

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

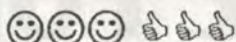
Newsletter 18

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Specially Produced for the
North - West Branches of The George Formby Society
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Welcome to Newsletter No. 18.



It's difficult to believe that we have actually produced 18 Newsletters since we started in July 95 and amazing how the news items keep coming in. . . So what have we got this month?

With deepest regret we report the death of John Knight.

News of a company who are manufacturing full size models of various past stars - they are looking into producing models of George.

Trudy Lane, of Canada, has sent in a very interesting article on her "George Formby look-a-like" husband and a copy of a letter from Beryl.

We have two letters from Harry and a report on Sale from Ken Ratcliffe. Also words and chords to, "I Remember George." . . . NOW READ ON. . .

Young Harry Stanford - Dear Stan, I want to thank all the members who remembered Lottie & I when George's light went out for us. Yes it was dark for most of the year but now the light is gradually beaming again. Well we have found our way back to the meetings and, as you say, "Here's Harry with his 75 year old jokes!" But what about Joe McCaffrey's cartoon, he goes back to the Stonehenge days when I got my jokes printed on huge stone slabs. Here is one of the oldest:- Eve said to Adam, "Don't you love me anymore?" and Adam answered, "Who else?" - Get it?

Thanks to Kevin Blanchfield for mentioning that I got carried off stage at Penyffordd. I'm glad it wasn't to the canal.

Glancing through the newspapers last week my horoscope said, "I have the potential to be a shining star in a grey sky, also I have something special to share with others. Fancy that, I never believed in horoscopes. Harry.

I keep you telling you Harry. Get rid of that five stringed banjo and take up the uke again. You were a shining light way back in 91 when you dazzled them all with your brilliance on the uke banjo. Anthony Mason & John Shreeve didn't have a look when you were on stage.

PS - George's light never goes out!

Grandson: "Granddad, there's a man at the door with a bald head."

Grandad: "Tell him I've got one."

The Formby Story - Part 8

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Still on George Formby Senior

George Formby had reached the top of his career. He was very popular throughout the country and to prove this he had bookings for the next 10 years. Other stars at the time considered that they were blessed with two or three years bookings but few could boast of having 10 years work on their books.

Throughout this Formby Story I have emphasised greatly on the fact that the Formbys had tremendous ability to uplift people even though they themselves were in a difficult position.

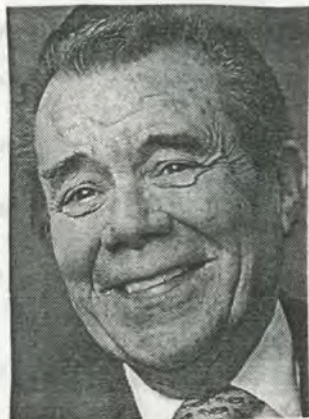


Peter Bennett, a well known Warrington businessman told me this story: His family were friends of the Formbys and on one occasion his uncle was due to meet George inside the Cemetery Hotel - which is about three hundred yards from the Formby grave. Outside the hotel there was a terminus where the Warrington trams would turn to go back to the town centre. George was crossing over the road and as the tram turned round it ran over him. He was trapped underneath. This caused quite a scene and the lads ran from the hotel to see if they could help him. They shouted "Are you all right George?" to which he replied, "I don't know, I've never been under a tram before!" He was always playing to the crowd and we are pleased that George Junior adopted from him the same ability.

Although George was well loved throughout the country he still suffered from extreme ill health. On one occasion, in London, he went on stage to make a great triumph after lying very ill for hours in the dressing room with Eliza sitting on his chest to stop a haemorrhage in his lungs. On occasions she would stand at the side of the stage and pop a cube of ice into his mouth while he was performing. His daughter, Louie, told me that, while performing, he had difficulty in keeping his eyes open, so he painted two dots on his forehead and dusted his eye lashes with talcum powder. Those in the upper circle were not aware that his eyes were closed. He found great comfort from this.

What brave people George and Eliza were and what an inspiration to those around them. George consistently refused to visit a doctor and felt that he could overcome his health problems through sheer determination and joviality.

More Next Month.



Brian Edge Writes . . . Sir Dirk Bogarde (originally Derek Niven Van Den Bogaerde) the 75 year old writer and actor, is currently ill in a London hospital following a stroke. He was born in Hampstead and was originally a scene designer and commercial artist before embarking on his acting career. He made his film debut as an extra in "Come On George" but so far I have been unable to spot him in the picture. Can any reader help?

