

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 27

Vol. 3, No.3
Sept 1997



Specially Produced for
George Formby Fans
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Newsletter No.27 and what have we got this month. Well, sadly we report the death of Bill Logan who was the first President of the George Formby Society. Also great success for Alan Yates who won the Granada TV competition, and George's family grave has had an uplift. We also update the whereabouts of George's ukes. Now please read on . . .

Another **Buster** (or is it Boster?) at **Crewe** - by Brian Edge.

The South Cheshire (Crewe) Branch attracted 70 to the July meeting. Each month we try something new and this month our drummer and leading uke player, Steve Hassall, worked hard at improving our stage decor by reproducing posters and pictures of George to decorate the backdrop. What a big difference these have made. Along with the back lighting of the slash curtains, the stage looks very presentable and adds greatly to the enjoyment of our excellent audiences.

It was good to welcome Ken & Ann Ratcliffe, Ivy, Alice Cronshaw and Cyril and Sheila Palmer from the Sale Society. Ken very kindly donated a Laurel & Hardy book which was auctioned for society funds with excellent results. Thanks Ken, Wonderful!! Amongst the Guests was John Walley, a founder member of the GFS and Sam Bass, a retired ukulele artist. It was great to have them with us. John kindly brought along some of his GF memorabilia, photographs, press cuttings, programmes which were interesting indeed. Sam also signed a few autographs which was appreciated.

Smiling Dennis Lee got the show rolling with a real favourite "You Can't Love Two Girls At The Same Time" in his usual chirpy style and much to the delight of everyone. Dave Price & Arthur Newton made their stage debuts on the night and - didn't they do well! Thanks to all those who so generously gave prizes for our monthly raffle which this month generated £38 for society funds.

The Privet & Hedge Evergreens were again on stage as was our very own songwriter and great sport, Arnold Osborne, who improves his act each month.

Alan Chenery has pledged us a custom built theatre of our very own should he win the lottery! His offer is recorded here just in case he happens to win and subsequently suffers a touch of amnesia! Thanks Alan it's a nice thought.

Stan Evans gave us another sample of his "Tommy Cooper" style magic. This time doing a newspaper tearing ~~trick~~ miracle. I wonder why he doesn't play the uke at the same time. But now folks you must prepare yourselves to see Stan's big one - the notorious stage guillotine (head chopper off) which he will shortly perform before your very eyes.

Thanks Brian. Now I'm not quite ready with the "Head Chopper" just yet and, as I haven't done it before, naturally I feel very nervous about performing it. Anyway, irrespective of whether It's right or not it will definitely be performed at the September meeting. Now I'll need an assistant with a size 16s neck. - Or better still, get two for if something goes wrong. Can you take out a bit of insurance?

P.S. - Pick someone who's done his act.

The Formby Story - Part 16 by Stan Evans

In the earlier part of this series we reported that we would try to complete the full story of George Formby senior and return back to his life whenever new material came in. We are grateful to Paul Ogden of Wigan for supplying the following detail on the early years of the Formby family.

As already reported, George's father (James Booth) was born on the 4th October 1875 to Sarah Jane Booth at 26 Hodgson St, Ashton under Lyne. The following year Sarah married a Frank Lawler at St Peters Church, Ashton under Lyne on the 23rd of April 1876 but perhaps we will never know if Frank was James's father.



James gave the name of Frank Booth (deceased) as his father (Cotton mill mechanic) on his marriage certificate and at times called himself James Lawler Booth. He also mentioned two parents in part 10 of the Formby Story.

In 1881 the family was at 106 Hill St, Ashton U Lyne. Frank was the head, aged 24 and classed as a bricklayer born in Ashton. Sarah was 23 and a cotton weaver born also in Ashton. James was aged 5 and registered as a scholar.

In 1871 (4 years before the birth of James) 26 Hodgson St was occupied by Sarah Booth, (James's grandmother) widow, aged 52, charwoman and laundress, born Yorkshire. The others in the family were William, son, aged 20, Thomas, aged 26, Elizabeth, aged 25. All the children were cotton workers and Sarah Jane, aged 13, was registered as a cotton setter. She was 17 when she gave birth to James.

Next door, 28 Hodgson St, lived James's great-grandmother and family - Mary Booth, widow aged 74, born Yorkshire, with her daughter Mary Ann who was married to Joseph Walker.

It is difficult to understand why young James suffered as a child. He had many close relations living in the same street and yet he was sadly neglected and many times forced to sleep on the doorstep.

THE HOY FAMILY - 20 Actons Yard, Wigan.

1881 - Eliza's father, George Hoy aged 40, Horsebreaker, born Suffolk, Louisa Hoy, wife, aged 25, born Liverpool and children: Georgina Hoy, aged 6, John William, aged 4 and Eliza Ann (George's mother) was aged 20 months.

More next month on the Formby family.

