

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 15

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Specially Produced for the
North - West Branches of The George Formby Society
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Welcome to Newsletter No. 15 and what are we reporting on this month? Well, it's been an hectic month in the N. West. We've performed at 5 events in 10 days - Blackpool Prom, N. Wales, Wainwright, Wigan Pier and the St Annes Opening of the Exhibition. Plus the normal monthly meetings.

As usual we have a bumper full of reports from our readers and we are pleased that Ann Ratcliffe and Lottie Stanford are back on the road to recovery. Great News.

We have reports on the opening of the George Formby Exhibition at Lytham St Annes and Jeffrey Formby Booth has started to confuse the world with some different angles on the life of GF senior and junior.

There is a full report on the lads entertaining on Wigan Pier and also the Blackpool Prom Show. We haven't heard a word from our own Harry Stanford because he's been busy dashing back and to the hospital to visiting Lottie. Our thanks to all who contributed to this issue.

Now Read On . . .

Merry Thanks from Ann Ratcliffe

Just out of Hospital.

Dear Stan, Would you please print a big **Thank You** to all our GFS Friends in the N. West Newsletter, on behalf of myself, and Ken, for all the Get-Well cards, telephone calls and Floral Gifts. I am back at home now, resting and looking through my cards - over 40 of them - and thinking of our society and how caring it is. It has certainly cheered me up!

I would like to thank Ken, my mum and family for being there for me and making my recovery easier. I know for a fact that when I left hospital, nearly all the wards knew about the GFS and all the cards, which were spread about, I told them how great everyone has been. Thanks Stan, See you all soon.

And thank you Ann for keeping us informed. I'll bet poor Ken has been worn to a frazzle with all that ironing. I kept ringing him to see if he required any professional advice. Hope to see you fighting fit at the next meeting. George's light is shining for you.



Don't Forget Your Trewselnest

The Formby Story - Part Five.

Still on George Formby Senior

The story so far . . . James (Jimmy) Booth is neglected by his mother as a child. Aged nine he leaves home and sings for pennies in the street. Through rough conditions he develops serious chest and breathing problems. He finds work in a blacksmith's shop but sulphur fumes make his condition worse. He breaks on to the stage and learns to ad-lib with the audience and the orchestra. He changes his name to George Formby. Read on . . .

George and Eliza the perfect partnership

The music hall was booming and the new George Formby was keen to match the talents of the great artists like George Robey, Marie Lloyd and Dan Leno.

When playing at a Wigan Theatre he met and married Eliza Hoy, a young seamstress who lived in Hindley, near Wigan. She was to become the mainstay of his life. Whenever he was down in the dumps she would pick him up, dust him down, spur him on and tell him to keep on trying. She was the ideal mate to push him to the top of the theatre bills. (it will be worth noting that, in later years, George junior found the same qualities in Beryl) She quickly learned his songs, and his patter, and would sit at the back of the backdrop curtain with her feet exposed underneath. George would shout, "Ah con see thee Liza, ah con see thee feet," and the crowd would roar. She would prompt him whenever he lost his lines and remind him of the next song. They lived on ten shillings a week and whenever times were hard she would make up the short fall by taking in sewing. Eliza's father wasn't pleased with her marriage to an unfortunate stage artist but this was smoothed over when it was discovered that they were both interested in race horses.

Eliza's father and her brother, John, were horse drawn cab drivers. They provided George with articles of old cab drivers clothing for his act.

They moved into No.3 Westminster Street Wigan, and started a family. This caused problems as it was important that Eliza should be at his side to give him strength. However the problem was solved when her mother agreed to bring up the children. With the strength of Eliza behind him he became a good crowd puller. The management of some theatres would make a temporary dressing room for him, at the side of the stage, to save him having to travel a distance between his acts.



Between songs he would withdraw to the makeshift dressing room where Eliza would cool down his inflamed chest with either ice or cold water. He would then put on another shirt and jacket to complete his act. More next month.

St Annes memories of our George

ONE of the biggest collections of George Formby memorabilia ever to go on display has opened in St Annes.

George Formby impersonator Alan Randall has put together the exhibition being held at Pleasure Island in St Annes.

It was officially opened by George's nephew Jeff Formby who has allowed a banjo, bought from former Beatle George Harrison, to be included in the display.

He said: "The exhibition really depicts George's life.

"It's wonderful to see all the memorabilia here in St Annes where he spent so many happy years."

