Harry Westwell, of the Canary Islands, wishes to buy a Dallas "D" banjo uke. If you have one for sale please give me a ring and I will supply you with his address.

There was a **Nice Surprise** on Sky TV - UK Gold on Sunday the 25th of Feb. It was the Morecambe & Wise Show and they finished with a Quartet - Pete Murrey, Roy Castle, Eric Morecambe and Ernie Wise singing "Everything's Coming My Way." They all played a wooden ukulele for accompaniment. It came over very well and was a pleasure to watch.

Gordon Hill from Liverpool, writes - Dear Stan, Just after the war, around 1946, when I was around 13, I attended a Gymkhana (there's a word from the past) at the Huyton Cricket Club. In those days it was a sleepy backwater, the centre of a agricultural community long before the overspill estates were built, giving it its present enviable reputation.

Every year the Gymkhana was opened by a well known personality, and in the year I'm referring to, it was George Formby. I remember he was much better looking than he was on the screen, with a Riviera sun tan and an immaculately styled suit and gleaming teeth.

He was a very pleasant man who chatted and laughed with various people. He tried his luck on the racing cyclists training rollers, with one or two "Oooh Mother!" I can't remember how long he was there but I do remember him driving away in his maroon Humber Pullman with Beryl beside him, pretty as a picture. Gordon Hill.

From The **Sale Branch** - Ken Ratcliffe writes!

Dear Stan, Hope you are recovering after your spell in hospital. The Sale George Formby Society held their AGM in February and a new committee was formed. Alice Cronshaw was elected as Chairwoman while Ken Ratcliffe was voted as Secretary/Treasurer. Our thanks went to Martin Harrison and John Broadhead for their hard work over the past two years.

The Sale Branch, now established in the new Brooklands Sports Centre, has certainly progressed since the days of Norris Rd. I would like to thank everybody for supporting us. We are still getting new members joining us, including children.
Thanks Ken for your report.

Wigan Pier - On the Sat & Sun, 3rd & 4th of August there will be a BOAT & STEAM RALLY and we are invited to gather our troops together to perform there.

At the moment we are not sure of where we will be performing as it all depends on the weather conditions, however, they have assured us that our requirements will be taken care of. On these occasions they usually attract large crowds so we may recruit a number of new members for the area.

Up to 1991 the authorities at the pier didn't want to know about the GFS and on every occasion completely ignored our letters. However, thankfully, there has been a change of management and they are now keen to work with our society to keep the name of George (and his father) known to the public.

Anyone interested in performing please contact Stan Evans.

Warrington Branch - The Warrington Council has kindly contributed £150 to the Warrington Branch to keep the name of George active in the area. However, this kind donation is not required by the Warrington members so it has been donated to The £1,000 Appeal Fund to send young Stephen Williams for a holiday in Disneyland. Our thanks have gone to the Council.

Mr Rogers of Liverpool rang - He remembers, as a child, living in the Mossley Hill area when George's mother, Eliza, owned a sweet shop on the corner of Meredale Rd and Rose Lane. On the shop blind was her name: Mrs George Formby. He claims that George's brother, Ted, had his eye on his sister and he would call round to visit her. Ted was the manager of the Odeon Cinema in London Rd. He remembers also that Ethel (George's sister) lived in Dodds Lane where she gave uke lessons.

78 rpm Record Wanted - George Moore Rang....

Has anyone got "Out In The Middle East" for sale on the old 78 record? If so, please ring him on 01482 712222. Some of you may remember George. He does a very good impersonation of George and gave a wonderful performance of this on the Noel Edmunds show around 1992. He often plays at the Leeds meeting.

Wintergardens Meeting - There was something different about this meeting as there appeared to be an awful lot of regulars absent and a lot of new faces there that we hadn't seen before - Welcome. Anyway it turned out nice again and everybody was looking forward to the next one. It was a bit disappointing however, as the theme should have been George's 35th Anniversary - How sad.

Blackpool Evening Gazette Sat 24th Feb 1996.

A motorbike named after banjo-playing Lancashire comedian George Formby is to be auctioned. The George Formby Norton, which the comedian rode in Fylde almost half a century ago, will go under the hammer on April 28th at the International Classic Show in Stafford.