Bill Logan. Charles Stewart rang to say that

Bill Logan passed away very peacefully on Monday 11th August. Bill was the very first GFS President, in 1961, and held the position for 14 years.

In 1961 He was successful in bidding for the majority of George's ukes at the Formby auction after George's death. He held these ukes until around 1991 when he started selling them off to GFS members. Bill was in the motor trade until his retirement and made claims - which were often disputed - that he was a close associate of George's.

Bill supported the Warrington with the loan of Formby memorabilia and George's ukes.



Along with his Secretary, Sylvia Kennaugh, Bill put a tremendous amount of effort into running the society and some of the old established members claim that these were the best years.

The first GFS meeting was held at the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool, on the 16th of September 1961 - six months after George's death. This was after a notice, sent in by George Wilson, had appeared in The Stage Magazine. At the first meeting Bill was elected President.

CHARLES STEWART WRITES . .

I met Bill and Sylvia Kennaugh many many years ago - just over a year after the GFS had been formed. Sylvia charmed me with her welcome and soon Bill and I discovered we had a common business interest in motor cars.

Over the years Eve & I came to be very close to Bill and Sylvia, we learned all the background and became part of the history of the GFS. There would have been no GFS without Bill and Sylvia, between them they organised and held it together in its formative years. Time has moved on and an era ended. Bill is joining Sylvia and George and we shall go on enjoying their legacy.

JOHN GUY WRITES . .

I remember Bill very well as I was one of the founder members who turned up at the very first meeting September 1961. He was good President who soon put his foot down whenever the Press ridiculed our society. He bought ukes from the 1961 auction which were meant to be paid for by the GFS but, alas, this was never done. The GFS was run smoothly when Bill was in charge.

Wigan Pier - Another Great Success! Our thanks to all who took part in our grand day out at Wigan Pier on Sunday 3rd August. Once again the weather was kind to us, although not as sunny as last year, and the crowds were delighted with our turn out. Jeffrey Formby Booth and Christine came from Milton Keynes to support us and George's niece, Geraldine, turned up to join in with all the songs. She enjoyed every minute and felt proud that her uncle was still remembered.

HOPE WE DON'T MISS ANYONE OUT

Our thanks to all who played a part and especially to Dennis Lee for organising the PA equipment and to Kevin Blanchfield for the loan of the Union Jack Flag, which took pride of place, and Steve Hassall for supplying and playing the drums. Also to Brian Edge, Pam & Jon Baddeley, Andy Eastwood & Family, Des Redford, Auntie Mary, Charles & Eve Stewart, Colin Wood, Fred Stevenson, Alan Chennery, Geoff Shone, Carl Basford, Gareth Sumner and last but not least, Jim Bramwell who stood at the back and kept them all in order. Thanks to all the ladies who came along to support - always appreciated.

It was nice to see old established GFS member Gerry Mawdsley in the crowd who, due to his work commitments, has difficulty in attending many of the meetings. As usual we passed the collection bucket round to the crowd who were very pleased to give. Exactly £100 was donated which was divided among two charities - £40 to the British Legion Fund and £60 to the Alder Hey Children's Hospital.

Brian Edge says . . . No! it's not Bob Greaves off Granada TV it's our very own Stan Evans, the North-West leading George Formby aficionado. Anyone would think Stan was showing off his magnificent new multicoloured waistcoat, but he is really explaining that the tailor of his George Formby Society blazer is none other than Moss Bros. Mind you it's a pity he has to carry that bucket around with him these days but it seems he couldn't find his old tin hat!



Wistaston Memorial Hall "Duck Derby" - Don't forget! It will be held in the Recreational Field near the hall on Saturday afternoon on the 6th September from 2pm. It's a FUN EVENT where we play our ukes to entertain the public, hold a bric-a-brac stall to raise funds, have a picnic and hopefully have a winning duck!

ITEMS WANTED

It's a great event but we do need your support. So please have a good root around and if you wish us to collect the items please ring Crewe 69836 and it will be arranged. And please come along on the day.

George's Grave

Just popped down to the Warrington Cemetery and - What A Surprise!! George's family grave has been renovated, repaired and completely cleaned up. It now stands out brilliant white among all the others and it's certainly worth a trip to see it.

For anyone wanting to visit:- The Cemetery lies on the main Manchester to Warrington A57 and about 1 mile from the town centre. The cemetery main gates are situated on a set of traffic lights and opposite a pub (which keeps changing names) and a car showroom. You can usually park your car outside the gates. Walk through the gates and immediately turn left. Take the left fork and then the right fork and you will bump into it.



Talking about George coming in very handy

When the Warrington Exhibition was on we received a lot of publicity on TV and on one occasion I remember driving into the town centre car park to park my car. "Oh," said the man in the kiosk, "It's the George Formby man - drive on."

Free parking on George - how's that? Stan Evans.