George Formby lived in a house on Inner Promenade, St Annes, until his death in 1961.



Alan Randall and Jeffrey Formby, nephew of George Formby

Last Minute Rush when **Alan Randall** rang - "Stan, are you coming to the Exhibition Opening tomorrow at Lytham St Annes?" "No problem, I'll be there with Jeffrey Formby Booth - have the kettle on."

Well it was a miserable sort of day when we set off and it went worse as we got nearer to Blackpool. However we managed to park close to the exhibition in Pleasure Island and dashed under cover.

Inside it was set out like a maze with various Warrington Museum photos on show. As you wend your way through the narrow maze there are various shots of George, life like models, George's Dallas "E" (until end August) and videos being shown on TV monitors. As usual the local press were there taking snaps of various items and Granada TV turned up for a news report.

Liverpool

We had a nice surprise when Craig Tinsley, Lydia (from Germany) and Craig's two children, Rachell & Jessica turned up to entertain us.

Craig bashed out a few Formby numbers and then dedicated two songs to Lydia - "Who Do You Think You Are Kidding Mr Hitler" and "Seigfried Line." (He's got cheek for anything).

But the highlight of the night was the Tinsley Duo - Rachell & Jessica, accompanied by Bill Pope on Guitar, with their renditions of "Black is Black" and "I Closed My Eyes." Came over great.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please Note That There Will Be No Liverpool Meeting In September As It Clashes With Blackpool. See You All In October.



new of the late George, launch the new exhibition

Jimmy Cricket - what a wonderful personality - (and there's more) had his wellies (stamped L and R) on the right feet and he entertained the small crowd before the grand opening. Well - guess who cut the tape? None other than George's Nephew, our own Jeffrey Formby Booth, and what a wonderful job he made of it "dead in the centre" like an expert. Anyone would think that he did it for a living the way he handled the job. The crowd couldn't get over it.

Alan Randall, who presented the opening, introduced a few other stars like Bobby King (who played Harry Scott in Alan's travelling show) and John Stalker of The Bachelors. Unfortunately Steve King, who set up the exhibition, took ill on the day and wasn't at the opening.

It is hoped that the exhibition will be a permanent show but I personally think that it will be for the summer season only. There is a charge of £2.50 and £1.75 at the door. Other details can be obtained on 01253 781381

George Formby's New Home**House bought at Little Singleton**

When, a short time ago, the news began to circulate that Mr & Mrs Formby were to leave the house at Brock, 14 miles from Blackpool, where they have been living for eight and a half years, there were folk who said to them, "Come and live in London."

But "Nay" said George. And "Nay" said his wife, and in chorus they recited. "We're not leaving Lancashire. We're not, in fact leaving the country near Blackpool. We both love Blackpool - and we're staying here."

Today - to show that they are serious about it - they have settled - or resettled - in the Fylde, have acquired a new house.

GARDENS AND WOODLAND

The new house is "Garthallen" Mains Rd, Little Singleton. It is only five miles from Blackpool. There are ornamental gardens, a tennis court, a rose garden, and an acre of woodland. The area of the site is three acres.

There are five bedrooms in the house - and a second floor which comprises one spacious room. There is, in fact, everything in the house which George & Beryl Formby love. All that is wrong is the name. "No," said George reflectively, "we can't have it called "Garthallen," we'll call it the name of the house at Brock, "Beryldene." "Beryl is Mrs Formby's name and we add "Dene" on. And we shall move in on September 9th, Beryl's birthday."

The house was in the possession at one time of Mr G K Bancroft, who is now living in India. Messrs, Thickett and Law, F.A.I. of Blackpool, negotiated the purchase.

Graham Friend of The World War Two Society wrote in ... Dear Stan, I would like to tell you of our recent Blackpool Parade on August 4th along the Golden Mile. It was for the Lions Club.

Len Phillips - Snake Hips, as you know him - was brilliant with his uke on the back of our float singing his heart out. There was a 40 piece band just ahead of us but Len kept going and he didn't let it bother him. He did our society proud, singing and dancing for a full two hours. He also entertained in the evening at Tom Reed's house and taught Tom's wife a few chords. We hope that we are as active at Len's age. Good for you Len. We are proud of you and you were certainly looking better at the Liverpool meeting. Great!

