

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 43

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Specially Produced for
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Welcome to Newsletter No. 43.

HARRY STANFORD

We've just had the very sad news that our dear Harry has died. On Wednesday the 2nd of December, his friend, John Lowe, rang his home several times and received no reply. He called at Harry's house and found that the milk was still at the front door. He and another friend rang the police and they forced the back door open. Poor Harry was slumped in his chair having suffered a massive heart attack. He



was immediately rushed to Whiston hospital, Prescot, where he lay in a deep coma. On Sunday the 6th December I received a call to say that Harry had passed away in his sleep.

Poor Harry has been terribly lost since Lottie died. At times he looked as if he was in a wilderness and at the last Liverpool meeting he was very pale and unsteady on his feet. He had to be escorted to the toilet of two occasions and he looked very unsteady. Even so he clutched his Banjo waiting to get up on stage.

He enjoyed the trip to France when everybody took care of him and joked with him about having bombed Caen during the war. However, he soon felt sad when he arrived home to his empty house. He told us many times that he and Lottie had never had a disagreement all their long married life. He was completely lost without her.

We first met Harry at the Warrington Museum George Formby Exhibition when he turned up to have ukulele tuition each Wednesday afternoon. He told us that he was only learning how to play but actually he'd been a player for many years. He thought he may not be allowed to join in if we knew he could play. Harry and Lottie made a good double act as she constantly nudged him and told him to take notice, but Harry was more interested in getting up and doing a spot.

Harry joined the GFS and after a couple of visits to the Wintergardens he was invited to go up on stage. He brought the house down with his 75 year old jokes and I doubt if there is an entertainer in the society who could command such silence and attention. His jokes may have been ancient but he certainly put them over well and there was a complete hush through the hall.

Harry soon got a reputation for wanting to stay on stage all night, (if you allowed him to). Many MCs have asked the question "How do we get him off?" - He enjoyed it so much. He would tell us about his professional boxing days and his war years in the navy and especially when he helped to liberate the prisoners at Japan's Changi Jail and when he entertained the prisoners. He also spoke of entertaining at "The Stage Door" when his ship was in dock and how the ladies presented him with a trophy for the occasion.

About 5 years ago he and Lottie became upset. After he'd proved himself a success with his jokes and his ukulele singing he decided to switch over to the banjo, - which didn't go down too well with the audience. He couldn't sing to his banjo so he was losing his popularity. We kept warning him and, in fact, we even banned the banjo from Warrington in the hope that he would stick to his uke banjo. For a few weeks he was upset, until he realised we were trying to help him. After that he told everybody about his banjo being banned at Warrington and made it part of his act.

As a tribute to Harry we have the words to his best song

94 Today

It's nice to sit down when you're 94 , down by the kitchen fire
And think of the things you used to have and the girls that you admire
But a farmer's life is a healthy life, and I feel as good as new
But I'll bet a bob you'll be surprised at what I'll tell to you

I'm 94 this morning, I'm 94 today
I'm not as young as I used to be and I'm getting old and grey
But my heart is young and I'm full of fun, and I'm very proud to say
That I'm getting married on Thursday though I'm 94 today

Of course, in the village, it will be a big surprise
The people think it's all a joke and the Minster's telling lies
But we will have the laugh on them as sure as I'm alive
And there may be a christening yet before I'm 95

I'm 94 this morning . . .

Our thanks to Harry for the words to this great little song if anyone wants to know how the tune goes I will be willing to help.

Margaret Moran sings at Crewe -

Seventy two attended the Crewe November meeting where a variety of talent was on the menu. Several new guests were welcomed. Locals Bob, Arthur and Sheila attended for the first time, Sheila made a big impression, with skilful sleight of hand managed to put the "kiss of death" on one of Stan's would be miracles! Andrew Little (who plays the lowest suspended uke in the country at an elevation somewhat higher than anyone else) attended for the first time and performed well

It was good to have Jonathan & Pam back with us relatively unscathed after their recent nasty car accident. Jonathan appeared as our publicity representative on B.B.C. Radio Stoke earlier in the week and he did a superb job for us. If we had paid a professional agency a fortune they would not have matched Jonathan's excellent performance.

I had the pleasure during the evening of announcing Walter Kirkland's engagement next February to our lovely Alice Cronshaw, who is Chairman of the Sale Society. Walter has asked us to lay on a special buffet to celebrate the event - Hooray - and this has been arranged. I am sure that we will all see some new talent on our stage on the 26th February as a number of special guests will be attending. On a truly serious note I have to tell you that I have taken up strongly with Walter as, for some reason, he seems to be neglecting his ukulele practise of late. I have also spoken to Alice and asked to make sure he gets plenty.

Arthur Newton rattled off a new song in fine style "Barmaid At The Rose And Crown" and his namesake, Alan Newton (no relation) gave us his own unique rendering of the Broadway Medley - great stuff. Gareth Sumner gave a creditable performance of "Horoscope."