Did you know? The cost of joining the GFS in 1961 was £1.1s.0d per year (£1.05) - At the very first meeting (Sept 16th 1991) Frank Formby (George's brother/Jeffrey's father) turned up and within minutes he was bashing out numbers like "I Could Make A Good Living At That" The excited crowds gathered round with their tape recorders and he played until the early hours of the morning. - Please remember that very few could play in those days so it was a treat for them to hear a professional artist like Frank.

Send in an article and a self photo

Wigan Pier - Did you know that it is licensed for marriages? - Well it is and what's more, the ceremony will be held in the George Formby Lecture Theatre, and, - the title "George Formby Lecture Room" will be included on the Marriage Certificate. Soon they will be advertising "Get married here and have George Formby's name on your certificate."



Well at least it's a start, but I still think they've got it wrong. George doesn't connect with Lectures or Marriages. Any room dedicated to him has got to be a FUN HOUSE - with slapstick comedy, music hall stage and film fun where people can dress up like Charlie Chaplin, Laurel & Hardy, George etc. Kids could be invited to sing comedy songs like Gracie Fields or do the Hylda Baker sketch or play the part of her stooge. There's tons of old material to go at.

Set film scripts could be used and visitors would be invited to play some of the parts, being filmed with a dummy camera - which is actually a video camera. There's 'no limit' to what could be organised in Wigan Pier using their own George Formby as a centre piece.

Wigan Pier already put on mock plays, with real actors, so it would be no problem for them to stage events from old black & white films. In an old Victorian classroom they stage a show depicting the severity of punishment to the kids who misbehaved, and in another room they stage a mock death in the home where friends and relatives turn up to give their condolences to the widow. It's well worth visiting.

Keep George's Name Alive!

George played a very active part in entertaining the troops abroad. He and Beryl were among the last to leave when the Germans drove us out of Dunkirk and, as promised, they were among the first to arrive back after "D" Day. So, as Formby fans, we should keep their names alive and active in memory of the war work they did.

"D" DAY JUNE 1998

So I'm suggesting that we could organise a coach trip to the battlefields of France if anyone is interested. It's a very moving experience. Please let us know if you are interested.



Blackpool Night by Eve & Charles Stewart.

What a great meeting we had at the Wainwright on a 'sweltering' August 9th. We were happy to welcome friends from Crewe. Brian & Connie Edge rounded up three car loads from their successful Society and came to join us. Secretly we wondered if it was Mary's night out with her 'toy boys' - - - - only kidding. We don't know where Brian dug up so many songs about Blackpool, it was amazing, he must have made some of them up, but terrific stuff! With six players in the party, they gave the evening a real boost. Many thanks to all.

It was lovely to have Cyril & Sheila Palmer and Alice Cronshaw with us again, all looking well. Cyril, who was in excellent voice, gave us some wonderful old classics. We were delighted to welcome the Cunningham family from Doncaster. Young Richard gave us a spirited performance on his uke, supported by his lovely small sister who certainly wanted to show her appreciation by climbing on to the stage and expressing obvious enjoyment.

The young ones were well represented by Gareth Sumner from Crewe who gave us an amazing performance of versatility, and Francis Collins playing a polished Ukulele medley. Well done and good luck to all our young enthusiasts. We would also like to add our personal congratulations to Alan Yates on his recent success.

The ladies did us well with lady players well represented. Carol Middleton doing a superb job as MC in Alan's absence - Thank you Carol. Mary gave us some wonderful solos and joined in all the choruses along with Connie.

Many thanks to our regular loyal supporters and everyone who helps in any way to make our monthly get together an ongoing success.

Liverpool Harry & Lottie couldn't make it to the last meeting as Harry was under the weather, but I think he was saving himself for Blackpool. Anyway he's a tough nut so he'll come bouncing back.

TURNING OUT NICE AGAIN

George's light has certainly been shining for Steve Raymond, who has recently been receiving hospital treatment, he looked like a new man, and sounded in very good voice as he belted out a couple of numbers. We are very pleased for you Steve and sincerely hope that the past is well and truly behind you. Well we didn't have many at Liverpool but it was an excellent night and we always enjoy our meeting. We missed Harry's 75 year old jokes!



Pleased to report that **Cliff Royle** of Frodsham, has volunteered to keep us supplied with articles for the Newsletter. Cliff was born in 1922, in Flixton, and came up the hard way. He worked for a small engineering company during the war and during this period he frequently came into contact with T S Lowry, the artist of "Matchstalk Men" fame. On many occasions he did his Fire-watching duty with him and found him to be quite an odd character. This was when he was unknown as an artist.

Since leaving school, Cliff's main pastime has been in athletic activities; long distance walking, marathon running, cycling and fell walking. He still does the latter two and also thinks of himself as a bit of a writer and has had one book published about 'Village Life in the 20s and 30s'. Another is due shortly on '10 miles walk from Frodsham' - making up a 100 mile challenge. He appreciates the tremendous support given to him by his wife, Margaret, and his son.

