

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY Newsletter 42

Vol. 4, No.6
December 1998

LONDON
PALLADIUM

6.10 TWICE NIGHTLY 8.45 • MANTINEE WEDS. at 2.40
VAL PARNELL presents

GEORGE FORMBY
IN OUR BIG AUTUMN SHOW
FUN AND THE FAIR ★

BILLY COTTON & HIS BAND

★ **TERRY-THOMAS** ★

★ **DEEP RIVER BOYS**

ALAN & BLANCHE LUND ★

THE MATHURINS **TED & FLO VALLET** **GILLIAN LYNNE**
AUDREY JEANS **PALLADIUM BALLET**

DECOR BY CHARLES READING STAGED BY CHARLES HENRY DANCER BY PAULINE GRANT

Specially Produced for
George Formby Fans
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Welcome to Newsletter No. 42

Well it's been another grand month in the N. West and we seem to be attracting new members to our meetings. Liverpool have welcomed quite a number of new faces recently and Crewe & Penyffordd are very pleased with the response from the radio shows, newspaper articles and Summer fetes etc. These have certainly helped to fill the rooms. We are still negotiating with a trip to the Isle of Man and hope to have more news later.

Just when we'd given up all hope for Southern Ireland, Geoff Shone comes up with a hotel with rooms available right in the spot where we are going - Youghal!

So all aboard for the Trip To Southern Ireland

(From Friday July 30th to Tuesday 3rd August)

Well it's took a lot of ringing around but finally we are set for another excellent holiday and this time we are going to Youghal (pronounced "Yawl") which is a very pleasant, old fashioned, historic type, seaside town close to Cork. Whilst there we will be taking part in the Youghal Busking Festival which is a well known annual event. Usually they include a Busking Competition but due to 1999 being a major Anniversary it wont be included on this occasion.

If you're Irish



Oh Danny boy

Does your mother come from Ireland

Youghal is situated on the main road from Rosslare and Waterford (known for the glass/pottery exhibition) to Cork, lying at the mouth of the beautiful River Blackwater. Youghal's most famous citizen was Sir Walter Raleigh whose home "Myrtle Grove" is still lived in today. Apart from the historic buildings, castles and churches, Youghal boasts four miles of safe sandy beaches along with golf, putting, tennis, angling and boules. The Strand Funfair and Amusement Park is the largest in the country. The surrounding countryside is dotted with beautiful villages and from Youghal we can visit Killeagh, - peace and tranquillity, - an olde worlde village of modern houses and thatched cottages and businesses.

The cost of the 5 day trip, including Coach, Ferry and Hotel B/B is - £205. Those who travelled on the Normandy Trip have been given priority.

The HSS Ferry (99 minutes) will be leaving Holyhead to Dun Loaghrie at 1.35pm and on the return will leave Dun Loaghrie at 11.10am. *Killeagh is known for peace and tranquillity but they've not had the Dennis Lee experience yet!* If interested please contact Dennis Lee on 01244 544799 or Stan Evans on 01925 727102.

ONLY HAPPY & FRIENDLY PEOPLE COME ON OUR TRIPS!!!

The Formby Story

By Stan Evans - part 32.

George & Beryl were very concerned about the welfare of the fighting troops overseas, so when General Montgomery asked them to persuade other stars to join ENSA on the front line they took every opportunity to publicise the fact that the troops were starved of entertainment and too many were staying in London where it is comfortable.



Both grimly serious at the Waldorf

The stars who were sitting back didn't like what George was doing on his forces broadcasts. Out in the Mediterranean, he criticised variety stars who stayed in the West End theatres instead of going to the theatres of war. They lodged complaints which resulted in George & Beryl being summoned to appear at the Waldorf Hotel to give an account of what their complaints were about.

George & Beryl looked seriously grim at the beginning as they faced the crowd of questioners. "My conscience is clear!" said George. But he scored a big hit when he described their meeting with Monty a few miles behind the front line. "Monty asked us why we couldn't get more stars out at the front." He was very pleased with our work in the Middle East and stressed that he desperately needed more artists.

"I had to do my shows first to earn my lunch with Monty," said George, and "I'm not attacking anybody who's been out there, but, it's a case of 'When the cap fits.'" George explained, "Any actor can go out there to entertain and in my opinion the managers should waive their contracts until the boys come home." They were satisfied with the explanation and by now they were almost eating out of George's hand. His cheeky, infectious smile was also winning them over.