The 1947 490cc Norton International has also been owned by Blackpool motorcycle dealer Richard Isles, one of George's friends. "I sold him most of his bikes" Mr Isles said, "I sold him so many I lost count. He had a lot of bikes in his time."

Mr Isles met George just after he had appeared the motorcycle film "No Limit." "We were enthusiasts who spoke the same language," he said. Mr Isles, 75, who owns Whittaker's Motors in Cookson St, told of his last meeting with Formby, just before the entertainer died of a heart attack in 1961.

"A few weeks before he died I took a scooter round for him to try. He wanted to have a go on a bike but his legs weren't strong enough to kick-start one. He managed to ride it all right, but when he stopped, he couldn't stand up. It was very sad."

Formby, who lived in Singleton and Fairhaven for many years, and was the highest paid entertainer in Britain in the 1940s, was an ardent motorcyclist and, in his youth, competed in grass track and sad racing events.

He was a member of the Home Guard in Fleetwood during the war, putting his biking prowess to good use by working as a dispatch rider. Formby sold the bike the following year and to the subsequent chain of owners it has always been known as the George Formby Norton. The bike is being sold by Alan Whitehead - a member of the George Formby Society.

Well, I'm not sure if Alan Whitehead is a member or not - he certainly wasn't up to last year. He is hoping to get £20, 000 for the Norton but I personally think he'll be lucky if he does. George only kept the bike for a month. Way back in 1990 I rang Alan Whitehead and asked him if he would allow us to use the bike in the planned George Formby Exhibition at the Warrington Museum. He refused. However, Cherry Grey rang him and used her feminine charm to persuade hm to lend it to us. He agreed but only on condition that we insure it for £35,000 - which we had to do, at great expense.

We've over 43 different articles in this issue
Hope yours is one of them! Bah Gum.

TT Racer Harold Rowell continued -

Bertie and I received an urgent summons to meet Monty Banks at the Forte Anne Hotel. He had come back with a small staff to do one day's work, and asked us to join him. They had a small van with them which contained a mystery package. Monty Banks, Shackleton, Webster and two others made up the entire party.



Early in the morning we went to Kirk Michael where we did a few so called speed shots and from there we returned to Ballaugh Bridge. It was narrower and more elevated in those days. Monty asked us to practise jumping the bridge so that we were both in the air at the same time. Whilst we were trying this, he and the cameraman, Shackleton, were lying in the entrance to Druidale Rd trying to find how high we had jumped. When eventually he was satisfied, he unwrapped the mystery bundle which was a plaster and wood body of a TT Rider. Our job was to jump over it on our motorbikes. Shackleton told us that, from the measurements he had taken, we would have no more than two inches to spare. He also whispered that we would be wise to ask for extra money for taking the risk.

Anxious to be out of it I told Monty that I wanted an extra £100 for taking the risk. He refused, and I was relieved. I don't know what I would have done if he had agreed. Instead, they took shots of us in the air and superimposed the body in the studio. When we finally saw the results, on film, it had nothing to do with the re-take so they had returned to the island for nothing.

In Spring 1936 we all met again at the Premiere. This was held at the Regal Cinema, Douglas. The Palace Company and the A T P people generously donated the proceeds to Nobles Hospital. In the Autumn of 1936 I saw a full size cut-out of George on a motorcycle in Oxford Street, London. Closer examination showed the head was George's but the motorcycle, and the body, were mine.

Our thanks have gone to Harold's widow for these articles.

Did You See the Bob Monkhouse Show (old recording) on UK Gold TV on Sunday 24th March? Bob was interviewing Norman Wisdom and in the background there was a large photo of George & his Uke - Great.

Goodnight Sweetheart - Heard nothing more from Alomo TV Productions from my letter asking for an apology being screened with the following episode of the show.

But, I was delighted that George was brought into the Feb 26th episode. The Yanks invaded the 1940s pub and one of them immediately sat down at the piano and started bashing out - and singing - Windows. The hero, who doesn't like George, stopped him from playing but towards the end, as a compromise, he agreed to him playing it again. It came over so great that we can only assume that the producers have a liking for George.

Local Radio in George Formby Land....

An application has been made for an Independent Local Radio Licence and George Formby members have been invited to contribute to the broadcasting. The area covered is around Wigan, St Helens and Skelmersdale and the potential is approx half a million listeners. More news later.