Thanks Brian. I think I've spotted him for you. The young Dirk Bogarde, who would be 18 years of age when he appeared in the film, was (I think) one of the stable hands at Sir Charles Bailey's farm. He is the smallest of the bunch - unless anyone knows better.

At the **Atlantic Pub** in Liverpool, when we were being filmed for the new Channel One TV, I noticed on one of the theatre bills that the Sole Proprietor and Manager of the Argyle Theatre, Birkenhead, (15th June 1928) was D J Clarke. Now I recall that there was a Danny Clarke who was involved with the Formby family, in the early days. Is this the same man and can anyone throw any light on it?

Derek Ball, Crewe - Don't play rounders with your grandad's wooden leg. You'll have him hopping mad.

Still at Crewe - **Jon Badeley** posed a question! - Which George Formby song was recorded by Bing Crosby? The answer is "Bless 'em All."

Still at Crewe - **Fred Stevenson**, of Alsager, did an excellent turn at the October meeting. He yodelled "Lonesome Me" and Frank Hyfield's "This Is How To Yodel." It was quite a pleasant change.

Still at Crewe - I was dead proud of **Harry** when he played his banjo uke on stage. He sang "When I'm 94" like the pro that he is. After such great applause I can't see him taking the 5 string banjo on stage again.

Uke for Sale . . . Len Wilson rang. He wishes to sell a Roy Smeck Deluxe uke/banjo which was made by John Grey. It is in immaculate condition, but with poor case. Price £250. You can ring Len on 01642 314218

A Report From Sale....

Dear Stan,

We received an invitation to join in celebrating Mancunian Films on the site of the original studios, on Dickenson Rd, Manchester. We were given memories of George Formby, Frank Randle, Old Mother Riley, Norman Evans and many more who were involved in the production of Mancunian films.

Twelve members turned up, Cyril Palmer, Martin Harrison, Dickie Speake, Dennis & Pat Taylor, Dennis Mitchell, Peter Pollard, Mac McGee and other members from the Yorkshire Ukulele Circle. The GFS member's performance in the afternoon was very much appreciated by the audience and we were treated to a Frank Randle impersonation show by Keith Clifford. After tea we were shown films and sketches as part of the "100 Years of Cinema" celebrations.

SALE NEWS:- About 50 turned up for the October meeting and it was announced that Jack Jones has reached 76 years young. Larry Johnson is now 70, but the oldest of them all - Harry, who weighed in at 85 - wasn't feeling too well on the night. Mustn't forget my mother-in-law, Ivy, who takes subs on the door. She has reached 76 years.

Don't forget the Sale Christmas Party on the 20th of December.

Thanks for your report Ken - always nice to hear from Sale. Don't worry about Harry, he was back to his usual self at the Liverpool meeting. Couldn't get him off stage.

I'll Bet you **Were Still in Bed** at 7.30am but on the 28th of Oct. Candid Camera was shown on UK Gold - Sky TV. The scene was an office and the typist was taking notes from her boss. In the background, pinned on the wall, were two theatre posters and one of them was advertising George at the top of the Palladium bill. Due to the camera moving about I couldn't see the name of the town, or who the other artists were.

Several Readers have asked if the article regarding the 2.45am phone call asking for a copy of "I Wish I Could Play The Ukulele" was true.

Well, I can assure you that it was perfectly true. I can only assume that he had been Saturday night clubbing until the early hours - when all Formby Fans should be tucked up in bed - and at 2.45am decided that he needed the words.

Revenge - If I stumble across his telephone number I will gladly give him a Sunday morning, 6. 30 am phone call, and I'll finish the call with - Turned Out Nice Again.

Here's a Touch of Bad News for Formby fans . .

The cost of taking out a licence to produce your own Formby backing tapes is quite reasonable but printing words and chords on paper is expensive. This is the reason why songbooks are so costly in the shops. Formby sheet music isn't produced because there isn't sufficient interest to justify stocking them in the shops.

Some of the publishers were awaiting the year 2011 when almost all of George's songs would be released from copyright. This is because George's two main song writers - Harry Gifford and Fred E Cliffe - plus himself - would have been dead for 50 years, which is the period required.