Although George & Beryl spent considerable time entertaining the troops they also had time to: give performances in the factories, in the underground air-raid shelters and also raise funds for various charities. They also made eight full feature films during the war years: - Let George Do It, Spare A Copper, Turned Out Nice Again, South American George, Much Too Shy, Get Cracking, Bell Bottom George and He Snoops To Conquer. Also he made no less than 150 records over the war period. So George & Beryl were very busy people during the war.

MORE NEXT MONTH

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AT PENIFFORDD

Excellent Night at CREWE - by Brian Edge.

POPULAR ARTHUR NEWTON ENTERTAINS AGAIN.

Arthur Newton was clearly very happy to be back on stage at Crewe after his recent illness and he surprised everybody with his very zippy performance of "Back on the Farm". His best performance by far was accompanied with a uke solo which was very effective. One thing certain Arthur may have taken it easy during the last couple of months but he has clearly been doing loads of uke practise whilst Mary was out doing the shopping!

Trevor Colley's performance is also coming on in leaps and bounds. He too is joining in the spirit of the North - West Branches by dressing for the part. For his act Trevor was immaculate in a deck chair striped blazer, boater and cream flannels which were ideal for his song "Blackpool Rock". It will not be a surprise if we see Trevor on stage at the Winter Gardens before long.

Paul Kenny put on a good performance. He is indeed fortunate that Mum & Dad regularly take him to all of the far away N W Branches, but they live near Chorley which is too far away to regularly visit Crewe and Werrington, but of course they are always welcome whenever they can make it.

Our resident singing magician - (oops, sorry, - singing miracle man) Stan Evans, told us in song how "Crazy" he was about his stooze Jim Bramwell whilst demonstrating the "Three Rope Trick". He was soon driven "Crazy" for when Jim was asked to choose either a set of red ropes or a set of white ones, Jim said he wanted blue because he used to have a bike that colour. Stan of course didn't have a set of blue ropes and the audience were soon in "tucks **" (Lancashire dialect).

It was good to see Bill Turner and his charming wife Ivy again at Wistaston. Unfortunately Bill was unable to perform due to a hip problem. We all sincerely hope that he will soon be able to get the treatment needed to relieve all the pain he is suffering and that we will soon be seeing his performing again.

Frank Murphy breezed into the meeting as usual, this time sporting a super waistcoat with "Young Codger" sequined on the back, which doubtless was made by his mother (Do you remember that fantastic Toreador outfit she made for him?). Frank also had a four flashing red lights beneath the vellum of his uke which was very effective. There is little doubt that this innovation will spread like wildfire through the GFS with the popularity of the Yoyo!

M.C. Carl Basford announced that Gareth Sumner was performing at the Crewe Lyceum in a Charity Show. Well done Gareth. What about writing to Stan and telling us about the experience of performing on such a big stage and in front of so many people? As it was to be Gareth's 14th birthday in between meetings the

audience sang Happy Birthday to his obvious delight.

The quality of our microphone and music mixing, as a result of getting to know the equipment, has noticeably improved considerably. This has taken a fair amount of time and effort between concerts by our enthusiastic Sound Engineer Colin Wood and assistant, Alan Chenery. With all the extra equipment setting up is quite an exercise and we all appreciate what Colin is doing. We are determined to give our members an ever improving sound system for their enjoyment.

At our Christmas Party next month there will be a £1 buffet. We are asking performers to team up with a partner wherever possible and take their songs in the form of duets. This will help us considerably. Anyone able to do a speciality act of any kind please consider having a go as we want to make this a very special party and a little different from our usual format.

Now young Brian. You've not been reading your Newsletter because on page 14 of the last issue we give the story of Frank Murphy's jazzed up waistcoat which reads "THE OLD CODGERS" on the back, and how it was specially made for his Big Breakfast TV show. Anyway we'll let you off because you are so busy hunting out more articles every month and I understand that Connie won't let go of the Newsletter until she's read it five times over.

After the Good News on Arthur Newton - Alas

Poor Arthur has been taken back into hospital again with his Cardio Vascular problem, however the specialist has now changed his treatment and after 4 days Arthur was allowed home. Obviously he was disappointed. However he is optimistic that the new treatment, along with extra tests will sort out his problem once and for all. We all wish him very well.

I'm sure that he will be visiting one or more of the branches even though he may not be performing for a while. Whilst in hospital, - Arthur reports: That on Sunday the first of November at 3.20pm he heard Wunga Bunga Boo on radio but what programme? Would you believe it? On Classic FM. And on the following day in Round Britain Quiz they asked the question about a George Formby song "Little Stick Of Blackpool Rock". George certainly goes on forever.

Thanks to Brian Edge for this report.

This Lad is Like a Rubber Ball - He Keeps

Bouncing Back!!! I've just been to the Sale Meeting and Arthur was performing on stage and in good voice. In fact he looked one of the fittest there. Good for you Arthur. I like a man who has Spirit! - a rare quality!