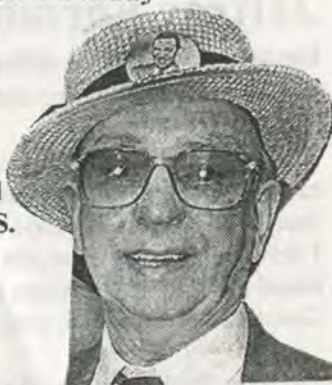
Drop a line to the Newsletter - or else

Sale Meeting - George Cheetam's 75th Birthday

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Friday 16th August was a grand night at the Brookland Sports Club, Sale. About 40 members turned up for the occasion and a good night was held by all. The buffet was laid on well and it was non-stop GF music all night.

I was very impressed by the huge George Formby framed picture that Alan & Alice Cronshaw presented to the GFS. This was in memory of dear Wally Cronshaw, ex Sale Chairman who died recently. A wonderful tribute to him.



Jack & Jim, who were included on the advertising poster, were on excellent form as they bashed out their Formby numbers. These two lads have come on really well since they were first discovered hiding behind their pint glasses at the Liverpool meeting. Jim's jokes are also coming along very well and I can see a young Harry Stanford in the making.

A great night out and young George Cheetam enjoyed every minute of it.

Happy 75th Year George.

Just Heard from **Stephen William's** Grandad. He rang to tell us that Disneyland had sent the family a quantity of 3 day passes and also 1 day passes for the Aquarium. The family will be flying on the 10th October. Great News.

Backing Tapes

- quite a number of members are gathering together a collection of backing tapes to use for their act and some have asked about carrying cases for them. Well, W H Smith supply an excellent case which holds 32 tapes and it is partitioned inside specially to separate each tape. There is a bit of doubt about the price as the first one I bought recently, cost £5. 95, but suddenly they have gone up to £8. 95. Anyway, they are worth the price. They also sell a larger version, which holds 60 tapes, for £12. 95. Colours are in red, blue or black.

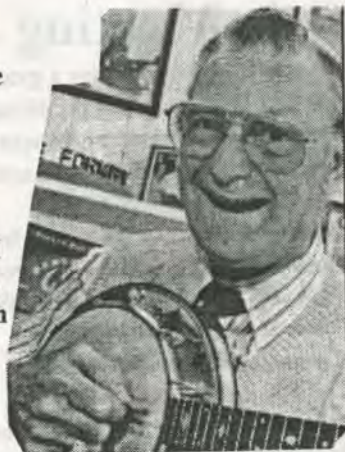
Always take care with tapes if you have a magnet in the house. If held close to the tapes, the magnet will clean off anything you have recorded. Beware!!!!

Olde Tyme Music Hall

- There's been a great run of 9 x 1 hour shows on Sky TV for the past 9 Sundays. Some of the stars have been Alan Randall, Tessie O'Shea, Bernard Cribbins, John Inman, Roy Hudd and many more. These were filmed at the Variety Theatre, Leeds

Jeffrey Formby Booth upsets the historians with a few different views on the lives of George Formby senior and George Formby jnr.

While looking through some old newspaper clippings I came across the name of Sam Paul, which was a name I remembered from the days when we lived in Liverpool. I delved deeper into the pile of cuttings and sure enough found the following articles relating to Sam Paul and George Formby Sen. & Jnr.



From the book "The Northern Music Hall"

One of the greatest names in show business was that of George Formby - and there were two of them - father and son. Formby senior was born in 1880 at Ashton-under-Lyne, and at the tender age of 12 was apprenticed as a blacksmith's striker to a firm of Manchester ironfounders. The work was far too heavy for his puny frame, while the sulphur fumes played havoc with his chest. He was 'very miserable' to all accounts, and only lived for his spare time when he sang comic ditties and strummed away on an old banjo. Soon he began trying his luck in the 'Free and Easy's in the Manchester area. Then about 1899, Danny Clarke of the famous Argyle Music Hall, Birkenhead, on a talent spotting tour, heard him in the Hen & Chickens singing room and signed him to appear for one week at Birkenhead - salary £2.10 shillings.

Danny did not think George's real name of Booth was suitable for the halls, so Formby - a place near Liverpool - was substituted. Not long after this, the great Walford Bodie signed up George to appear with his Royal Magnets company at the old Lyceum Theatre in Market St, Blackburn, with a short tour to follow.

George met and married Eliza Hoy, a Wigan girl, and his luck changed. He made his home with his wife's people in Wigan and got a regular weekly engagement at the old People's Palace in St Helens, run by a Mr Tarbuck and Harry Liston, a former comedian. And so, with a regular 30 shillings a week, and his tram fare to Wigan, George Formby started married life.