Comic Les Pearson gave an excellent performance - just how we like it with good clean stuff which rendered Connie into hysterics. Her laughter as usual disrupted the show and she left the room (what for - wasn't apparent) only to be asked to return by the comic who must have thought that it was his birthday.

Les brought the charming Margaret Moran, who delighted us with her singing. Margaret concluded with the lovely number "Winter Wonderland." We hope they both enjoyed their first trip to the Crewe meeting as much as we enjoyed having them with us. Look out for Stan Evans's new Banana sensation which he is currently practising. It will be great fun at a future meeting.

The South Cheshire George Formby Ukulele Society wishes all its supporters a very Happy Christmas and all the very best for 1999.

Cont. next page

Thanks Brian. Once again it was another grand night at Crewe. You once told me that in your young days you were employed as a Magician's Assistant! That's why you were honoured - Yes! Honoured! to assist me with my Jumbo Card Miracle. What went wrong? I had to bow my head in shame and my reputation went down the drain! P.S. What's this new Banana sensation I'm supposed to be doing?

Quotes from "Roy Hudd's book of Music Hall, Variety & Showbiz Anecdotes." - from Brian Edge

It happened back stage at a war-time fund raising variety show. A young female vocalist was with the pros, - including George & Beryl - in the Green Room and she was telling how she had been invited to entertain the Royal Family at Windsor Castle. "Oh they were so nice to me. It was wonderful. They sent a car for me and they were so nice. They were ever so friendly and they knew all my songs and even sang along with me. They were so complimentary to me afterwards and we even had supper together, etc. etc."

Glowering in the corner throughout this, Beryl sat. Eventually she could stand it no longer, - "That", she said, "Is nothing! - Nothing at all. Why George and I have been there so many times the King said, "Well you know where we live, don't be strangers." Thanks Brian.

Connie Edge writes - LAUGHTER TREATMENT

Doctor Mario the "Yours" magazine medical advisor says that Laughter Treatment is based on scientific research which found that older people, who are socially isolated, bored, or who do not enjoy themselves, die prematurely.

Depression renders the immune system unable to fight disease efficiently. On the other hand, loud laughter and enjoyment of humour have been proven to reduce stress, boost the immune system and improve circulation. Many people now attend laughter therapy when, during the sessions members breathe deeply, relax and then start laughing, even if nothing funny has happened.

If you want to practise laughter therapy on your own try laughing when you see or hear something amusing, with a little effort you will end up laughing with gusto. Some scientists say that laughter has the same effect as exercise because it speeds up the heart beat, improves the circulation and uses many muscles in the body.

Thanks Connie. I agree with the scientists! A good night in watching Ken Dodd on video is a wonderful tonic and you feel on cloud nine after it. But I wonder if the scientists can explain why we are now living much longer even though all the good comics are dead? And why do they die early if they are always happy?

I rest my uke case.

The Formby Story

Part 33 By Stan Evans

CHANGES FOR GEORGE

At the end of the war George was awarded the Order Of The British Empire for the gallant work he and Beryl had done entertaining the troops on the fighting front. To the press George announced that he was disappointed for Beryl as she was equally deserving of the award. He considered that the medal should have been shared.



During the war years, parts of Britain were invaded by American forces who were training for the 'Normandy Landings,' and I can personally remember at the time, American big band sounds flowing through the streets of Warrington town centre at midnight. It was a great sound and so different from any we had heard before. On the radio we regularly received the American entertainers: Bing Crosby, The Andrews Sisters, Al Jolson, Bob Hope, Jack Benny and many more. And the big American bands like Paul Whiteman, Bob Crosby, Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, and more, were broadcasting day and night to the American services in this country.

We were going through a musical transformation which was completely different to George's simple songs, which were played to the accompaniment of the ukulele, banjo and a piano. The American sound was driving through the country with no less determination than the Normandy landings and there no way that George could compete with it.

Changes were also taking place in the cinemas where stars like James Mason, Stewart Granger, Jean Kent, Phillis Calvert and Margaret Lockwood were becoming firm favourites with their sinister type romantic films. They were creating a huge demand and rapidly overtaking George as the top box office draw. George and Beryl were concerned for the future and felt that this was the end of the road for them.

Huge American stars like Humphrey Bogart, Sidney Greenstreet, Bette Davies, James Cagney, Gary Cooper and Edward G. Robinson were also squeezing George out of the entertaining world.

George made a few mild attempts to change with them when he joined the Deep River Boys on stage with a jazzed up versions of "Some Of These Days" and "Sweet Georgia Brown," but he had to accept the fact that change was taking place and there was nothing he could do to stop it. More Next Month.