Have you a story for the Newsletter? if so, please send it in. Don't worry about spelling etc. We'll dress it up.

George's Spitting Image

For some years I've heard about a George Formby look-alike who lives in Warrington. About 1991 I received a phone call from a gentleman who offered to bring him round to be checked over. Unfortunately he didn't arrive and as I didn't take his number all trace of him was lost. Recently I received a second call and this time it was from David Hird of the Warrington College, who asked



if he could bring George's look-alike round with Gary Skentelbery, the Warrington Guardian photographer. - no problem!



George's spitting image is Alan Bentley and as soon as he walked through the door you could see the strong resemblance to the Formby family. Without any makeup whatsoever he is, without doubt, the nearest you ever get to George. In fact, he looks more like George than Geo . . . - But that's an old joke! Incidentally, Alan was born in Stockton Heath, - nudge, nudge. More next month

A Carol for Christmas by Brian Edge

in Melody form for the Crewe Christmas Party - 3 beats to the bar

THE FIRST NOWEL



The first no - wel the angel did say was to certain poor



shep - herds in fields as they lay. In fields where they



lay, keeping their sheep on a cold winter's night that was



so deep. No - wel, No - wel, Now - el, Now - el, Born is the



King of Israel

HAPPY CHRISTMAS

TO ALL AT CREWE

FROM a VERY IRATE DENNIS LEE

Oh my goodness what have we got here? He sounds angry!

Dear Mr Editor (*I'm in trouble*) You reported in the last issue of the Newsletter that a newspaper article carried the caption "Tragic Waste of an Alcoholic's Life." Needless to say I was very concerned and hurt that you cast nasturtiums on my good - nay unblemished - name and character. Now usually you are very fair in your comments but I have to report to your readers that on this occasion you were sadly mistaken.

TRIBE

You see I'm always so busy with GFS business and on the go with other things that I've been christened a workaholic. Added to this Leslie has taken up a new hobby and she's involved me in it. Now for some time she's been experimenting with a secret Paste to realise her lifelong ambition of breeding vegetarian Ferrets and the trouble is these ferrets need the paste regularly or they revert back to eating ripe tripe - right? Now the reason why I keep disappearing from the meetings is to give them the paste.

GOT WIND

The local press got wind of this and decided to run an article on it underneath the one they did about me. Now you obviously read it all wrong and I blame those glasses that you bought from the Penketh Car Boot Sale because on checking the newspaper article it didn't read "Tragic Case of an Alcoholic's Life" but clearly stated "Magic Paste of a Workaholic's Wife" I await your grovelling apology!

Thank you Dennis. As you know, if I am wrong I will grovel, grovel and more grovel to anyone I offend but the proof of the eating is in the puddin. I rest my uke case!



'Tragic waste' of an alcoholic's life



"I'm sure you sing 'Lamp Post' beautifully sir, but I must insist on cash!!!"

Gnomes, Elves and, er er - Fairies? - At the next Penyffordd meeting (Friday 4th December) we have been asked, - nay pressed - into going dressed as either a Gnome, an Elf or a Fairy. Well for the life of me I couldn't imagine some of the men dressed as any of these. The sight of Brian Edge, or Jim Bramwell, or Kevin Blanchfield etc. dressed as any of these is enough to give us heart attack through laughing. It'll be worth going if it's only for the laugh. Take your camera.

Blackpool Formby Friends by Eve & Charles

It has never been known for us to run out of "Butties" (sandwiches for anyone outside Blackpool) but it happened on Saturday the 7th November. Not a crumb was left due to a bumper turn-up. We were pleasantly surprised when four stalwarts from over the Yorkshire hills arrived to join us. Lionel Owen, Paul Mountain, David White and George Butterworth did a ninety one mile (each way) trip to be with us, and what a joyful addition they were to our company.

We nearly had a full house in spite of the absence of some of our regular supporters. Eileen Abbott has had a very traumatic time lately but thankfully she is now mending. All the members sent their best wishes for a speedy recovery - the buffet missed her special touch! It's lovely to have Lucy & Joe Jackson back with us. They had a rough ride during the last twelve months, but things are improving. Lucy's enthusiastic enjoyment is always a tonic. Thanks to everyone who helped to make it a special evening.

LANCASHIRE DAY

By the time you read this Newsletter we will have performed for the Mayor at St Anne's Charity function to commemorate Lancashire Day on Friday Nov 27th. in the Lowther Gardens Pavilion.

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Don't forget our meeting on December 5th and please come along early, - we are there from 6.30pm. Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year to you all.