Cliff gives his own story of how he became involved in the uke: "My interest started when I was involved in the Black & White Minstrel Shows at our local mission. I had a small wooden uke which I attempted to play. There was no tuition around so I only learned three chords. It was not until the Formby Exhibition at Warrington that my interest was again aroused. Then as a result of my contact with Stan Evans I was hooked. Well I never forgot those three chords but my problem is remembering the words and other dots that go with them.

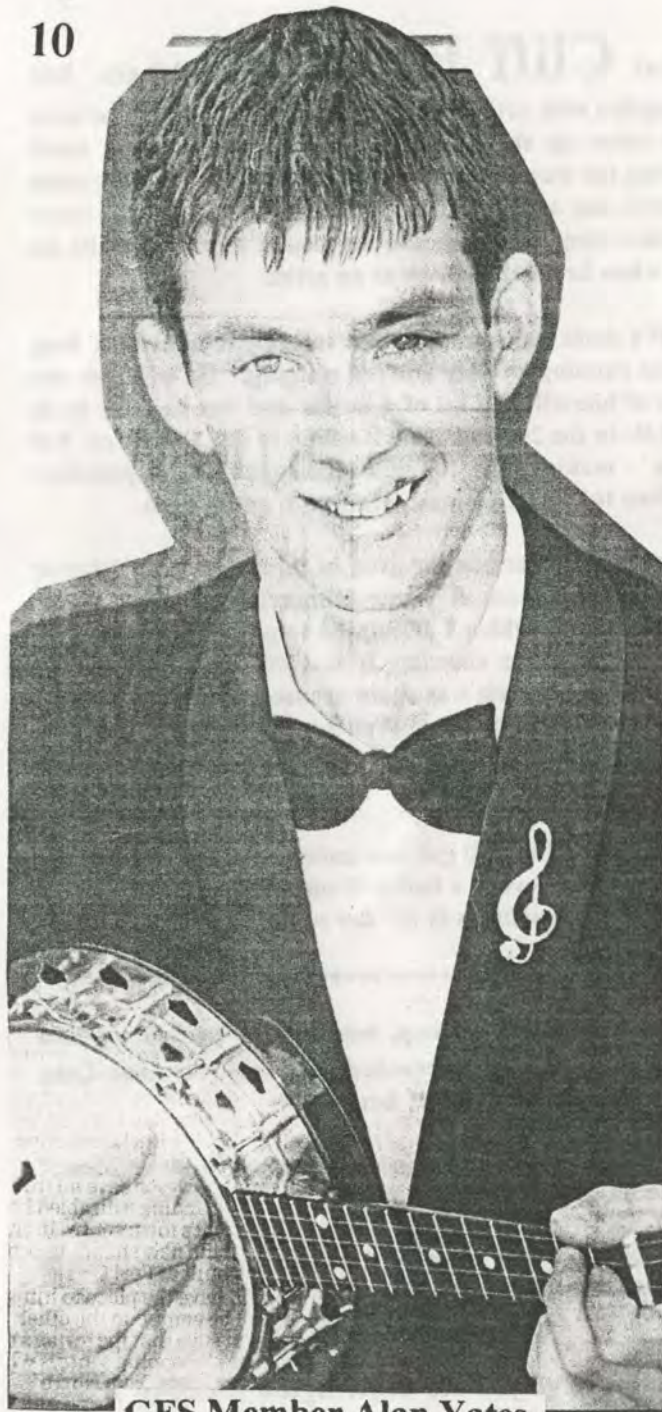
I might be in my mid-seventies but I've still got two ambitions; One is to do the split stroke and the other is to make love to a Police Woman in uniform."
Thank you Cliff. Now these two ambitions in the last paragraph. I take it that you don't mean at the same time!

Colin Wood, from the Crewe group, works at a Boat Yard and recently, while he was working, he was approached by a lady, Mrs Sue Cole, who told him that she had a lot to thank him for, because: -

"One day I was feeling extremely low as I had just lost my car in an accident." She went on to say, "The day after, I came down to the Boat Yard and you were singing your head off with George Formby songs. This reminded me of the days when my father took me to the theatre to see George, and it brought back very pleasant memories for me and helped me to forget my problems."

Very nice story Colin and thanks to Brian Edge for sending it in.

Raffle Prizes will be appreciated for the Warrington Meeting which will be held on Friday 31st October. As it is leading up to Armistice Day the function will be in aid of the British Legion.



**GFS Member Alan Yates
of Fleetwood**

GRANADA TV - Thank Goodness - the old songs are not dead! About 20 calls came in to say that some young man, playing a uke banjo, was taking part in the Granada TV Talent Competition and, had I any idea who it was? After a few calls to Granada it was discovered that it was Alan Yates of Fleetwood, one of the young brilliant GFS players.