Talking About Laughter

(further to Connie's letter) - I once went into a fit of laughter when typing out a piece written by Beryl in the George Formby Fan Club Book. As Editor of the GFS in 1988 I was preparing my first Vellum and the article was a new game called "Holding The Baby" which Beryl described wonderfully.



The game is actually another version of 'Hunt The Slipper' but it has a more exciting finish. All you need to play the game is a small box of bombs which can be obtained from any reputable arsenal. Any number of players can play.

PLEASE IMAGINE WHAT IS TAKING PLACE AS YOU READ ON . . .

How To Play:- The players sit in a circle facing inward. A bomb is taken from the box and the fuse is set for say, half a minute and handed to any member of the circle. It is then passed rapidly from hand to hand, - excitement running high as time proceeds, - sweat streaming from every brow. There is a hush, followed by murmurs of prayer and eventually the time expires and the person holding the bomb at the time leaves the circle. There is a deep sigh of relief on the faces of the remaining members which is followed by roars of laughter and jolly fun. The game precedes until either the supply of bombs run out or the players. Does anyone fancy a game?

Now I thought it was hilarious as I typed it out and couldn't control myself with laughter. It was a real tonic. After sending out the Vellums I sat at home waiting for members to ring with their comments. NOT A DICKY BIRD!!!! - ZILCH!!!!

One member eventually rang and I asked if he enjoyed my first effort, - "Well it was alright" he replied. "Did you enjoy Beryl's new game?" - "No I didn't like that". "Did you enjoy page so and so?" - "No I didn't like that?" - "Well did you enjoy reading page so and so?" - "No I didn't like that."

"Oh my goodness" I thought, "This is a tough crowd to please." Anyway, I'm pleased to report that eventually a few kind comments filtered through but I shall never forget the enjoyment received with Beryl's article.

More On Harry I won a raffle prize at the Sale meeting which was a round tin box of assorted biscuits. After the meeting I was talking to Harry in the car park and gave him the box of biscuits to take home. A week later I met him and he told me that when he arrived home that night he made himself a cup of tea and opened the biscuits, only to find another tin inside. He opened the second tin and found another empty tin inside. No biscuits just tins.

More from Fred & Jessie Bailey's File

A Letter from Ben Henry, director of Associated British Films Ltd.

Dear Fred, I was very glad indeed to received your letter in regard to "Keep Your Seats Please" at Warrington. I had already seen from the figures how very well the picture was doing and I can readily understand to what extent the audience laughed. The picture is doing amazingly well wherever it is playing, and it looks like establishing George in the front rank of screen comedians.

I was talking to George & Beryl on the phone early this morning and they told me that they had heard from you regarding this particular booking, but the success is nothing new as wherever the picture is played it has done exactly the same. I am enclosing a synopsis of the film "Feather Your Nest". I saw your photographic Calendar the other day, which I thought was very good indeed, and which I understand is very popular in Warrington. Signed, Ben Henry

Hope you find these letters interesting. They give us more information on how George & Beryl conducted their business.

You'll remember Roy & Olwen Ellison of Australia who visited us in the N. West and enjoyed the Peniffordd meeting. Roy plays the uke in Australia but unfortunately he can't buy anything over there to help him with his playing. Anyway, he's found some good friends over here so he's looking forward to getting down to some better uke playing.

He writes: Dear Stan and Friends, We would like to say a big "Thank You" to you all at the George Formby Society for making us all so welcome. The night we came to the meeting we had a lovely time and it was the highlight of our holiday. We bought our two young nephews, Ben & Sam a small ukulele each and they are very keen to learn. They live in N. Wales so no doubt they will keep up with the playing so many thanks to you all.

George's Double - We were just about to arrange for Alan Bentley, - George's double, to come along to some of our meetings when a phone call came in to say that he had been taken into hospital with a heart problem.

Over the past month he has received a lot of publicity in various newspapers so I'm hoping that this is not the reason for his health problem. Will keep you informed on any progress.

Crewe's Practise Night will be held on Tuesday the 19th of January when members are invited to go along to iron out all their uke playing problems

Blackpool's Lancashire Day - 27th Nov.

What a wonderful lunchtime we had on Nov 27th. Dennis Lee and Kevin Blanchfield, from the North Wales Branch, ably assisted by Charles Stewart and Stan Evans from Warrington responded to the Fylde Mayor's invitation to provide traditional entertainment to celebrate Lancashire Day.

It turned into a most memorable occasion with a charming Mayor, Councillor Anne Smith joining in, in good voice, with the final number, "We'll Meet Again."



Dennis and Kevin got the audience going with "Out In The Middle East" and Stan Evans created a storm with his wounded soldier routine to the rousing tune of "The Soldier's Dream", with Kevin as a very much wounded soldier. But what a strange coincidence! Stan wasn't aware that the Mayor was to hand out red roses to each table just before he sang that old favourite "A Rose In A Garden Of Weeds" which went down well with enthusiastic audience.