Kindest Regards from Eve & Charles Stewart.

Thanks Eve & Charles. I was very sorry that I couldn't make the meeting. This was due to Armistice Sunday. I'd actually forgotten that we'd invited 25 of the World War Two Society to march in our British Legion parade and I was their host for the Saturday night. Anyway, I'm very pleased that the Yorkshire lads came to give some support. It amazes me how these lads have a habit of turning up at the right time, - when we need them. We must have a cord attached that sends out an S.O.S

We are very sorry that Eileen has been going through a rough time. She's a lovely lady and I'm sure that she'll battle through it. They are all tough around Blackpool

Fred & Jessie Bailey - George & Beryl's close friends were

Fred & Jessie Bailey who had a Fruit & Vegetable business in the Warrington market and who lived near George's home in Stockton Heath. During the Warrington GF Exhibition there was a lot of information floating around the town relating to Fred & Jessie's collection of GF home cine films, photographs, records etc. and, after making many enquiries, no-one appears to know what happened to these.



Anyway, I am pleased to report that I've managed to locate, and purchase, one of Jessie's correspondence files which was

Left to Right: George, Harry (valet) Beryl's Mother, Beryl, Jessie and Fred

bought in a local auction for £75. Mainly they are late 1930/40s letters from Beryl to the Bailey's, and from Associated British Films Ltd to the Bailey's, who apparently helped with the publicity of George's films. Also letters from Basil Dean's office to the Bailey's.

There is also an estimate from Roughley's the Warrington Monumental Sculptor's who quoted the Bailey's - on behalf of G & B - for repairs to the family grave:-

April 25th 1939 MR GEORGE FORMBY'S MEMORIAL

Dear Mr Bailey, I thank you for your kind enquiries on behalf of Mr Formby and I have pleasure in confirming my quotation for the work on the stone.

To. Removing all the existing old chippings and slates (which are all broken) from the inside of the grave. Levelling and making firm the ground which has subsided a little inside the grave.

Supplying and erecting 2" thick solid reinforced concrete slabs in sections (to enable them to be taken out without breaking at any time) The joints of the slabs to be finished with cement pointing. Complete covering of the slabs with approximately 3 cwt of best quality white chippings of a medium size.

Total inclusive cost as given £3. 10. 0. (which was O.Kd. by Beryl.)

Work guaranteed satisfactory, weed proof, and subject to inspection and approval. Work to be completed within two weeks. Thanking you and assuring you of our best attention. Signed A. Roughley.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AT WERRINGTON

Sale George Formby Society From Alice Cronshaw

CHANGE OF NIGHT

The Sale Christmas Party is on Thursday 10th December - Do Not Miss It!!!
 We have a special singer and dance trio who will be entertaining us, - at very much expense, - called Al Diamond Trio and the Sapphires. We also have a Grand Buffet so how can you miss such an occasion? See you all on the night.
Thanks Alice, We are all very pleased that Sale is still marching on and progressing by the month. Don't forget to save me a vegetarian sandwich!
Tell me something. I've noticed that usually when the ladies leave the room to powder their noses they usually go out in twos. However, just lately you've been going out in fours. So what are you up to? No doubt it's something for Christmas.

What a Load of Waffle!!! -

Many N. West members waited for the Vellum to arrive to see what the response was to the tirade of abuse thrown at us by Peter Pollard. Unfortunately none of our letters were printed, - only a mild apology from the Editor, who left us in doubt as to what on earth he was going on about. He went all round the houses to explain nothing. Anyway! We're not bothered. Somebody out there has got the message.



— That's the last time I write to the Vellum!!!

Beware

- If you are asked to do a spot in a show make sure that the Tape Player is OK. I've just done a 20 minute spot to raise funds for Croft Village and as they'd hired professional equipment I naturally assumed that all would be well. Well it was, - packed room, lovely audience, all dressed in Olde Tyme Music Hall styles, until the Sound Man switched the tape player on. It came out dreadfully slow and the rousing singalongs sounded like funeral marches.

I couldn't use the uke because the backing was coming out in a lower key. And the speakers were set facing the audience so I couldn't hear the backing tape. Fortunately the audience had song sheets so they kept me in time with the backing. Anyway, it all came over very well and no-one was any wiser.

It was fortunate that we had a large majority of ladies in the audience as they are more comfortable singing in a lower key than the men. Be prepared. Stan Evans

Eva & I recently got a few invites to go to Granada TV Studios to watch and listen to the well known quiz show, "Today's The Day" which is presented by Martyn Lewis. Due to having other commitments we didn't go but afterwards we discovered that the show on the 6th of October contained a few questions about George supported by a 1947 film clip.