Then through the kindness of Leoni, the Cat King, George played the Stoll Tour of nine halls at £8 a week. But fame really came to him in 1907 when George Robey signed him for pantomime at Newcastle at £35 a week, which was real big money in those days. George senior, a figure still well remembered, with his pallid face, wistful air, enormous boots (bought from the Bros Egbert for 15 shillings) and his lugubrious song 'Standing At The Corner Of The Street.' Poor old George, always fighting a losing battle with the dreaded pthisis, with his pathetic aside to the orchestra 'Coughing better tonight.'

Editor's reply:- According to the birth certificate George senior was born in 1875.

From the book "The Pierrots Of The Yorkshire Coast"

Sam Paul, who's real name was Robert Nesbitt Sample, decided to venture into the realms of cinema and hired the Central Hall, which was built on the site of Redcar's first railway station. It was here that he opened his first Picture Palace. He is said to have taught George Formby to play the ukulele in the early 1920's. George originally appeared on the stage as George Hoy, using his mother's maiden name, but after the death of his father, in 1921, he was eventually persuaded to use the name Formby. George's solo act in the halls was not going at all well, so Sam, who was a expert on both banjo and ukulele, took him in hand. He helped him with his gags and taught him to play the instrument. This set the pattern for George's very successful career.

I was always under the impression that George senior died first, so I wonder which version is the right one?

Editor replies:- In 1929 George was still struggling to play the uke (In The Congo) so I can't understand how he could possibly have been playing for 8 years. George's first appearance was definitely on the 21st March 1921 at the Earlestown Hippodrome. This was six weeks after his father's death. As it was his debut, Eliza invited her friends to come along for support. According to Louie, who is a mine of information, George senior never played the banjo. The photo that may have mis-led people was of him, on stage, holding a frying pan.

More discrepancies next month from Jeffrey.

Blackpool Gazette

Steve King says farewell to his 'buddy' Al

Local Al Jolson impersonator, Steve King, won't be donning the dubbin again. Having almost fully recovered from a minor stroke he suffered during a pantomime season in Hull, Steve, whose Al Jolson act made him nationally known - has decided he has taken his last trip down the Swanee River.

But he hasn't turned his back completely on showbusiness and will be running Alan Randall's George Formby exhibition at Pleasure Island, St Annes for the summer season. He will also be returning to his grass roots by being relief projectionist in the new duel screen cinema complex. "I have not been able to contact all the well wishers in writing as a result of the stroke" says Steve, of Mossom Lane, Thornton Cleveleys, "But I send my best wishes to everyone and hope to see as many as possible in St Annes."



Steve took ill on the opening day of the exhibition so we sincerely hope that George's light is shining for him. Steve, who usually pops into the Wintergardens meetings, has contributed articles for past Newsletters.

Don't forget to send a self photo with your article

and give us all a laugh

Bingo!—and Bill is a winner in his own write

DOCKYARD worker Bill Hunter could be on his way to fame — thanks to his wife's bingo-playing.

A comedy song he wrote in his spare time is to be featured in a top television show. And the words were inspired by his wife Rose's outings to bingo.

Bill, a plater's helper at the Tyne Dock Engineering Company in South Shields, has just been told that his song, *Bingo Crazy*, is one of six chosen for the final of the Opportunity Knocks song-writing contest.

I heard about

Billy Hunter some years ago and how he was dedicated to George and his songs. After hearing from his wife, Rose, and discovering that he had died three years ago, Eva & I decided to pay her a visit.

We made the long round trip of 350 miles to see her but it was worth the trouble. Rose told us that Billy had always wanted to be a member of the GFS but never got round to joining. He dedicated his life to playing George's songs for various charities and writing GF type songs. She played some of the songs for us and they sounded great.

With 10 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, Rose is kept extra busy. There was a look of joy in her eyes as she played Billy's tapes for us, and at one stage she did a dance, but there was also a look of despair that said "I wish he was here to enjoy it with me."

Although Billy never succeeded in making any money from his playing and writing I got the strong impression that he received his rewards from entertaining the people. The happy look on his face tells the full story. Our thanks to Rose Hunter for the lovely article.

Stan Evans

Bill, a 53-year-old father of six, has been playing the banjo and ukelele since he was a teenager, and has often made amateur appearances at local clubs — as well as keeping workmates entertained at "smokers".

And now, with a bingo-knocking song, he could have made the big time.