The best kept secret of the day was CHARLES'S BIRTHDAY! The Lancashire Lad himself was born on Lancashire Day . . . but what a turn up, because Lancashire Day has been buried in the past and only unearthed by the present Mayor. In spite of his aversion to birthdays, Charles will remember this one with great pleasure. Our thanks to all who gave support on the occasion.

Thanks Eve & Charles. - Charles wasn't born!!! - He was fired out of a rocket!!! It was a grand day and the show helped to raise funds for the Mayor's Charity.

Liverpool

- What a grand night we had. Most of the regulars were missing but we were amazed by the number of new faces that turned up. Quite a number are learning to play the uke so it looks like the future's good for Liverpool. Tom Bailey has stated that there is enough money in the funds to invest in a Mini - Disc Player so this will save the problem of running tapes to the beginning of songs etc.

The members were sad to hear of the death of Harry but all agreed that it is a blessing for him to have passed on. "Now he's with Lottie" they claimed.

North Wales Went With A Wow!!!

Dennis Lee rang. He was dead chuffed with the Penyffordd meeting when the members were asked to come dressed as Elves, Gnomes and Fairies. Unfortunately I missed it due to a heavy cold but apparently it went down very well. The atmosphere was great especially when Cliff Royle appeared dressed as a proper fairy. He had a frilly frock sticking out all round, a long blonde wig and a wand with a star on the end. "In fact," said Dennis, "He looked more like a transvestite than a fairy. - He was a good sport."

Connie Edge came as a fairy (the mind boggles) and Lesley came as a little elf. But apparently some had turned up at the wrong meeting because Gerald Jones came as Jimminy Cricket and Young Frank came as Al Capone, with a black suit, black trilby and dark glasses. Jim Murphy came as an Arab. We hope to have photos in the next issue. We've got to see Cliff!

PUT ME ON IN THE MIDDLE

Colin Wood doesn't like going on stage near the end because after a drink or two he starts slurring his words. But he had no alternative at Penyffordd because the hall was full of players and they all want to get on stage. He went on near the end to sing "Mr Wu's A Window Cleaner Now" and when he should have sung "With a hi-de-hi and a one lung too" he actually sang "With a hi-de-hi and a long one too," which I'm sure George didn't sing.



Colin sings his own words

Les Pearson sent in this newspaper cutting: Yorkshire entertainers had to pretend they were from Lancashire to survive in the business because the main place to perform was Blackpool. "Dave Morris, who was a great comedian who had a radio show called Club Night, actually came from Middlesbrough, but he kept quiet about it. What they wanted was a season at Blackpool.

The attitude of Lancashire people, and certainly Manchester, is that can't put one over on us. Of course, you can put one over on them, but the attitude is one of scepticism and a belief everybody is trying to do you down. But it's not as aggressive as the Yorkshire attitude, which has its fists up most of the time. I think its a sort of underdog humour. People see themselves as put upon slightly, yet being able to maintain a cheerfulness. Lancashire people never get excited about anything - and it's a useful way of getting laughs.

The above is part of a newspaper report on a new book "Now That's Funny" written by David Bradbury and Joe McGrath (Methuen) £12.99.

George & Beryl in Warrington - George

would be 24 years of age when my age group was born. We knew that his family lived in Warrington and that they lived at Stockton Heath. In her early years my future Mother-in-law actually worked in service at the Formby home, Hill Crest, for the Formby family and during this time she collected several photos of the Formbys which were lost over the years.

As a youngster I remember the gang getting word that George & Beryl were at Fred Bailey's and when we heard this we would all scamper to see if we could meet them. Unfortunately it wasn't to be because they would either be hiding away in Fred's office, - where Fred controlled his wholesale fruiterer business, - or probably they'd left. However, although we were unlucky, some of the kids were fortunate to meet them and here is a photo of George and Beryl handing out bananas to some of them at Fred's store shed. Fred stands on the right with the trilby hat.



Ukes For Sale - Nice to hear from Tony Marshall who has just

rung from Leeds. He has three uke/banjos for sale:-

Dallas "A" with improvements string adjustment - no case - £50 o.n.o.

Dallas "B" in good condition - no case - £120 o.n.o.

Dallas "C" in good condition - case - £250 o.n.o.

Please ring Tony if interested on 0113 2740111

Have you an interesting story for the Newsletter?

Hee - weren't the old days great?

Back in the 1880 (5 years after GF senior was born) J C BARKER, who was a Clog and Patten Maker, Newsagent and General Dealer, of Pendlebury, Nr Manchester, was prepared to supply the public with the following articles . . .