One of the questions was: "Who's laundry did George Formby popularise?" So perhaps it's a good job we didn't go otherwise we may have been thrown out for shouting out the answers and ruining the show. Stan Evans.

Dennis Lee with his "I Took My Uke To A Party" (and nobody asked me to play) came over very well at Penyffordd. This is one of Gracie Fields's when she sang about having taken her "Harp" to a party. A great little song.

Which is a good time to mention that we are planning to put on a number of shows at various theatres. Although the main ingredient will be George the show will also contain a number of variety acts. This is to help to sell the show to a wider audience. - not just Formby fans.

BE PROFESSIONAL

So we need to get down to working on some good acts that are different from the normal Formby but still acceptable as part of George's era. So what have we got? Well at this stage we have

- 1. Our Thrash Group is sounding great and improving each time they meet
- 2. Individual Formby Players with George's most popular songs
- 3. Formby players with specials like: "Middle East" and "Lottery Millionaire" etc.
- 4. Youngsters that can perform in front of an audience
- 5. A Jazz Band that is rapidly building a repertoire
- 6. Artists like Jim Bramwell who can hold an audience with his jokes
- 7. A brilliant player like John Shreeve who plays really excellent melodies
- 8. Yodelling Fred Stevenson
- 9. Dennis & Leslie Lee with a good song and dance routine
- 10. Tom Meredith with a Jolson act
- 11. Artists who can rouse an audience with popular Sing-alongs
- 12. Anthony Mason who brought the pub down in France
- 13. A touch of magic combined with comedy
- 14. CAN WE CUNJURE UP ANY MORE?

The Trip to Southern Ireland clashes with the Warrington Meeting so July 30th has been cancelled. - 30th April and 29th October are OK.

GFS Publicity Trailer - Dennis Lee has come up with the idea of either the GFS or the N. West Branches purchasing a trailer exhibition van, with a lift up side, which can be fitted out with GF material and also double up as a stage to perform on.

Dennis writes . . . The purpose of the GFS is: "To perpetuate the memory and music of George Formby M.B.E. by promoting functions, meetings, publicity etc. We do this well in some of the areas e.g. via the meetings, local newsletters, the Internet, TV and Radio etc. and we know that publicity is vital to our success.

If anyone is interested in making use of an exhibition van to promote George then please drop a line to Dennis or ring him on 01244 544799.

Perhaps you have a few other ideas to promote the GFS



PERMANENT EXHIBITION

In the past we have talked about establishing a permanent GF exhibition. But the idea falls down on many counts: Where and how we could obtain a building? How to maintain it and pay the overheads? Where could we get the staff and who would pay them? Volunteers would be out of the question as I doubt whether there would be sufficient of them in a given area. There would be many major problems yet experience has shown that we attract new members as a result of exhibitions.

My suggestion is that the GFS should invest in a mobile exhibition trailer. Such a facility would overcome all the above mentioned difficulties associated with a permanent exhibition. The trailer, towable by a medium sized family car, would normally be stored at some central point. It would be available to groups of members who wished to mount an exhibition, or concert, by towing it to various Agricultural Shows, Festivals, Carnivals etc. and to places where George gets very little publicity and where members are very thin on the ground. Scotland or Norfolk or even places like Holland. Think what publicity it would get during the millennium celebrations!

Have You Written To The Newsletter Yet?

TRAILER SET-UP

Facilities incorporated within our trailer could include:

- the fitting of wall boards for the display of pictures, press cuttings etc.
- the availability of GFS publicity leaflets and forms
- details of conventions and branch meetings etc.
- a small shop selling tapes etc.
- connections for mikes, amplifiers etc.
- one side of the trailer to open upward to provide a roof for the stage.

FUNDING

The cost is in the region of £20,000. Having read the documentation associated with the National Lottery Grants I believe we stand a chance of obtaining an award under the Arts section. Such an award would amount to 90% of the capital cost. Our contribution therefore would be around £2,000. This is not a lot of money when set against the publicity it would bring us. As regards running costs (maintenance, insurance etc) we could charge a fee to the borrower who should in turn be able to raise money on the event.

Many thanks Dennis. We have discussed ways of promoting George and agreed that a permanent exhibition needs an awful lot of managing. In fact, to be successful it will have to be run like a business to survive and getting volunteers to take on such a commitment will only work for short limited periods. Most certainly not on a full-time basis.