His song and the five others were picked from an entry of 21,000, and when he goes to London for the show later this month, music publishers will be there to hear his words and music.

Bill, who has worked nearly 20 years with TDE, said at his home in Anderson Street: "I'd think about taking up song-writing full-time if this one is a success — but I'll have to wait and see how it goes."

His wife added: "He's got a marvellous ear for music, and could have made millions by now."

The chorus to Bill's song is:

My wife is bingo crazy, my wife is bingo mad.

There ought to be a law against this cruelty to Dads.

I have to wash the dishes and put the kids to bed.

When the wife's out playing bingo, I might as well be dead.

But Bill's wife revealed his guilty secret: "He does sometimes come to bingo with me at the weekends."

Reporter: Malcolm Scott

Pictures: Bob Wilson



Bill and his favourite ukelele keep the men happy at TDE's South Shields yard.

**Members of the
GFS entertain
at Wigan Pier**

**GEORGE FORMBY
SOCIETY**

**Poor Len
is taken
prisoner
on Perch
Rock**

Vell, vat hast he bin up to?

He hast bin fraternising mit ze German fraulein!

This was a wonderful day for the G F S and the Wigan crowd loved us. The weather was oozing with sunshine and we couldn't have picked a better day for the occasion. For years we've attempted to break Wigan - and their attitude to George - and at long last it's been cracked. The vast crowd thoroughly enjoyed our four outside concerts and George's songs. Several requests were given - mainly by youngsters - and there wasn't a dull face in the crowd. George's songs were bouncing all around the Wigan Pier complex and everybody joined in the fun.

About 30 GFS members turned up in total and the concerts were performed by Dickie Speake - on Keyboard, Geoff Shone - on Drums, Peter Pollard, Lionel Owen, Dennis Lee, Andy Eastwood, Brian Edge, Martin Fowell, Carl Basford, Jack Skelland, Jim Bramwell, Ray Davies and last, but not the least - Kevin Blanchfield, who sang with the enthusiasm and aggression you would need to strangle a horse. There was a talent scout hanging around so I can only assume that the Wigan Rugby league club have signed him up as a supporter.

The air was so electric that even the wild life joined in the fun. While Dickie was singing his Arthur Askey "Busy Bee song" a huge bumble bee hovered around his head. It was unbelievable! While the rest of the group was busy waving their arms and shooing it away, Dickie was wondering what the commotion was about.

The concerts worked out perfectly and the crowds kindly donated £115. 44 (plus 20 pence) to the Alder Hey Childrens Hospital. George would be proud.

During our performances several Wigan locals told us of experiences that had been passed on from their parents. One lady claimed that she was a member of the St Francis Hill Chapel Church, Goosnauth, near Preston, where George and Pat were to be married. Arrangements were made and they were looking forward to the big day. Unfortunately George died before they could be married.

Another lady told us that her husband's grandfather - known as Grandad Hartley - was the registrar who registered George & Beryl's wedding in 1924. *There must be loads of snippets around the Wigan area. G-R-E-A-T D-A-Y - W-O-N-D-E-R-F-U-L.*

And Alder Hey Childrens Hospital were chuffed -

To the George Formby Society - Ref. 0495 - A. 🍑🍑🍑

On behalf of the staff and children at Alder Hey Childrens Hospital, I am writing to thank the George Formby Society for their kind donation of £116 which was raised through a concert at Wigan Pier on 5th August. Well Done! I enclose an official receipt for the cheque. Thanks once again, for your support for the work here at Alder Hey Childrens Hospital. Yours Sincerely, John Regan, Fund Raising Manager.



Any News For The Newsletter? Bah Gum.

14 Crewe Break Record!

Seventy-two turned up at the July meeting at Crewe which is a record for the society.

Audrey Lewis arranged a surprise 'bunfight' to celebrate her husband Ray's 65th birthday and his retirement but sadly at the last minute neither were able to come due to a serious family illness. All members present offered their best wishes to Ray for a long and happy retirement and offered special thanks to Audrey for the splendid party that she laid on, and was enjoyed by everyone.

It was good to have Wilf Salt and Bobbie with us for the evening. When they walked through the door just after the meeting had begun they were met with spontaneous applause. Wilf has now left the district and has taken up residence in St. Annes. We wish them both well. Somebody will now have to learn "Out in the Middle East" the George Formby song which has become so synonymous with Wilf Salt that nobody else bothered to learn it. Volunteers please!