Came the finals afternoon (on Blackpool beach) and the majority of contestants sang the usual modern stuff and rubbish, but not Alan (who was full of a very heavy cold) he bashed out "Lamp Post" with tons of Formby pride and was voted the winner by the TV viewers. The prize is a Two Week Cruise, for four, and a chance to entertain on board ship.

Alan's mother, Marilyn, was dead chuffed! She said, "The phone calls and letters have been coming in and the newspapers have to taken photos. We're all very pleased."

Well we are pleased also and I personally remember Alan, with my grandson Lyndon, and Leslie Thomas - all about 10 years of age - going out in the streets of Blackpool and doing a spot of busking. At that time Alan could only play one tune and that was "Little Brown Jug" - so - Hasn't he done well!!! We are sure that Alan, who is always immaculately turned out, will do well in his career and wish him the very best.

BLACKPOOL GAZETTE Wed August 6th 1997

When he's not stacking shelves in the super market where he works, Alan Yates dreams of a more glamorous career in the world of Showbiz. Now Alan hopes that dream is a step nearer reality after winning a prestigious TV talent show.

Alan, of Coniston Ave, Fleetwood, was voted top of the pops by Granada viewers when they watched eight young hopefuls bid for stardom on the screen. And he has won a £4,500 cruise in which he will be part of the onboard cabaret - for his entertaining impersonation of George Formby.

Alan turned the clock back to woo the judges in the heat - and then 7,000 people voted for him in the final for his rendition of the Formby classic Leaning On A Lamp Post. Alan is taking his parents, Brian and Marilyn Yates and his girlfriend Michelle Green of Elmwood Drive, Thornton to help to enjoy the star prize.

Alan started to play the guitar and ukulele at the age of nine encouraged by his uncle, Steve Helme of Fleetwood's Hodder Avenue, who has appeared as a singer, guitarist and George Formby impersonator. Now Alan is following in his footsteps and hoping to break into big time. He said "It was great to win, I'm over the moon and hope to go into show business full-time.

Nice little Story from Jeffrey Formby Booth - George's great niece, Caron, hates the sound of the uke banjo and has always avoided publicising the fact that she is related to our hero. However she recently went for an interview for the job of assistant librarian and at the interview the man asked if she had any leaning towards playing musical instruments. She declared that she was interested but with no particular dedication and with that the interviewer told her that he is a ukulele fanatic. "Oh", she said, "My mother's uncle is George Formby!"
So George comes in very handy at times.

The Milton Keynes super sleuth has also informed me that Janet Hawkins has just bought Dave a new pair of Hush Puppies and - guess what? - The pup has just eaten one of them.

N Wales report by Cliff Royle We were again supported by the Crewe members, a goodly number of visitors, and Andy Eastwood and his parents. We were pleased to welcome new member Brian Wright who we soon hope to have on stage. Andy is an excellent ambassador for the society, always ready to help and join in. After the Friday night meeting he appeared at Sheffield on the Saturday, and then at Wigan Pier on Sunday. His final duty was to visit his Grandmother.

The Crewe and N Wales members excelled themselves with their varied repertoires and Brian Harrison performed well having taken a new lease of life after going to the Blackpool Convention; and Gerald Jones came up with another of his unusual features; a superb mime of Blackpool Rock.

Once again Stan Evans produced a Miracle, and after a lot of kidology about the trick not working, finally managing to get his four balls doing the right thing.

Perhaps the highlights of the evening were the efforts of our two very young members; Frank Murphy (aged 6) who did a wartime song and later brought tears to many eyes with his rendering of "Because I'm Shy"; and Stephen Ensall who played a couple of Formby songs accompanied by Stan Evans and Andy Eastwood. It was nice to see these two young lads (not Stan & Andy) play and be supported by their families.

M/C Dennis Lee, who lead a practice Thrash for the Wigan Pier event, appreciates all the help given by his wife Leslie and other members of the Branch. Anyone wishing to help will be welcome to do so.

Would anyone wishing to include an article in the Newsletter please contact me either at the Branch or on 01928 731088.

Dennis has just informed us that the British Legion is soon to have a face lift, but this will not affect our meetings. The September meeting will be a "Pie & Peas Night" so bring along your guests.

ARTS DAY CARNIVAL

Four of our members recently took part in the carnival in Castle Park, Frodsham, on a beautiful Summers day, playing to a good crowd. The folks around Frodsham certainly enjoy the Formby style of entertainment. Cliff Royle. *Thank you Cliff for the article. I'm glad you told me about the British Legion having a 'face lift' because I thought it was Dennis who was having one. Well, it's badly needed - the Legion I mean!*

Last Month we publicised the Jolson, Formby and Crosby show at the Southport Arts Centre - Starring Ken Goodwin as George - every Mon. night till 15th Sept. Well, Bill Pope rang to report that the show is a disappointment.