Periodicals and Bristles	Bury Simnels and Powder Blue
Cobblers wax and Penny whistles	Paper, Rubbing Stones and Sand
Pattens, Clogs and daily papers	Copy Books in every hand
Startling times for midnight tapers	Magnesia, Blacking and Weekly News
Almanacs for various names	Any Book you like to choose
Books of pleasing fireside games	Teaspoons, Tablespoons and Spices
Monthly magazines, Pomatum	Fine Cigars of various prices
Nuts - too may sorts to state em	Tobacco, British workman stuff
Valentines in great variety	Knives and Mustard, sharp enough
Suitable for all society	Toys for children, Helps for Nurses
Tales, religious, social, moral	Oranges and fancy purses
Neck-beads very much like coral	Wesley's portrait, Albert's, Bunyan
Tales of past and present times	Cloggers Chips and Pickled Onion
Sparrow-bills and Nursery Rhymes	Congreve Matches, Fusees too
Tales of Goblins, Imps and Spectres	Ladies Twist for those who chew
Air balloons and Mursell's lectures	Pens of steel and pens of quills
Strings for big and little Fiddles	Purgative and Stomach Pills
Mormon works and books of Riddles	Clog-clasps, Apples, Ink, Bootlaces
Books for Sunday Scholars Prizes	Holders for Cigars and Cases
Tobacco, Pipes all shapes and sizes	Rings and India Rubber Teats
Bibles, Sealing Wax and Figs	Revival Hymns and Humbug Sweets
Readying Combs and one inch Sprigs	Hair Oil, Clog Nails, Pencils, Slates
Brick-dust, Prayer books, Scented soap	Perfumes, Pigtails, Plugs and Dates
Toothache Pills and Bands of Hope	Sweets in all their preparations
Sugar, Toffee, Books of Martyrs	Jack in a Box and Gough's Orations
Spurgeon's Sermons, and Ladies Garters.	All these and more than I can mention
Eccles Cakes and genuine too	Invite the Public's kind attention.
The above was written for an advertisement by Joshua Lysons in 1880.	

Granada Plus TV - It was Tuesday the 1st of December, at about 11pm, and there was a quiz game on the "Men and Motors" programme. Members of the team had to recognise the names of popular songs which were sung to George's tunes. One of the men played about 4 of George's tunes (one was Lamp Post) and strummed the chords on a uke banjo from sheet music. Actually it was amateurish but interesting.

Just Think!! - You could have advertised something for sale here!

How Was The GFS First Formed? - Charles

Stewart supplies a copy of a letter which George Wilson, of London, wrote to The Stage magazine in 1961. "As I was dubbed "South London's George Formby," which I consider a privilege, I knew George & Beryl over many years, and only last October, George and I were together in Blackpool. He was a marvellous man.

I intend to open a "George Formby Appreciation Society," and if anyone is as keen on George as I am, I should like to hear from them. I feel that what was once said in an article, 'There's nothing quite like George's uke' is there?' to be a very true and wonderful statement. I fell under the 'Formby Magic' some nine years ago, and have remained enthralled ever since. I have only to play one of his discs and the magic is again woven. Thank heaven for the wonder of the gramophone: it will show to the future peoples what a man George was and the wonder that was his power to produce through his hands.

It was a rare privilege to have known George, and to have been born in his time: to relish that rare talent nowadays, that of a true artist, so very, very hard to find in this day and age. I sign off with words from one of the not so well known of George's numbers, and think that the words are appropriate:

Goodnight little fellow goodnight

It's time to close your eyes and go to sleep. George Wilson.

A second letter read - Further to my tribute to George Formby, I should like to amplify on The George Formby Appreciation Society." This is to answer the numerous letters I received from George's admirers.

The sole purpose will be to keep alive the name of George Formby, and to circulate to members news of George's past activities, and to arrange meetings at various towns up and down the country, for the purpose of record recitals of George's records. It is furthermore hoped to show one of George's films at each meeting. Also if members wish to bring along their ukulele banjos they may give some recitals of his numbers. These meetings will be for Members only to get over the problem of Copyright, etc. A lot depends on the strength of the membership, and of course to provide such amenities will involve a membership fee of some kind. I shall arrange for a Committee to be elected.

It would be nice if all the members would donate towards a memoriam plaque, which perhaps Emile Littler might allow to be placed at the Palace, London, where George was at his best in 'Zip Goes A Million' and 'Dick Whittington.'

The project would be non-profit making. If a member's belongings include a tape recorder, this would make another avenue open, i.e. the exchange of tapes of George's work. Out of the funds the Society would buy an annual wreath for George's grave, and put an 'In Memoriam' notice in The Stage."