During the evening members were told of the illnesses of Ann Ratcliffe and Lottie Stanford and those present signed cards wishing them well. Both Ann and Lottie would like to thank everyone for their wishes and they look forward to meeting all their friends again before too long.

Our M.C. Jonathan Baddeley is on holiday at the time of the August Meeting and his place will be taken for the night by your friend and mine Derek Ball who I know will be an excellent stand in for Jonathan.

During the month we were asked to provide some entertainment at the Cheshire Cheese Hotel in Shavington on the occasion of the anniversary of the "Night that the Bomb Dropped". The Cheshire Cheese was one of the first places in Crewe to be bombed during the war and the event is commemorated annually. Jonathan and Pam, Des and Mary, Colin, Christine and myself went along and we did two half hour spots which were well received. The place was all decked out in wartime fashion, flags, bunting and Spitfires everywhere. All the staff were in military uniform, it was a real flag waving do which raised, I am told, over £1000 for charity.

Anyone who has not yet visited Crewe are cordially invited to come along and have a great evening! See you there!

On Blackpool Prom - Sunday July 28th .. It was

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the most dreadful day (weather wise) but about a dozen GFS members turned up to entertain from the Blackpool Prom Bandstand and crowds of about 200 very quickly gathered around to listen to George's songs. The music sounded really great and passers-by couldn't help but tap their feet - some started dancing.

Eve & Charles Stewart did an excellent job of arranging the sound system and organising the show. Thanks must go to Wilf Salt, Anthony Mason, Alan Middleton, Charles & Eve Stewart, Steve Abbott and Ray & Kieran Marshall for providing the entertainment. They performed very well.



There is no doubt about it, the backing tapes certainly provide first class sound. At one stage a spitfire aeroplane was almost skimming the top of our bandstand and creating the most terrific noise. To counter attack, Anthony announced that we will sing "It's In The Air," which was performed without a backing tape. In such a big area the ukes alone sounded so empty and the crowd immediately started to disperse. They soon gathered again when the tapes were used. We must learn from this lesson. Use Backing Tapes - or Keyboard, especially in the open air.

This was a wonderful entertainment spot which gave great publicity to the GFS. Charity collections were gathered in and donated to the Blackpool Mayor's Hospital Fund. We have no idea of the amount collected but the crowds were pleased to donate in exchange for a really excellent show. We must do it again next year.

Read On . . . Sunday July 28th was certainly my "FB Day." Charles rang to tell me that all the above activities begin at 10am so it was a case of setting out for Blackpool no later than 9am. That morning I opened one eye to glance at the bedside clock and had a surprise when it read 8.30am. I couldn't believe it. Not much time left so I had a quick shower and dashed downstairs - - - only to find that the clock battery had run out at 8.30 pm and it was only 5.30am. Anyway it was too late to go back to bed so I spent a couple of hours working on the Newsletter.

9am arrived and I jumped into the car - - - only to find that the battery was completely flat. The ignition had been left on all night and there wasn't a spark in the battery. I couldn't believe it. This was definitely my "Flat Battery Day."

Eve & Charles Stewart would like to thank all who came to support the charity show we held on the Blackpool Prom Bandstand. The President of the Blackpool North Round Table thanked us most graciously to add to the approving comments of our audience. We don't know how much money went into the collection boxes but there was plenty of contributions and we had them dancing and singing with us. Great Day, Regards, Chas & Eve. ☺☺☺ 🍷🍷🍷

Excited Andrew Barnes rang Stan, Diane and I wish to announce that, today, 5th August, we've just had our first baby, it's a boy and we are naming him Luke. He will be able to play the uke. *Great news Andrew. We look forward to seeing Luke - and his uke - at the meetings.*

Memories of George - One gentleman recalls when he went to the Ritz Cinema in Warrington. It was 1941 and they were holding a show in aid of Spitfire Week (all money raised would go to buying new Spitfire fighter planes for the war) and, as the resident organist went down, playing, on walked George to entertain the crowd.

Another claimed that his father owned a drapers shop in Warrington and George would pop in each week to buy 24 new yellow dusters to clean his car. *Seems a lot of dusters but, who knows, he may have used them to clean windows as well.* Brian Edge

Alan Randall - Did you see him on Sky TV on Sunday night 11th August? He rang about 12 months ago to tell me that he had just made a TV recording for the Good Olde Days programme from Leeds. This was the showing and he did an excellent performance. Alan walked on to the stage, immaculately dressed in his striped blazer and straw hat, and opened up with Auntie Maggie's Remedy. He then did his 3 song medley of Wu, Windows and Lamp Post and the audience joined in and loved it. Alan, who has a great gift for getting the audience involved, usually cries out "You know the words better than I do." For my money it was the best part of the show.