Fred died on September 2nd, 1957. Harry Gifford died on January 8th 1960, and, as you know, George died on March 6th 1961. The year 2011 (50 years after George's death) could have brought a revival of Formby music (what a treat for our young members), however, The EEC have recently held meetings and decided that the minimum period is to be changed to 70 years after the death of the composers. What a great shame!

Fred E Cliffe, - real name Cliff Howchin - was born in Liverpool on December 1st 1885. He spent most of his life in London and toured the music halls as a lightning sketch artist. In the early 1900's he appeared for several years with Charlie Chaplin in "The Mummung Birds". His association with Harry Gifford began about 1932 when they started to write songs in a one room office at 10 Branchester Rd, Streatham. Harry Gifford usually wrote the music and Fred most of the lyrics, although in some instances Cliffe was responsible for both.

Harry Gifford - real name Harry Folkard - was born in Plymouth in 1876 where his father had a corner shop which sold musical instruments. His early career was not unlike that of his future partner; in his youth he had been a corner man and banjoist in a minstrel troupe, and he appeared as one of the Ugly Sisters in Cinderella at the Shakespeare Theatre in Lavender Hill. He wrote patter for Billy Bennett and Max Miller, and collaborated on some 40 songs with Fred Godfrey (of Bless Em All fame). On one occasion, in 1943, he wrote a song for Stanley Holloway in the film "Champagne Charlie". He also had a small speaking part in the film.

Harry was a very even tempered man with a jovial disposition who always had a funny tale to tell about his life. He never married. He is buried in Putney Vale Cemetery.

George, in his letters to Gifford and Cliffe, conveyed his thoughts about new songs and suggested titles for others. He usually referred to them as "Dear Lads" or "Dear Boys." They appear to have met George very rarely, and then only at film trade shows or recording sessions, but there can be no doubt that their relationship was a happy one. George often referred to the songs being rejected due to being too blue or, at times, not blue enough.

The lads had the strong impression that George was a hard taskmaster who knew exactly what he wanted, and got it in his songs like, *The Lancashire Toreador*, *Fanlight Fanny*, *Our Sergeant Major* and *Mr Wu's A Window Cleaner Now*, and many more.

The above was taken from the writings of Brendan Ryan

Liz Fay rang from London. They are researching the possibility of using George singing Windows in a new TV advert to boost double glazing sales. I told her that George had a vast repertoire of songs and we could possibly find a song on any subject. For example:- *Hardware* - Andy The Andy Man, *Brewery* - Barmaid At The Rose & Crown, *Milk Board* - Delivering The Morning Milk, *Coal Board* - Down The Old Coal Hole, *Newspapers* - Photo In The Press, *Join The Army* - Frank On His Tank, *Join The Airforce* - It's In The Air, *Join The Navy* - Bell Bottom George, *Bridal Dresses* - Somebody's Wedding Day, *Body Building* - Biceps, Muscle and Brawn, *Hymns of Praise* - Bless em All, and many more. Can you think of any?

Looking through this list I noticed that George certainly had some very unusual titles:- *The Wart on Grandad's Nose*, *Bottle Nose Bertha From Bow*, *Grandpa's Old Glass Eye*, *Coupla Pouds of Tripe*, *I Was Wagging My Magic Wand*, *Willie the Wireless Fan*, *Whoopee for a Waxworks Watcher*, and many more. They don't write songs like that now! . ☺☺

Anthony & I did a Radio City spot for Billy & Wally on Friday 8th November to boost the Liverpool meeting, which was due to be held that night. We went through the usual patter of "What does a young lad like you see in George Formby" and "How many members have you got" before we were asked to give a song.

We were just about getting into top gear with "I Wish I Could Play The Ukulele" when we were chopped off for the news items. Some day we'll get it right at Liverpool.

Future Events - In the last issue we reported that the N.West members must get down to organising a set programme of songs, tunings, keys and players etc. for future events. As soon as possible we need to arrange a quantity of backing tapes and song sheets for the members who can be called on to perform.

The Liverpool Members have expressed a great interest in this and are keen to get started. Dennis Lee has given me a list of songs that they perform - plus the uke tuning and the key:-

“D” Tuning - Chinese Laundry Blues - first chord G



“D” “ I Remember George - first chord D



“D” “ We'll Meet Again - first chord D

“C” “ Cleaning Windows - first chord C

“C” “ Blackpool Rock - first chord C

“C” “ Lamp Post - first chord C

“C” “ Little Ukelele In My Hand - first chord C

“C” “ Bless 'em All - first chord C



Please let me know if you wish to add to this list, or join the entertainment group.