Latest List for Southern Ireland

Mary Atkinson, Eileen Hansbury, Charlie Penman, Bill Pope, Marion Wilkes, Irene Conlon, Alice Cronshaw, Glenys Walter Kirkland, Alan Newton, Des Redfern, Caldicott Family (3), Eve Stewart, Joan Littlewood, Sylvia Currey, Brian & Connie Edge, Alan & Pat Chenery, Stan & Eva Evans, Denis & Olwen Gale, Trevor & Flo Hughes, Dennis & Leslie Lee, Arthur & Mary Newton, Geoff & Dolwen Shone, Alan & Liz Whittaker, Colin & Christine Wood, John & Sue Beevers, Paul & Jill Woodhead and Betty, Anthony Mason - 42 ' date.

PLEASE NOTE: The coach **All SEATS ARE NOW SOLD** ... only 6 seats left.

Get Ready For Ireland Song

Cockles & Mussels - Tuned to "C"



In Dublin's fair city where girls are so pretty I first set my eyes on sweet
She was a fishmonger, but sure 'twas no wonder, for so were her father and
She died of a fever, and no-one could save her, and that was the end of sweet



Molly Malone. As she wheeled her wheelbarrow -
mother before. And they wheeled their wheelbarrow -
Molly Malone. Her ghost wheels her barrow -



through streets broad and narrow, crying Cockles and Mussels alive, alive oh.



Alive, alive oh, alive, alive oh, crying Cockles and Mussels alive, alive oh.

IF YOU'VE GOT ANY GOOD OLD IRISH SINGALONGS WITH CHORDS
PLEASE SEND EM IN FOR THE NEXT ISSUE.

Brother Ronald (well into his 80s) Rang - Stan! - I'm looking

for an old song called "It's A Great Life If You Don't Weaken" or something like that. Can you help?

Well we'll try! Has anybody got the words and music to it? if so please write in. Brother Ronald, - known as the Industrial Monk, does a lot of good work throughout the country and plays his sing-alongs on his Martin ukulele at all the functions. He is an inspiration to us all.

Jim Bramwell is a busy lad!

He's had a Stair Lift Chair fitted in the house and he's so pleased with it that he is giving all the neighbours a free ride. They are delighted and some think it's better than going to Blackpool for the day.



Eileen Abbott- Blackpool Branch -

Wishes to thank all the members who have been so kind to her during her recent spell in hospital. After her operation she is making every effort to overcome her health problem and attending the Wainwright meeting.



On behalf of the North West Members I wish you the very best of health Eileen. We appreciate the help that you and Steve give to Eve & Charles. George's light is shining for you.

Is Our Editor Cracking Up? by Brian Edge

Just what is that Stan Evans going on about? In his notes at the foot of Crewe's October concert report our editor suggests that I should read page 14 of Newsletter 41. Well, what a load of TRIPE that turned out to be. Frank Murphy's waistcoat actually reads "YOUNG CODGER". I'm getting to think that it is Stan Evans who is becoming an Old Codger. Perhaps a trip to your nearest Optician would prove useful! Ha-Ha Now what was that old adage? "Those in greenhouses . . .!"

Help me out Connie, Brian and Dennis Lee are both having a go at my eyesight. My reference was to 'who made the waistcoat', but I must admit defeat regarding the printing. I was convinced that Big Breakfast stated on the phone that they would print "Old Codgers" on the back of the waistcoat. .

Anyway Connie, he's still got it wrong! My comment was in the December Issue not November. Get that Optician on the phone.

Dennis Lee - We've heard nothing from him re. his publicity in the papers. Come on Dennis. We are not falling for this "Feeding ferrets on Magic Paste" tale so what is it all about? We want an answer in the next issue.

Les Pearson is appearing in the Christmas edition of Coronation Street but you'll have difficulty in recognising him because he's dressed as Father Christmas, along with 7 other Father Christmases. In the cafe sketch he is the one nearest to Keith Clifford who is known for impersonating Frank Randall.

North Wales by Cliff (It's time for a new ribbon) Royle

Dear Stan, Sorry to hear that you were "Proper Poorly" and unable to be with us. Seems you will perhaps have to do a miracle on yourself. You missed a great night for we were well and truly overwhelmed. Just over a hundred present at our Christmas Party; a record attendance, and there so many players and entertainers that we had to be rationed to one song each.

We had a few somewhat special turns; Jim Knight did his stand up rendition of Burlington Bertie (without a uke but with his monocle); Jonathan & Pam Baddeley each gave an excellent performance in spite of still suffering from the after effects of their car accident; Brian Wright performed a mixture of song, ribaldry and dance (?); and we were ably entertained by all our youngsters, Steven Ensall, Gareth Sumner, and Mr Black Eyes, himself Frank Murphy. Some of our members that we see (and hear) now and then, Brian Harrison and Kevin Blanchfield performed, but it is rumoured they only came for the food.

Des Redfern came on to do an encore with his "Changing Trains at Crewe" only to told that there was a Mr Ankers in the audience who had actually driven the Queen's Train. He did not say if he changed there. Then we had a return visit of Alison Nadin, assisted by Mother Jean who performed an excellent puppet show for us again. Ray Davies did a great job as MC; his one failing was that he did not manage to control Charlie Penman although he did get him on to the stage to play "Wild, Wild Whiskey". Ray made a special point of thanking the South Cheshire Branch for their wonderful support during the year.