During the 1991 Warrington exhibition Anthony Mason and I worked six days each week for 5 months and all appeals for help were fruitless, - A lot of members were unable to assist due to distance of travel. At the end of the show we were glad to get away from the continuous drone of George singing the same 40 songs over and over again on the background tape. The continuous repetition of the GF video documentary almost drove us up the wall. No matter how much you love George there is a limit. The day we closed I went home to listen to some classical music. What a relief! So, in my opinion a permanent exhibition is not advisable. What do you think?

Abbott Monarch Wanted - George Moore on 01482 712222 is looking for an "Abbott Monarch" uke banjo . Please give him a ring if you have one.

FREDDIE STARR SHOW - George also reports that the TV show he is appearing on "Beat The Crusher" is show number 6 which should be screened around January.

George in Coronation St! - Did you hear George singing Fanlight Fanny last Sunday night? It's about time they made an attempt to cheer the show up because over the last 12 months it has gone the same way as most of the other soaps like: Eastenders and Brookside with cops and robbers, murders, prisons etc. If we all drop a line to Granada Studios, Quay St Manchester, to thank them for playing George's record, perhaps they will consider including a George Formby fan in the cast. George pops up every- where.

Buying A Uke - Roberta Dickson has requested that we publish an article on what to look for when buying a uke. She is looking for one that is lightweight because it is for her 6 year old daughter.

Some years back SAGA of Japan manufactured the ideal uke banjo - the DBU 4, for youngsters to learn on and it sold in this country for around £35 to £40. It was perfect! However they no longer produce them but it is possible that some of the members have one of these they may part with. If you have please contact me and I will put Roberta in touch with you. For a youngster it should be possible to purchase a cheap model for around the £30 - £40 mark.

Uke banjos are not easy to obtain so I suggested she should purchase a small wooden ukulele (which is like a very small guitar with four strings) from the music shop. It is tuned in exactly the same way so it is ideal to get started. Plus the fact that it is a quiet instrument for beginners to learn on.

Sometimes children insist on a uke banjo just like George played, but the answer to this is that George started playing on a small wooden uke and in fact, he also entertained the fighting forces in France using a small wooden uke.

When buying a wooden uke the only thing to make sure of is that the 4 tightening pegs (at the top of the uke) have got small adjustment screws at the back. There should be one screw at the back of each peg. It is important otherwise the peg will keep slipping and you will have difficulty in tuning.

If anyone has got any spare ukes to sell would you please advertise them in the Newsletter. It costs nothing to advertise here!

N. Wales Branch by Cliff Royle. - Well I

am sure the arguments about what should be the composition of entertainment at Society meetings is borne out by the attendance's at our meetings; again a full house at the Nov gathering, although there were a few pasties surplus this time. The reason I think is our varied programme, and we did have some varied talent to support us on our Fifth, - yes Fifth, Anniversary, which was celebrated by wearing colourful gear.

This time under the eye of our M.C. Jim Knight (we were delighted to have his Wife, Myra with us on this occasion) There were a number of special attractions. "The Times Square" Ladies Barber Shop Quartet, These are all local young ladies, part of a group of twenty, who have recently appeared on SC4 TV. One of their members is the Wife of our member Steve Ragsdale. Stan Watkinson gave us a happy sing-a-long to the accompaniment of his Banjo Guitar, and Stan Evans responded with his sing-a-long supported by what may be called a mini

Indian Rope Trick. Jim & Frank Murphy rendered "Thirty Thirsty Sailors" with much prompting from his young son Frank; and Steve Ragsdale recited "Mad Carew" (???) aided by our comic Brian Wright.

Our friends from Crewe turned up again with something different, this time with a young blond who I understood was a Stripper. Unfortunately it turned out to be Connie who decided on the last minute to sing instead. Then we had Auntie Mary in her usual top form. Two young ladies, Margaret and Dorothy, greeted people on the door, and of course took money from them. Again we welcomed our young stars of the future, Stephen Ensell and Paul Kenny.



Brian and Connie Edge - in fancy dress of course

Paul is like me; always trying to beat the band. Keep it going lads, you are doing very well!

There were times, as we all know, when words were forgotten and it was funny to see how efforts were made to get players back on track. I had to laugh when, in one lull, arms were waving about and hands were attempting to play castanets. Of course Dennis made a presentation to me for my forthcoming birthday; a half fit 76 if I made it to the 13th. Still it was nice to be thought of and presented with a card and a present. I'm not sure if the liquid is screen wash or Phyllosan?



Dorothy and Margaret greeted the members on the door.

Our next meeting is on 4th of Dec. This will be our Christmas Party with its usual buffet. It is hoped that as many as possible will come along dressed as Santa's helpers, "Gnomes, Elves or Fairies" I am a bit concerned about the latter. Dates to note are "Practise" Tues 15th Dec, and the next meeting is Fri 29th Jan. NO meeting on Jan 1st of Feb 5th. Many thanks Cliff. Peniffordd has certainly taken off well and where else in the world can you get a good night's entertainment and a pasty for 50p? Unbelievable!