From **Charles Stewart** after the funeral of Bill Logan.

Bill died on the 11th August and thus ended a glorious chapter in the GFS. There would have been no lasting society without his personal commitment and energy to perpetuate his favourite entertainer.

His daughter, Lindy, informed us on the following day of his peaceful departure at his home in Carlisle. Eve & I attended his funeral on Friday to pay our respects to a long standing friend. The GFS was also represented by John Walley and Gill, John Guy and Tony Thornton. We enjoyed the hospitality of his lovely family and renewed acquaintances with many of his local friends.

Bill Logan - left background - leading a uke session in the very early days of the GFS. John Walley stands on the left of the picture and John Guy is at the centre rear. The loss of Bill means the end of an era for the society.



Statue for Hylda Baker - Show-Business charity, Comic Heritage, is to unveil a blue plaque in honour of comedienne Hylda Baker on Sunday 17th August which is being sponsored by Blackpool's flamboyant entrepreneur and philanthropist Basil Newby.

Hylda died in 1986. She spent the last years of her life in Brinsworth House, the entertainment artists home. The unveiling ceremony will be performed by Sheila Ferguson, a star of Last Of The Summer Wine, who recently brought her one woman Hylda Baker Show to Blackpool.



DON'T FORGET THE NEWSLETTER

Harry Wilcox of Blackburn rang. Harry has always been a very keen fan of George's and has fond memories of him - and a sad one too.

Way back in the war years, when he was around seven years of age, his mother bought him a cowboy outfit and a six shooter to go with it. One day, dressed up in his outfit, feeling a bit cocky, he strolled along the street looking for trouble when suddenly he spotted a huge crowd gathered outside his local shop. "Great" he thought, and proceeded to sort 'em out. When he got to the centre of the crowd he crashed straight into George & Beryl who were campaigning for "Salvage for the War Effort." He immediately ambled up to George and told him to 'stick em up' to which George gave him a clip on the ear and a message to go and get some salvage. He ran home to his mum who sent him back with a load of old newspapers to give to George.

Some many years later, he was walking through Blackburn market when he spotted a cardboard box full of old cine films on a market stall. He was always interested in films so he asked the price. The lady told him that he could have them for thirty shillings (£1.50) and eventually reduced them down to a bargain price of fifteen shillings (75p).

After giving it loads of thought, and not knowing what the films were, he turned the offer down and decided to hold on to his money. A few days later an article appeared in the Blackburn newspaper giving the story of how a box of George Formby home cine films had been found on a market stall. Some were black and white and others were in colour. He couldn't believe his bad luck.

Even today, Harry soon becomes upset when he thinks of the joys he has received from George and finds it emotionally difficult watching "George's Friday Show" on video - George's Farewell.

Good story Harry!

Peniffordd Pie & Peas Night . . .

Just received a message from Dennis Lee to confirm that the next meeting on September 5th will be a Special Pie & Peas Night . . . and . . . you're not going to believe this, but . . . the PIE & PEAS ARE FREE! So what do you think about that? Can't wait to get there but I hope they put a vegetarian pie at one side because I don't eat meat. We look forward to a great night.

At the last Peniffordd meeting the full stage was made use of and what a difference it made. It looked very professional with the stage curtains and GFS banner.

Any ideas on what you'd like printed in the Newsletter?

Wigan Pier make attempts to honour George but they don't appear to have much idea on how to go about it. Some years ago - after the Warrington Exhibition - they named a lecture room after George and called it the George Formby Suite. Now they have conjured up special meals in their restaurant and called it The George Formby Medley, under various selections like: The Bridgeman Banquet, Ryland's Repast, Swan Meadow Selection, Mansel's Choice or Eckersley's Fare.

For £4.50 per head you can have Thai style Satay Sticks and Peanut Sauce, Crudites & Dips and Assorted Danish Pastries.

Or for £7 per head you can have a variety of Quiche Tartlets, Honey & Sesame Seed, Fresh Samosas and Gala Pie & Pickles.

Or you can have the top of the range for £11,50 which consists of Quiche Lorraine, Sugar Baked Ham, Special Liver Pate with Melba Toast and Fresh Pineapple filled with Savoury Rice.

Well I can assure you that none of the above would have tickled the taste buds of our George. He was a Fish & Chips and Woodbine lad and if he'd been with us at Wigan Pier he would have opted for: Mr Wu's Wigan Pie Whoppers or Auntie Maggie's Meat Chops or Blackpool Rock Beefy Burgers with a Mug of Tea, Bread & Butter and for no more than £2.50 per head.

I wonder if Wigan never recognised George because he didn't come up to their standards? - Hope not.