We celebrated Geoff Shone's birthday. However when on stage he was conned into making one of his exceptional playing appearances accompanied by Dennis Lee and Brian Edge. About a dozen took part in our Fancy Dress Competition, - Elves, Gnomes and Fairies, and the winner was Auntie Mary who was dressed as a gnome in a lovely gnome-made outfit All the other entries were excellent.



Gerald Jones and Son

We had excellent food a plenty, provided by members, and organised by a number of our ladies. We had one complaint from the Frodsham party (8) - the cost was too cheap. Thanks to all who provided the food and helped with the presentation. A Happy Christmas to you and Eva and keep up the Miracles.

Thanks Cliff. I felt terribly feverish that night but managed to get to Blackpool the following night to support Charles & Eve. I would have won the Fancy Dress as Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer. Young Mary wouldn't have stood a chance.

Young Cliff Royle

has come up with a good point regarding mini - discs. "When we use mini discs, which are prepared by other player's, we need to have some sort of indication of the number of verses, choruses etc. Only recently I was caught out when part of the third playing of "Lamp Post" was missed out. It has also happened with other players.

Good point Cliff. You are quite right. Possibly we require a few code numbers at the back of each title giving some idea of verses, choruses etc. If you wish to bring your own backing tapes to my home I will be pleased to put them on mini disc.

S.O.S. - Many years ago a singer by the name of Issy Bonn sang a great little song called "Daddy's Little Girl" which has a lovely melody. I know how the chorus goes but does anyone know the verse.

CHORUS

You're the end of the rainbow, my pot of gold.
You're Daddy's Little Girl. to have and hold.
A precious gem is what you are
You're mummy's bright and shining star
You're the spirit of Christmas, my star on the tree
You're the Easter bunny to mummy and me
You're sugar, you're spice, you're everything nice
And you're daddy's little girl.



If you know the verse please give me a ring on 01925 727102 - Stan Evans.

Les Pearson's Just Phoned - Stan!!! - They've

just mentioned George again on Coronation Street!!! - "Janice Battersby's daughter was cleaning the shop windows when she was approached by her mother who told her to clean their house windows, claiming that the last time they were done was when George Formby cleaned then" Thanks for the report Les. You went down very well at Crewe.

Great News - The Coach Trip to Southern Ireland is completely

full and there are no seats left. The last to book seats were Mac & Milly McGee, George & Mary Atkinson, and Peter & Joan Cain. All the rooms in the hotel are booked but we are still negotiating with coach companies for the best deal.

Arrangements for travel, deposits etc. will be announced in a later edition of the Newsletter and/or by phone when Dennis Lee will be contacting you. Although the seats are booked there may be the odd cancellation so please contact Dennis or I if you wish to put your name down on the waiting list.

Beryl Formby Way - The Blackpool Gazette are inviting readers to write in with their opinion on what the new Lytham / St Anne's road (from the M55) should be named. Julian Wilson of St Anne's has suggested that it should be named Formby Way, while David Meldrum, of Ansdell, prefers it to be called Les Dawson Drive. Roger Mellor of Lytham has suggested that it should be named Shrimpers Reach because the first residents made their living shrimping there and "reach" is a nautical term.

In my opinion it should be named "Beryl Formby Way" simply because it would be one way of compensating her for the damaging abuse that was thrown at her during her life as George's wife and manager. I've stressed many times that she was a woman determined to do business in a mans world and she suffered for it. Her sole desire was for George to receive the bouquets and fortunately she was tough enough to withstand the brickbats. The womens libbers of today have a lot to thank her for.

Sale Christmas Party - Another grand night at Sale and the room was full. The Dolly Sisters, - or is it The Spice Girls, - or is it The Al Diamond Trio (there were four of them - Alice, Sheila, Vera and Hilda) and the Sapphires? They keep changing their name for every party. Anyway they were good (hope to have a photo in the next issue) and to think that they did all their rehearsing in the toilets. No wonder they looked flushed.

Cyril Palmer was a star when he sang "Delilah" but Tom Jones didn't get the treatment given to Cyril when Incontinence Pants and Bloomers were thrown at him by the ladies. He weathered the storm very well and went on with the song.

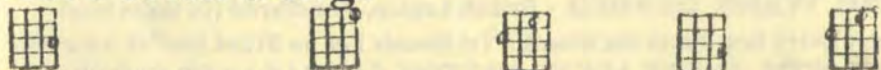
A grand buffet was served up by the stalwart workers and appreciated by all. In fact they'd overdone it because there were loads of sandwiches left over for the "doggie bags."