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS
EVERYBODY**

WHOOOPS! - It must be terrible when you turn up at a meeting only to find that you've got the wrong night or even the wrong venue.



Cyril Palmer

Some months back Cyril Palmer made the journey from Sale to Liverpool only to find that he was a week early. Anyway it wasn't too bad because he spent the night entertaining the club members.

But last week Des Redfern badly slipped up when he and his Auntie Mary turned up at Sale and suddenly realised that the meeting was being held 40 miles away at Liverpool. Needless to say, they got back in the car and dashed over to the meeting, - arriving about an hour late. Anyway it didn't bother them because they were both in good voice when they got on stage.

APPEAL FROM AUNTIE MARY

As you ladies probably know there are very few songs in the GFS that are suitable for ladies so Mary is asking for any songs that would suit her. Doreen Crosby has been a good Samaritan and sent her a load that have been altered to suit and Mary has now got a nice surprise in store for the Christmas parties.

So, if you've got any songs for the ladies please let us have a copy.

Liverpool's 6th Anniversary - Well it doesn't seem 6 years since we started the meetings at Liverpool. We remember it well, - Friday the 13th of November and it was the most dreadful wet weather.

Liverpool, probably the most popular musical city in the world, has survived many lean meetings with sometimes only about 15 present but we've kept them going and we are pleased to report that it is now prospering very well with every seat taken.

Tom Bailey has been a great and trusted servant to us all, - arranging the room, never failing to be there, collecting raffle prizes, collecting the money, and for the 6th Anniversary, he and his wife, Agnes, prepared a buffet for us to enjoy. It is only through these reliable people that we are able to hold our meetings. Our thanks to you and Agnes for your kind effort and our thanks also to those who travelled (especially Des & Auntie Mary who came twice the distance) from other towns to give support.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AT LIVERPOOL

More from George's Suitcase -

Balance Sheet - year ended 5th April 1948

THEATRE INCOME

Bolton	514. 16. 1d	Sydney	11,958. 6. 8d
Blackpool	1250. 0. 0	Melbourne	5,833. 6. 8
Southport	1000. 0. 0	Broadcast	2,000. 0. 0

Total	2764. 16. 1	Total	17,791.16.1
	£15033. 6. 8 (converted to sterling)		

Film Profits	3,878. 0. 6
Sundry Receipts	305. 12. 0
Martin	1,000. 0. 0

Total	£21,981. 15. 3d
Less expenses (below)	18,700. 11. 1

Difference 3,281. 4. 2

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS
TO ALL AT SALE**

EXPENSES

	Australia	UK	Total
Salaries	414. 0. 0	1381. 12. 8	1795. 12. 8
Laundry & Cleaning	75. 2. 6	142. 12. 5	217. 14. 11
Travelling Expenses	137. 2. 2	1156. 13. 2	1293. 15. 5
Tips, presents etc.	839. 2. 4	293. 8. 8	1132. 2. 11
Make up & Chemist	20. 3. 6	54. 4. 8	74. 8. 2
Papers, stationery	43.19. 6	90. 8. 0	134. 7. 6
Phone/postage/cables	166. 8. 10	588. 16.10	755. 5. 8
Baggage/trunks etc.	14. 4. 9	408. 7. 6	423. 2. 3
Publicity/entertaining	598. 1. 0	1298. 5. 1	1896. 6. 1
Theatre seats	79.16. 6		79.16. 6
Wardrobe/			
Fox fur coat	499. 0. 0	1321. 17. 11	2005.19. 9
Employees wardrobe	120. 0. 0		120. 0. 0
Music, flowers,			
stage supplies	146. 17. 0	300. 0. 0	
Hotel and meals	810. 10. 0	478.18. 3	128. 8. 7
Hotel and meals - staff	170. 8. 3	200. 7. 0	370.15. 3
Commission paid	2668.15. 0		2668. 15. 0
Travelling to Australia	2662. 3. 6		2662. 3. 6
		TOTAL	18,700. 11. 1

Another example of the work Beryl was responsible for. Hope you find it interesting.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS TO ALL AT BLACKPOOL

Statue for George - It was announced in the Vellum that the society is considering ordering a statue to be made of George and having it erected in Blackpool. Well I personally think that it is a great idea and wish it all the success, - But not at a cost of £36,000, 00 - no way! George & Beryl would go mad at the thought.