Head-banging!!!! Eva & I were invited recently to 70th Birthday party and looked forward to going. Now you would have imagined that for a 70th Birthday party the plan would be start the night with a few Max Bygraves type songs and gradually build up to a bit of Disco stuff followed by the heavy metal headbanging stuff at the end, when we'd gone home.

Not this one!!! There was a very loud "FANFARE" which rattled everybody's brains - "NOW HAVE WE GOT A SURPRISE FOR YOU!!! WE ARE STARTING WITH NONE OTHER THAN THE 'SPICE GIRLS' and we want you all in the middle of the floor." You have never heard such noise in your life. It was dreadful and nobody could speak for the loud dust-bin clanging din that they were creating. Within seconds we'd made a "Sharp Exit" into the silence of the night and escaped to the Alliance Club where we heard the tinkling of "Who's Sorry Now." We were Sorry we didn't go there in the first place.

Hold your hand up if you haven't written to the Newsletter yet.

Where are George's Accredited Ukes'

LOT No.	1 st Owner	2 nd Owner	3 rd Owner
441 Fernandez Wood	W. Logan GFS		
442 Dulcet Wood	W Logan GFS		
443 Large Wooden	McKnight	John Walley GFS	
444 Black Wooden	Mrs Welch	G Johnson	
445 Fernandez	Hyman		
446 Small Wooden	D Naylor GFS		
447 Baby Gibson	W Logan GFS	M Metcalfe GFS	A Randall GFS
448 Gibson Concert	W Logan GFS	Les Moore GFS	
449 Dallas "C"	Frank Formby	W Logan GFS	A Randall
450 Dallas "D"	Pat Howson	Rex Blaker	S Miller GFS
451 Abbott	W Logan	Bob Norton GFS	
452 Will Van Allen	Pat Howson	Rex Blaker	Stan Evans GFS
453 Melody Uke	Turner		
454 Baby Gibson	Pat Howson	G Nicholas	Frank Formby
455 Ludwig	Pat Howson	Rex Blaker	S Miller GFS
456 Angelus Mini	Pat Howson	Mongomery GFS	
457 Gibson Concert	W Logan GFS	T Wallin GFS	
458 Dallas "E"- -Gold plate/Dress Guard	J Crowther		
459 Dallas "E" Gold Plate	Frank Formby	W Logan GFS	Stan Evans GFS

These instruments were entered in the Auctioneer's Catalogue (J Entwistle & Co) for the 21st July 1961 auction at Beryldene. Bill Logan reported that Pat Howson removed lots 450, 452, 455 and 455a and sold the first three in Sotheby's auction. These were purchased by Rex Blaker, a keen Formby collector who suffered a tragic death. On Wednesday the 7th June 1989 they were sold at the Eadon Lockwood & Riddle, Sheffield Auction along with other Formby memorabilia owned by Blaker.

It is very important that we keep a record of the whereabouts of George's ukes so if anyone has details of any movement please contact the editor of the N.West Newsletter. The ukes we are trying to trace are Lots 444, 445, 453, 456 and 458.

Have you ever thought? If we didn't have Venetian Blinds it would be curtains for all of us!

Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today - 'cos if you like it today you can do it again tomorrow!

4th Owner5th Owner6th OwnerM Metcalfe
G Harrison

Stan Evans GFS

Bob Norton GFS

W Logan GFS
G Harrison

G Harrison

J Formby Booth

Bob Norton GFS

GEORGE FORMBY SENIOR

NOW I'M NOT SURE OF THE DATE BUT AN OLD NEWS ARTICLE CAME IN - SUNDAY CHRONICLE - PANTOMIME ANNUAL, WITH AN ADVERT FOR "JACK & JILL" PLUS "JOHN TILLER'S PEACE OFFERING" STARRING GF SENIOR AT THE TOP OF THE BILL. IT WAS STAGED AT THE OLYMPIA, LIVERPOOL AND HAD A CAST OF 200 INCLUDING 48 TILLER GIRLS.

THE DATE MUST BE AROUND 1918 AS IT MENTIONS "VICTORY" AND "MEN WHO HAD DONE THEIR BIT."



"Brian, wouldn't it be better to get the telly fixed?"

Craig Tinsley
rang to say that he had just been reading the in-flight magazine at the airport and was dismayed to read that the uke/banjo is classed as a "mongrel among ukuleles." Well what do you think about that?
More on the subject when the magazine comes in. I'll bet they didn't think that when George was alive.

Ken Ratcliffe writes in - Russell Grant, the TV

Astrologer, has purchased George's house which he thought belonged to George & Beryl. However, the house deeds have never included the names of G&B. Prior to them moving in, the house belonged to Josef Locke who was having problems with the tax collector. It is understood that the debt was £12,550 which was paid for by the Formbys. Although they lived in the house, no transaction place. Perhaps it was for tax reasons. We may never know.

Thanks for your article Ken but I'm reasonably sure that the house would belong to G & B as I can't see Beryl not getting the contract all signed and sealed. Why their names didn't appear on the title deeds has got me beat.