Some don't know the words and chords to “I Remember George” - by the late Stanley King, of Leeds - so here it is. It's a really great song!

I Remember George - by Stanley King.



Hello folks how do you do, I'm happy to be meeting you. I'd like to sing a song or



two, to remember George. Singing as he did before, that famous grin from jaw to



jaw. The audience would yell for more, yes I remember George.



Cleaning Windows, Mr Wu, Leaning On A Lamp Post too, T.T. Races, Hindoo



Man, songs for every Formby fan.



Memories of him remain, well It's Turned Out



Nice Again, and that Chinese Blues refrain, yes I remember George.



With a ukulele in his hand he'd top the bill, oh what a thrill. Syncopating with the



band, I hear him still and always will. Memories of him remain, of It's Turned



Out Nice Again. And that Chinese Blues refrain, Yes I remember George.



Oh Mr Wu, I'm telling you, that I remember George

NOW YOU CAN GET PRACTISING

 From **Derek Ball** of Crewe - In the 1930's I went with my parents to see a variety show at the local theatre. I remember my father laughing a lot when this funny man was singing. When I asked why he was laughing so much, he said, "Shush! I'll tell you later." He never did tell me.

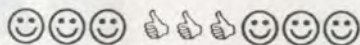
I was very young at the time and didn't know who George Formby was, but he must have made a great impression on me because I don't remember anything at all about the show except the man with the banjo - Just our George.

Here's a few ANAGRAMS for you to work on . . . Answers on page 19 - - cheat fair!

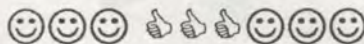
GEORGE'S SONGS

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. A Dry Hand Inmate | 4. Simple Nazi Iglo |
| 2. Nippy Leo Roared | 5. Aiding Randy Riff |
| 3. Lag My Choppy Uke | 6. Now A Bug On A Bug |

Did you spot our deliberate mistake? Well it was either a mistake or Derek can't spell.



A George Formby member named Jack
 Did a show, but they gave him some flak
 It sounded absurd, he forgot every word
 And finished up getting the sack



A George Formby member named Harry
 Did a show on the island of Barry
 The jokes that he told, were 70 years old
 Now Barry's as happy as Larry - Bum Bum



Demand for stand Laurels

IT'S not everyday you see two comedy legends taking a stroll through Liverpool city centre.

But these two are on the trail of the lonesome Pine Clearance Centre — leaving the owners of the newly re-opened shop delighted at demand for the life-size wood and resin figures of Hollywood icons.

GEORGE FORMBY

I had a conversation with a spokesman for the firm and he told me that he had received an order for a George Formby model. He is now looking for a model of George to copy from before going into production. The prices are around £80 for a 36" high model, and about £400 for a life size. Very reasonable!

I suggested that it should be made complete with a lamp post, which, naturally will incur extra cost.

Wouldn't it be great to have a full sized model of GF at our branch meetings? It could be transported to each of the branches and stood near the door to greet people as they come in. What do you think?

We Regret to Report the Loss of John Knight -

Most of the members who attend Blackpool will know John, of Stoke on Trent. He always stood close to the "ukuleles for sale room" and often held Gordon Markendale's latest prototype model. He had very high respect for Gordon's work.

Gordon offers his tribute:-

We are deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of our good friend John Knight, which occurred on the afternoon of Saturday, 2nd November.

John was a true friend, but more than that, he was a generous person, who gave freely of his time and advice to many, not least to myself and I know that many other GFS members will echo that sentiment. Sadly, many people only get the opportunity to say how much a person is valued at a time such as this.

We can only guess at the gap his loss will leave in the lives of Barbara, his wife of 40 years, and his son Mark and family. Our thoughts are very much with them all at this time. John will be sorely missed and a long time remembered. We hope to have a photo of John in the next issue.



George's Light is shining for you Ron.