Although statues are great for those directly concerned, in this case GFS members, but they are of little interest to anyone else. Last week I received a call from the Isle of Man (noted for good behaviour) claiming that George's statue in the Douglas shopping centre is being abused. Just imagine what vandalism we would get in Blackpool!

The finest tribute to George & Beryl is the raise money to support a Blackpool children's hospital. George loved children but Beryl was reluctant to have any. This would be one way of thanking the Council for supporting the society.

P.S. - Just heard from the Isle of Man that George's Statue has just been removed from the site to be cleaned up. But they're not sure if Norman Wisdom's statue had been removed also. Maybe Norman, who lives there, keeps it sparkling?

Southern Ireland - Anyone going to Southern Ireland is requested to learn a few Irish Songs and here's a few to get you going:- Mountains Of Mourne, Isle Of Innisfree, Does Your Mother Come From Ireland, Galway Bay, Molly Malone, If You're Irish Come Into The Parlour, MacNamara's Band, Mother McCree, When Irish Eyes Are Smiling, and many more. If anyone has got any good sing-along type Irish songs, suitable for the uke, please bring them along to the meetings or send a copy in. Many Thanks.

So - to date - how many have confirmed their booking for Southern Ireland? - Dennis & Leslie Lee, Eileen Hansbury, Stan & Eva Evans, Bill Pope, Mary Atkinson, Alan & Pat Chenery, Brian & Connie Edge, Colin & Christine Wood, Marion Wilkes, Irene Conlon, Walter Kirkland, Alice Cronshaw, Charlie Penman, Denis & Olwen Gale

POPULAR WARRINGTON STORY - About a policeman who got in trouble during George's funeral. Manchester Road was packed solid with people and an old man, - who had been doing his shopping in town - stopped at the cemetery to ask a policeman what the crowds were waiting for? The policeman replied, "It's for George Formby!" "Why?, Is he dead?" said the man. To which the policeman replied, "Well he must be because they are (blank - blank) burying him." The man, who was most upset about the policeman's conduct, reported him to his superior and the poor copper was in hot water.

Late News - Jon & Pam Baddeley - It never rains but

it pours!!! - Over the past few months Jon has been suffering with a bad back and struggling to get to the meetings, - I know how you feel Jon. To make matters much worse he and Pam were recently involved in a bad car accident when they were driving home from work. A small sports car smashed into their car and two others got involved in the four car pile-up. A report in the newspaper claimed that it took three hours to



Jon (far left) with Daryll Snow, Mary Atkinson, Dennis Lee, Brian Edge, Arthur Newton and Colin Wood.

clear the road. Their car was a write-off. All were taken to the hospital and it is suspected that Jon, who has bad bruises to his chest, may have a broken a rib. Pam is suffering with bruised ankles and sadly it happened a few days before her birthday. They were due to go to York to celebrate.

When I spoke to them on the phone they both felt extremely grateful for having escaped more serious damage. They were also pleased to know that their friends in the GFS are concerned about them. Well that is what societies are all about!

SILENCE PLEASE!!! - all around the room.

Come On Branch Organisers and M/Cs . . Some of the meetings in the N. West are very noisy and we are getting to the stage where we have little or no respect for the artist who is struggling to get his songs over.

This is very bad in the night clubs and it has become accepted by the artists who perform there. I've spoken to some of them and they've admitted that they just want to get their songs over and get out of there.

But in the George Formby Society we must start insisting on **SILENCE** for the artist otherwise it will go the same way as the night clubs. So come on everybody! Give the artist a chance to perform.

Perhaps we should consider allowing a couple of minutes between each song so that the audience can have a chin-wag. Drop me a line if you have any views on the Noisy Audiences in the N. West.

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: - Dec 5th. Adm £1 with Buffet. All are made very - very - very welcome.

Liverpool - Broadgreen Conservative Club - Every 2nd Friday in the month - Ring Tom Bailey on 0151 289 1711 Players Urgently Wanted

Sale - Woodheys Club, 299 Washway Rd, Sale - CHRISTMAS MEETING THURSDAY 10th DECEMBER - But usually every 3rd Friday - Ring Alice Cronshaw on 0161 727 9829 or Cyril Palmer on 0161 748 6550. Adm £1.

Crewe Branch Wistaston Memorial Hall - Ring Brian Edge on 01270 569836 Future dates - Fri 27th Nov, Fri 18th Dec. Adm 50p. Come early for a seat. PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL NEXT YEAR'S MEETINGS WILL BE HELD ON THE 4th FRIDAY OF THE MONTH.

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.

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 - 11th Dec.

So as George would say -

"Get Cracking"

Support Your Newsletter

PLEASE BOOK EARLY FOR SOUTHERN IRELAND