We were pleased to receive Mac & Milly Mcgee and George & Mary Atkinson at the meeting. They travelled from Leeds to be with us. It was Milly's first night for a long time because she'd been suffering with ill health. Anyway she looked great on the night. Nice to see you all again.

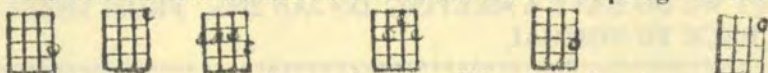
Alice & Cyril wish to thank all for their support and for creating a wonderful atmosphere.

Anything to sell? If you have anything to sell drop a line and we'll offer it in the Newsletter. ANYTHING!!! Home Made Rock Cakes - take your pick! Second hand toilet rolls. It won't cost you a penny to advertise.

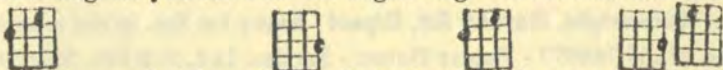
More Irish Songs



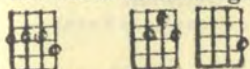
WHEN IRISH EYES ARE SMILING sure tis like a morn in spring. In the lilt



of Irish laughter you can hear the angels sing. When Irish hearts are happy all

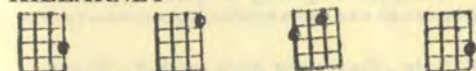


the world seems bright and gay. But when Irish hearts are smiling sure they

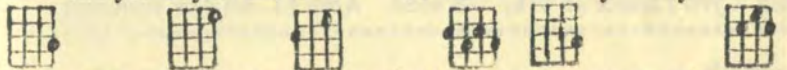


steal your heart away

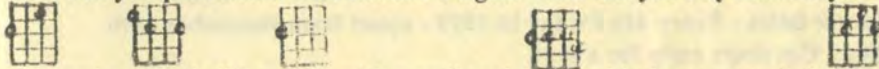
KILLARNEY



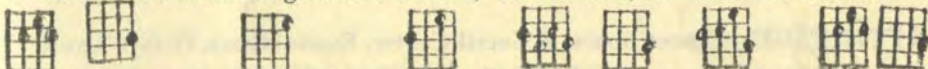
How can you buy all the stars in the skies. How can you buy two Irish eyes




How can you purchase a fond mother's sighs. How can you buy Killarney?



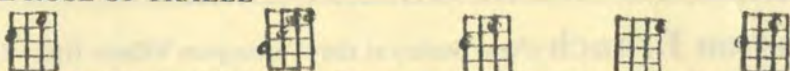
Nature bestowed all her gifts with a smile; the emerald, the snamrock the blar



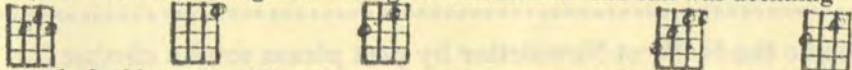
ney. When you can buy all those wonderful things. Then you can buy Killarney

WHOOFS  *BLUE*

THE ROSE OF TRALEE



The pale moon was rising above the green mountain. The sun was declining



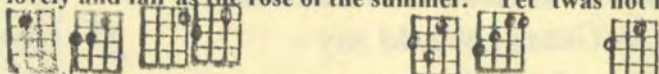
beneath the blue sea. When I strayed with my love to the pure crystal fountain



That stands in the beautiful vale of Tralee



She was lovely and fair as the rose of the summer. Yet 'twas not her beauty



alone that won me. Oh no, 'twas the truth in her eyes ever dawning



That made me love Mary the Rose of Tralee

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
PLEASE NOTE -THE RE ARE NO MEETING S ON JAN 1st OR IN FEBRU-
ARY. BUT WE DO HAVE A MEETING ON JAN 29th. FROM THEREON
WE ARE BACK TO NORMAL

Blackpool - Wainwright, Hornby Rd, B/pool - Every 1st Sat. in the month -
Tel Eve Stewart on 01253 768097 - Future Dates: - Sat Jan 2nd, Feb 6th, Mar 6th,
Apr 3rd. 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 - Dates are now settled - Every
3rd Friday - Ring Cyril Palmer on 0161 748 6550. Adm £1. All Are Welcome.

Crewe Branch Wistaston Memorial Hall - Ring Brian Edge on 01270
69836 Future dates - Every 4th Friday in 1999 - apart from December 18th.
Adm 50p. Get there early for a seat.

Warrington Alliance Sports & Social Centre, Evans House, Orford Lane,
Warrington - Stan Evans on 01925 727102 - SPECIAL MEETINGS on Friday
Apr 30th and Friday Oct 29th.

Werrington Branch (Near Stoke) at the Werrington Village Hall - Ev-
ery 2nd Thursday in the month, Ring Bil 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 or-
der 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 - 15th January.

So as George would say -

"Get Cracking"

Support Your Newsletter