Please spare a thought for a dear member of the GFS - Ron Holliday, of Doncaster. He is currently receiving treatment in the Weston Hospital, Sheffield. Some of you will remember Ron, an expert on the wooden uke, from the earlier meetings when he performed lovely ballad songs like Sally, Who's Sorry Now, and many more. He has a large repertoire of his type of sentimental songs, and also many Formby numbers. Ron lives for his playing and his dancing and he has played at many of the charity functions in his area. Our thoughts go to Ron and Helen who have been good friends to Eva and I for a number of years. Stan Evans

Your Thoughts Also - for Sale members, Ann Ratcliffe, who has recently been taken back into hospital, and Sheila Palmer, who is suffering with stomach problems. Let us hope that George's light is shining for all.



by Brian Edge

I have just put the clock back one hour which will doubtless plunge many people into the deep melancholia of winter. Not Formby followers of course as they are always bright and cheerful throughout the year.

William Willett (1856-1915) was the man responsible for this phenomenon, he campaigned for daylight saving as far back as 1909 but never lived to see it first adopted in 1916.

It may interest many readers, though they will find it hard to believe, that during the 42 years that I worked for the railway the many hundreds of thousands of clocks throughout the network were never 'officially' put back on any of these occasions - yet the trains still ran to time! Of course you don't believe it but nevertheless it is true! You see it was at one time considered to be harmful to a clock to wind its fingers backwards and as a result all railway staff, on such occasions, were instructed to move the fingers forward eleven hours! I told you it was true!

So my next job is to adjust the words to one of George's songs - 'Trailing Along in a Trailer.'

During summer time it goes:

In the barn the other night I was doing alright,
a dairymaid sat on my knee,
One kiss begun at a quarter to one,
and finished at half past three.....

but until the spring it will have to be :

In the barn the other night I was doing alright,
a dairymaid said "Howd' you do?"
One kiss begun at a quarter to twelve
and finished at half past two!

Grandson:- "Granddad, there's a man at the door with a pram"

Granddad:- "Tell him to push off"

Grandson:- "Granddad, there's a man at the door with one leg"

Granddad:- "Tell him to hop it."

Claire Moody - North Wales . . . From Chris Moody - Her Dad.

Dear Stan,

Just a few lines about "Annie" at the Clwyd Theatre which has just ended. It ran from the 5th to the 9th of November. Claire was cast as "Rose," one of the orphans, and had the opportunity to entertain with a very talented group of children.

The show received good reviews and played to full houses for the last five performances. It was a show with something for everyone, singing, dancing, comedy, a great orchestra and also two dogs who consumed large quantities of sweets and biscuits, and did all the wrong things, as soon as they got on stage - to the great amusement of the audience.

There was a cast of sixty with a similar number working in lighting, sound, front of house, make up, costumes etc. I worked with the stage crew for the week, which was like moving house every night for Pickfords. Besides scene changing my duties also involved curtains and props.

Thank you to the GFS members who have always encouraged Claire. It was great to see some of them at the Saturday show. Let us now get back to normal "Where's that Uke?" Yours Sincerely, Chris Moody.

P.S. A man walks into the doctors with a banana up his nose and one in each ear. "Doctor" he asks, "what is wrong with me?" "You're not eating properly." Said the doctor.

John Major -

I've just heard on the grape vine, that the Editor of the Syncopator, which is the Ukulele Society of GB magazine, is wondering why John Major hasn't replied to his letter. He wrote to the Prime Minister because he understands that he is a player of the ukulele.

He began his letter with:- Dear John, It has come to my attention that you are a bit of a "plonker!" If there is any truth in this rumour, then I would invite you to join our esteemed society. The Editor asked his members the question: "Where did I go wrong?" and he was most disappointed that the PM had not replied.

Well, I should think that it stands out a mile why he didn't reply. He must get thousands of letters from those who think he is a "plonker." As soon as he read the opening line he will have binned it - and I don't blame him.

The Editor wishes to thank all who contribute to producing the N. West Newsletter. It really is appreciated and I thoroughly enjoy opening the morning mail. Many, many thanks. Please keep sending 'em in.

Our November meeting went well in spite of the atrocious weather. As usual our friends from the Mid - Cheshire group were in attendance and they brought yodelling Fred Stephenson along with them to do his stuff. Jenny, Peter and young Adam Smith made their long journey to be with us - we really do appreciate the fact that our friends put themselves out to support our group. Many thanks to all who came - the branch can only be as successful as we ourselves make it. Altogether I counted over 40 people in the room - a marvellous turnout!

John Edmiston is naturally left - handed but always played his uke with his right hand in the conventional fashion. However he has decided in future to play left handed. He said his strum is much better but unfortunately he now has to re - learn the chords with his other hand! Keep at it John and you'll win in the end! Brian Harrison surprised us all with his progress - well done Brian.