A Church Joke from Jim Bramwell.

The vicar finishes his service with: "Dear Brethren, I am afraid that there will be no church outing this summer as our Treasurer, Mr Greenhill, has done a bunk with the church funds. Now will you please turn to hymn number 316 and we will all sing together 'There Is A Green Hill Far Far Away.'"

Nowt to do with **George** but **Peter Lee** has a few items to offer.

Five Octave Yamaha Keyboard with stand £150.

21" Nicam FST, Text Colour TV, Grundig, Excellent Picture & Sound £120.

14" Hitachi Colour TV, Excellent Picture & Sound £60

Phillips CDI with DV Cartridge, Games & Films £200

VHS Front Loading Video in Good Working Condition £50

Sharp Twin Cassette and Radio Gettoblaster £20.

UKE BANJO - Modified German Musima £85 or near offer.

You can ring Peter on 01535 690441 or at 3 Damens Lane, Keighley BD22 7AP

Will Malcolm Ever Give Up? - Not On Your Nellie!

Just received a letter from dear Malcolm Palmer who runs the Stourbridge Branch of the GFS. For the past four years he has attempted to make a success of their meetings but, alas, he is still struggling with only a few members. However, Malcolm is dedicated to the cause and believes that someday he will reach his goal.

Well Malcolm, we sincerely hope that you do make a success and if you want any posters printing just drop me a rough copy and I'll produce some for you. Some day we will organise a trip to your meeting to help you with some publicity. In the meantime:-

We'll spare a thought for dear Malcolm.
He's doing his bit for us all
Down there in Stourbridge, he's running the show.
But no-one will answer his call

He's pleaded with all of his players
To "get all your back-sides down here"
Kevin turned up - oh! what a surprise
So he wished him a Happy New Year

He works very hard for his members
Provides them with cold chips on bread
Sardines and lager to wash it all down
But they'd rather watch tele instead

So the next time you think you're unlucky
And sit all alone by the phone
Just think of poor Malcolm, playing his uke
All by himself, on his own - bum bum.

Thanks for your letter Malcolm. Keep persevering and we are sure that you will make it someday. Best Wishes.

Read on:- **Malcolm has For Sale:-** Two organs with pedals. One is a Conn Caper with rhythm accompaniment for £100, and the other is a "Hammond J" for £120.

You can ring Malcolm on 01902 678012.

Raise A Smile -

Customer in Restaurant:- "Waiter, this chicken's got one leg longer than the other."
Waiter:- "What you gonna do, eat it or dance with it?"

Husband:- "My wife is so loud that everytime she opens her mouth her face disappears."

Urgent
I'm beginning to get low
on articles for the
Newsletter so how's about
getting pen to paper and
popping a letter in the
post. It could be
anything to do with
George, or ukes, or jokes,
or crosswords, or any
queries, or any
experiences on how you
came to take up playing,
or listening to GF.

John Taylor (Down The Old Coal Hole) has a

wonderful little story regarding his son Andrew who was born on the 13th October 1993. Ever since Andrew was born he has enjoyed listening to his dad playing the banjo-uke. His favourites are "Granddad's Flannelette Night-shirt" and "Mr Wu's A Window Cleaner."



However, John was concerned that Andrew was very slow in reaction and developing his speech. He expressed his fears to the specialists who gave him ear & nose checks and suggested that he should have a brain scan. Andrew had a vocabulary of only about 10 to 20 words." It was noticed that Andrew was particularly interested in watching Jack Jones on his Tuition Video and he would sit for hours taking it all in. But expressing nothing.

At the June meeting at the Wintergardens, Andrew spotted Jack, who was a long distance away in the main concert room, and immediately he shouted out, pulling his dad towards him. He wanted to meet Jack. John wondered what on earth he was shouting for until he realised that Jack was his little boy's hero who played the banjo-uke on screen. They went over to meet Jack who said, "Hello little fella." Andrew was delighted.

What John saw in his little boy that day was a great upliftment and he now realises that Andrew isn't as slow as he thought. At last his little boy had found something that motivates him.