TAKEN FROM THE FRANK RANDLE BOOK and sent in by Ken Ratcliffe.

Joseph McConicle (Josef Locke) was named by Frank Randle when they were playing in "Randles Scandals" at the Grand Theatre, Blackpool. Frank met him at the stage door and asked him his name. When he told him, Frank advised him to change it. The stage door was 'locked' so he suggested the surname of 'Locke' which Josef has used ever since.

Thank you Ken, these stories of how these big stars got their names are very interesting. Some many years ago there was a music hall comedy star named Nosmo King who got his name from the inside of a railway carriage door - No Smoking! Does anyone know of any others? Send em in.

Another Warrington Special - Coming up

and just before Armistice Day so it a good opportunity to raise some funds for the British Legion. The event will be held at the Alliance Club - which will be overflowing with loads of Red White and Blue on the night. Again we will be inviting the grand old veterans who fought in the first world war and, of course, George Formby, Gracie Fields and others will be there to entertain. This will be a similar night to the last, and, to save the hiccup we had last time, we will apply for a bar extension.

The theme on the night will revolve around the British Legion so there will be plenty of war songs - so get practising with Roll Out The Barrel, Kiss Me Goodnight Sergeant Major, You Are My Sunshine, Run Rabbit Run, Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye and many others.

At the last Warrington Meeting **Brian Edge** heard considerable groaning coming from the cubicle in the Alliance gents toilet. He thought "Poor fellow" and being very concerned he said, "are you all right?" To which came the reply, "Yes I'm OK I'm just tuning my bagpipes."

So make a note in your Diary

Friday 31st October

Concert Groups

- It is essential that we get down to working on organising concert groups so that we can provide entertainment whenever called on. A set script has been produced and members are requested to learn this so that - if required - they can step in at any of the concerts.

Script One is . . . "D" Tuning - We Remember George, Mr Wu, Little Ukulele, "C" Tuning - Windows, Blackpool Rock and Lamp Post.

Script Two is . . . "D" Tuning - We Remember George, War-time Medley, Middle East. "C" Tuning - Bless em All, Lamp Post and We'll Meet Again.

To save the embarrassment we had at the Granada TV Studio a practise run should be held at each of the meetings. How's about it organisers?

Joe McCaffrey's cartoon is very appropriate!



"IM PLAYIN' 'WINDOW CLEANER'! - WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING?"

Crewe Practise Nights - Wistaston Memorial Hall 7.30pm.

This is getting more popular and the average attendance is about 14. These nights help players to gain confidence and with mutual helpfulness which is ever present, members are able to develop their playing skills, microphone and stage technique. The sessions cost £1 to cover the hall rent. Further sessions have been arranged as follows:-

Monday 11th August and Monday 1st September.

N. West Meetings and Future Dates

North Wales Branch - British Legion, Penyffordd (10 miles from Chester) Every first Fri in the Month. Tel Dennis Lee on 01244 544799 Adm 50p

Blackpool - Wainwright, Hornby Rd, B/pool - Every 1st Sat. in the month - Tel Eve Stewart on 01253 768097 - Future Dates: Sep 6th, Sep 27th (NOTE DATE CHANGES IN SEPT. - NONE IN OCT. 1st Nov, 6th Dec. Adm £1 with Buffet. All are made very - very - very - very - very welcome.

Liverpool - Broadgreen Conservative Club - Every 2nd Friday in the month - Ring Tom Bailey on 0151 228 9769 Players Urgently Wanted

Sale - Woodheys Club, 299 Washway Rd, Sale - Dates are now settled - EVERY THIRD FRIDAY - Ring Ken Ratcliffe on 0161 430 8290. SALE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT Adm now £1.

Crewe Wistaston Memorial Hall - Ring Brian Edge on 01270 69836 Future dates - Fri 26th Sept, Fri 24th Oct, Tues 25th Nov, Thur 18th Dec. Adm 50p.

Warrington Alliance Sports & Social Centre, Evans House, Orford Lane, Warrington - Stan Evans on 01925 727102 - SPECIAL MEETINGS ONLY

Werrington Branch (Near Stoke) at the Werrington Village Hall - Every 2nd Thursday in the month, Ring Bill Turner on 01782 304858. Future dates - Sept 11th, Oct 9th, Nov 13th, Dec 11th.

To receive the N. West Newsletter by post please send a cheque for 50p + 25p pp. (or £2.25 for 3 months) payable to Stan Evans - Address on front cover. Organisers can order a minimum lot of 10 copies for £3 plus 60p postage and you are welcome to sell them to help raise funds.

Deadline for next issue - 18th Sept

So as George would say -

“Get Cracking”

Support Your Newsletter

LATE NEWS

Just Received a card from young Joseph Collins from Florida. He is having treatment with the Dolphins with good results.