During the interval and at young Brian Edge's instigation we telephoned Wilf Salt who was in the middle of his 76th birthday party - he was gobsmacked. We all sang happy birthday and wished him well. God bless you Wilf and many, many happy returns.

We recently had problems with our sound equipment and it became necessary to purchase a new amplifier which I'm delighted to say has resolved the matter.

Our next meeting on Friday 6 December is party night and everyone is invited. Food is being provided and a bottle of whiskey for the best festive fancy dress. Come on let's make it a night to remember! If you need directions give me a call on 01244 544799.

Dennis

Thanks for your report Dennis. That new sound equipment looks powerful - It's a good job Lesley is good at twiddling the knobs.

Liverpool Meeting

The 4th Anniversary was, without doubt, the best meeting we've ever held there. The place was packed and it was a case of "standing room only" for those who turned up late. We were pleased to receive Tony Thornton, who is the new Editor of the GFS Vellum magazine, and before kicking off we introduced him to all the members. As usual he received a thunderous round of applause from our happy crowd.

What a great thrill we had when we saw Brian Edge and the Crewe gang, Colin, Alan, Steve, Des and dear Mary Atkinson (84) coming through the door - what a treat!



TOM BAILEY the nicest looking lad in the Liverpool

As usual we had problems with the sound system for the first 15 minutes (I'm coming to the conclusion that this equipment needs to warm up before use) but from then on it was all down hill.

My philosophy is to always start the show with an expert, and who could be better to open up than Steve Hassall. He delighted the crowd with his two Formby songs and great uke playing. Des Redfern - who was struggling 18 months ago - is coming along really well with his entertaining. He will make an excellent player.

Young Harry Stanford (85 and still going strong) brought his uke/banjo and commandeered the stage for 6 hours with his 75 year old jokes. He then sang a song we had never heard before and finished with his own inspired composition, "If You Don't Like George Formby Matie," which included several raspberries. I am pleased to report that the raspberries came from Harry and not from the audience, who thoroughly enjoyed his show. We all get a special delight in watching Doris Raymond do her spot. She thoroughly enjoys bashing away on the uke/banjo. Our thanks to all who took part and especially Tom Bailey who works like a Trojan ringing round to his members and keeping them informed on what is happening.



A George Formby member named Nellie
Was singing and playing on tele
She shouted "Oh Lord - I've forgot every chord"
Then froze when her knees turned to jelly.

The star of the October meeting at Crewe was without doubt Colin Wood. Colin had a rough old night looking after the P.A. system, but he came out of it all with flying colours! He'd got more wires around him than you'd find at a Rolling Stones concert. He'd two singing mikes to look after, a uke mike, a radio mike, the main amplifier, a small amplifier, a strange cassette player (which played the tapes upside down to what he was used to) and two cases of backing tapes. In addition during the night he was handed backing tapes which were not wound back and one individual actually handed him tape boxes which had the wrong tapes inside! It wouldn't of course be right to mention that individuals name but his initials for the record are Brian Edge! Of course looking after the system is only part of Colin's job he has to set it all up and take it down after the concert. Well done Colin keep up the good work.

Fifty two attended and it was a mixed and varied concert. Des put on another good show for us and didnt he look smart? Presentation is an important feature in improving the spectacle of our concerts. Our audiences are growing all the time so it is good to see more members adding a few props to their act. What about Barri' Bowler's bowler, red shirt and black waistcoat? Very colourful. And what about Derrick Ball's Legionairres Hat and moustache? All these touches help to make the evening more enjoyable. So lets all try to build on it.

Whilst talking about Derrick wasn't the monologue that he had written himself funny? The bit about 'fleeing from that far flung fly and flee infested fort' was a real tongue twister.

Before our very eyes Stan Evans changed a handful of lottery tickets into ten pound notes - quite incredible - but like all his mates in the magic circle he wont tell anyone how its done!

All our regular uke players are improving their acts with each meeting but it must be said that Jonathan Baddeley's performance of 'Grandad's Flanelette Nightshirt' was superb. He really got into that song and put it over so well. It was without exception his best ever performance at Crewe.

Fred Stevenson took to the stage at Crewe for the first time and delighted the audience with his yodelling. Freds uke, a Ludwig Wendell Hall copy, sounded really great and what was more he made it himself!