All our readers will join me in wishing young Andrew great success with his future and hope that he takes great steps steps of progress. We are sure that George's light will be shining for the dear boy and we'll keep track of his improvements when we meet John at the meetings. *Great little story John and it's wonderful to know that our society can be of help.*



Went to see **Lottie Stanford** in the Earlestown Cottage Hospital and Eva & I were extremely surprised at how well she looked. She appeared to be about 20 years younger and she was delighted with the flowers and cards received. She looked really wonderful. Although she is looking very well she still has a problem with walking.

Lottie is settled in a lovely private room with an excellent view on to the lawn and huge bushes of beautiful red roses. The members will join me in wishing Lottie a very speedy recovery and we are sure that George's light will be shining for her. But I wonder if Harry is keeping up with the ironing?

Harry's just phoned - Lottie is now out of hospital and he is serenading her with his banjo. *Put that banjo down Harry and get the ironing done.*

From **Charles Stewart** - I receive a lot of phone calls from GFS members requesting the phone numbers of Blackpool hotels so would you please include this list in your next issue. *No problem Charles - It's a pleasure!*

Hotel	Address	01253	B & B	Parking	Walk
Hollies,	88/90 Albert Rd, (lifts)	24958	£18	No	Yes
Wilmar,	58/60 Hornby Rd, Disabled Welcome	23811	£12	Yes	Few mins
Mongomery,	14 Hornby Rd,	25935	£11	No	" "
California,	90 Hornby Rd,	295232	£13	Yes	" "
Glengarry,	55/57 Hornby Rd (inc. Even. Meal)	22423	£16	Yes	" "
Sunnyside,	40/42 Hornby Rd	22171	£13	Yes	" "
New Central,	64a Reads Ave	23637	£15	Yes	" "
Leopold,	10/12 Leopold Grove	292958	£15	No	Next door
Carlisle,	34 Charnley Rd	22586	£11	No	Yes
Beverley,	4 Charnley Rd	23255	£13	Yes	Yes
Durham,	64 Adelaide St (Even.Meal)	26768	£15. 50	Yes	Next door
Lynton,	88 Hornby Rd	28058	£12	Yes	Few mins
Mrs Connell, 18 Leopold Grove (next door to Wintergardens		£14 & £17.			

Young Bob Drinkwater

has got a complaint!- sorry Bob, I won't do it again - honest - "You've gone and printed the wrong telephone number!!!" Oh, my dear - I always get it wrong for poor Bob.

Anyway Bob, here's your advert again - perfect this time.

2 Ukuleles For Sale ... By Bob Drinkwater - OK up to now Bob?

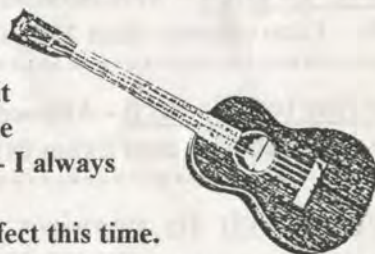
La Foley Ukulele, 12 frets, Standard size, Geared Pegs, perfect condition, case £120.

Martin No.2 Ukulele (Mahogany). Name in gold letters on peg board. 12 frets, Rosewood fingerboard, Top inlaid with black & white celluloid. Black nut, Patent pegs. In Excellent condition, no cracks or scratches, with case £300.

Ring Bob on 01384 395918 - How's That Bob?

From Ken Ratcliffe - Manchester Evening News 31/7/96

Lottery millionaire Karl Crompton has called off a move to a £650, 000 new home ... because he can't build a soccer pitch there. Liverpool fan Karl wanted a training area for his soccer-mad mates who play in a Sunday league. He visited comedian George Formby's former stately home, Mallard Hall at Singleton, near Blackpool, with a view to buying it off owner Basil Newby, but when he inquired about removing trees to make way for a full size Astroturf pitch, he was told the council would not allow it. And since he also wants his own motorcycle track, he may have to build from new, while still living with his parents at Cleveleys, near Blackpool.



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:- Aug 31st, Oct 5th, Nov 2nd, Dec 7th. Adm £1 with Buffet.

PLEASE NOTE: 2 MEETINGS IN AUGUST

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:- Sept 27th, Oct 22nd, Nov 19th, Dec 17th. Adm 50p

Warrington Branch - Alliance Sports & Social Club Evans House, Orford
Lane, Warrington. - 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 next issue - 15th September

So as George would say -

"GET CRACKING"

ReTtElSwEn RuOy TrOpPuS