Talking about **Radio - The BBC Radio Merseyside** have shown quite a lot of interest in the N. West Branches of the GFS lately. Every week they ring to ask about the meetings or invite us to go to the studio to give a few songs. George's name is always coming up with their listeners and often they will ring with any queries regarding George.

February 8th - Manchester **Radio rang** - Hello Stan, did you know that today is the anniversary of George Formby's death? - Oh no it's not - Oh yes it is - Oh no it's not - Oh yes it is - This went on for some time. "I've just been informed by our research dept!" "Well, tell your research dept that they don't know what they are talking about!"

A few minutes later the phone rang again: Hello Stan, Our research dept claim that you don't know what you are talking about. George Formby died 75 years ago on Feb 8th 1921!

One thousand apologies - I thought they were referring to George Formby Junior! Never argue with the BBC.

1. I Like Bananas 2. The Baby Show 3. Pleasure Cruise
4. Window Cleaner 5. Get Cracking 6. Leaning On A Lamp

W T Southward Writes In -

Dear Stan, With reference to your article in the paper about George Formby being portrayed as a drunk, in Goodnight Sweet-heart, I have to agree with you. He was no drunk!

I was born and brought up in Barton, nr Preston and remembered George well. He lived with his wife in the next but last house before going over the railway bridge. The house was on the right hand side, on Garstang Rd, going towards Garstang. On the opposite side there were two cottages and his manservant lived in one of them. We often saw George tinkering with his car outside the house. I think it was a white car.



Nobody ever mentions the fact that George & Beryl lived in Barton in an ordinary semi detached house. I just thought I would let you know. *Our thanks to Mr Southward who will receive a copy of the Newsletter. Actually we do mention that G & B lived in Barton. In fact there is a reference to it in this issue. Above is a photo of their semi detached house.*

Jim Knight - N. Wales Branch.

Jim dropped a line to tell me that he just appeared in a Festival Gala Concert in his local town. He was billed as Jim Knight - Happy Memories Of George Formby.

He was born in Wrexham and moved to Bradley when he was five, where he lived for 43 years. He is married to Myra and they have two children and three grand-children. He was a Sub Postmaster and Grocer in Bradley for

a number of years and was heavily involved in charity work in the village. As an active member of the community he was Chairman of the Bradley Youth Club, Treasurer of the Bingo Club, a member of the Village Hall Management Committee, a member of the Gwersyllt Parish Council and he also spent many happy times as a member of the Bradley Concert Party.



Jim is a keen Formby fan and has been a member of the GFS for many years.

You've Forgotten The Newsletter!!!

N. West Branch Meetings and Future Dates.

N. Wales Branch - British Legion, Penyfordd (10 miles west of Chester).

Every first Friday in the month. Ring Dennis Lee on 01244 544799. Adm 50p

Blackpool Branch - Wainwright Club, Hornby Rd, Blackpool - Every First Saturday in the month - Ring Eve Stewart on 01253 768097 Future Dates:- Apr 6th, May 4th Jun 1st, Jul 6th, Aug 3rd, Sep 7th Oct 5th, Nov 2nd, Dec 7th. Adm £1 with Buffet.

Liverpool Branch - Broadgreen Conservative Club - Every Second Friday in the month. Ring Tom Bailey on 0151 228 9769 Adm 50p

Sale Branch - (NEW VENUE) Brooklands Sports Club, George's Rd, off Marsland Rd, Sale. Every 3rd Friday, Ken Ratcliffe 0161 430 8290 Adm 50p

Crewe Branch - Wistaston Memorial Hall - Ring Brian Edge on 01270 69836. Future Dates:- Mar 29th, Apr 26th, May 24th, June 28th. Adm 50p

Warrington Branch - Alliance Sports & Social Club Evans House, Orford Lane, Warrington. SPECIAL MEETINGS ONLY - Next Meeting Friday 29th March, George's 35th Anniversary of his Death. Stan Evans 01925 727102

If you wish to receive regular copies of the George Formby N. West Newsletter just send a cheque for 50p plus 25p. Or £2. 25 (inc post) for the next three issues - Payable to Stan Evans, Address on front cover.

Or Branch Organisers can order a minimum lot of 10 for £3 plus 60p postage and you are welcome to sell them to help raise extra funds for your branch.

Deadline for the next issue is the 15th of April - as George would say - "GET CRACKING"

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