All performers, our drummer Steve, the ladies in the kitchen, Alan and Des for the loan of equipment can give themselves a big pat on the back for jointly making it such a great night for everyone.

Make Sure you **Have Your Tuning Fork** . . . Police in the Crewe area are hunting a gang of confidence tricksters who are offering for sale electronic musical equipment. In response for an order for a Uke Tuner the con-men had the audacity to supply a tin of tuna fish instead. This matter was further compounded by the fact that the tin was 4 months beyond its 'eat before date! It is thought that the gang operate from the East Midlands area although the police have nothing concrete to go on at the moment. Forensic laboratories have the matter well in hand and Scotland Yard have been advised to exercise extreme caution when purchasing electronic tuners from other than reputable sources. Brian Edge.

Thanks for your report Brian. It all sounds a bit fishy to me.

Nice **Letter** from Trudy Lane of Canada. . .

Dear Stan, I was talking to you this morning inquiring if you still sold the George Formby books but apparently I was unlucky. I came across my copy a few years ago and it was like going back through time seeing George's face. As you know, my husband was a look-a-like, both in looks, speech, playing the uke-banjo and entertaining. This was during the war and before that as a young man.

I have seen many claiming to look like George but none as good as my husband. During the war we were followed once in the park by children who asked, "Is he George Formby?" To see him walk on the stage, banjo in his hand, and before he started to sing, the applause was deafening. He would sing to me when we were boating at Southport. He was also a juggler and he would balance a spinning plate, on a stick, on his chin and play the uke!



I am sorry to say that he passed away this year, but he left behind happy memories of laughter which would be hard to top after 48 years. He was 75.

I mentioned that the words carved on his grave marker are "The song is ended but the memory lingers on" and you told me that the words on George's grave are similar - isn't it strange considering that I had not heard or seen anything about that? Can you please send me a photo of George's grave. I will be grateful.

I have enclosed a copy of Beryl Formby's letter. She wrote to my mother-in-law who applied for permission to sing some of George's songs.

ROYAL STATION HOTEL NEWCASTLE-on-TYNE

Telegrams Nerotel Newcastle on Tyne
Telephone Newcastle Central 20781 (8 Lines)

25th. January. 1938

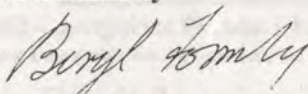
Mrs M.M. Lane.
Kent.

Dear Mrs Lane,

Mr Formby wishes me to thank you very much for your letter to hand also for the photograph. With regard to the song in question "When I'm Cleaning Windows" I am very sorry to say Mr Formby cannot give you permission to use this song at all as it is a copyright song and protected by the Associated Copyrights Ltd. And even if he granted you the said permission they would not and would come down on you like a ton of hot bricks.

Might I take this opportunity of wishing you the very best of luck with your new venture and I hope you get plenty of work for the Five Lanes. They certainly seem to be a nice bunch of children. Mr Formby joins me in sending all good wishes.

Yours Sincerely



Thank you Trudy for your interesting letters. Beryl was right of course, they couldn't grant permission directly as it would have to be cleared with the Licensing Authority. What a coincidence that the two graves have almost the same message. On George's grave the words are, "The Songs Are Ended But The Melodies Linger On." I've had a few requests lately for photos of the grave so I will take some as soon as the broken flag has been repaired - or replaced.

Talking about the **Formby Family Grave** I mentioned in the last Newsletter that the flagged floor of the grave had suffered some damage and I would write to inform George's brother, Ted Booth.

We'll Ted kindly replied with appreciation for having informed him and reported that he would ask a friend to call at the Warrington Cemetery to assess the damage. Will keep you up to date.

Answers to Derek Ball's Anagrams:-
1. Dan The Dairy Man, 2. Ordinary People, 3. Happy Go Lucky Me
4. Zip Goes A Million, 5. Frigid Air Fanny, 6. Wunga Bunga Boo
Did you spot the deliberate mistake? I'll bet he spelt it wrong.

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:- 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:- Nov (special £1.50p) 19th, Dec 17th. Adm 50p

Warrington Branch - Alliance Sports & Social Club Evans House,
Orford Lane, Warrington. - Stan Evans 01925 727102 Special Meetings Only.

For 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 December

So as George would say -

“GET CRACKING”

ReTtElSwEn RuOy TrOpPuS

A little song entitled:-

**Don't hit your mother with a shovel, it'll leave a dull
impression on her mind**

