

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 48

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Your Newsletter is Four Years Old



Specially Produced for
George Formby Fans

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Welcome to Newsletter No. 48

and haven't we had a busy month! The North Wales Branch have been very busy entertaining and packing the streets at the Llandudno Extravaganza and Warrington attracted 135 to the Alliance Social club to raise money for 8 year old brain tumour sufferer Jordan Stevenson.

The George Formby N. West Newsletter is now four year old so you will be able to have another 24 issues bound together for a keep sake. Remploy of London Rd, Newcastle under Lyme ST5 1RX - Tel 01782 711300 are the people for the job. The price is around the £12 mark. Please read on

The Jolly Folks Section - Switch on the TV and you will be faced with "Doom & Gloom" from all over the world. There is absolutely no happiness whatsoever on TV and even the once comical Soaps have now changed to an endless series of "aches and pains." None of the channels show pleasant programmes like they did in the past. Whatever happened to the 'Music Hall shows' and the 'Minstrels'? They were great!

CAMPAIGN

So the North-West Newsletter has launched a campaign to change the world! We are looking for happy folks who radiate happiness and who love entertaining. They will be made members of our Jolly Folks section.



If you know of anyone who is always pleasant and loves amusing people with happy smiles and jokes etc. then drop a line to the Editor - and a happy smiling photo if poss.

To start the ball rolling I would like to nominate Jim Bramwell. He is always happy and loves entertaining, and he never visits a meeting without a pocket full of mintballs to share with the members. Jim is my mintball hero!!! Secondly I would like to nominate Dennis Lee and Lesley Lee as a Jolly Fellow and a Jolly Jill. They always wear a smile whenever you met them and they are always keen to help anyone.

Now there are many more members that qualify as Jollies Folk so the next time you go to a meeting have a good look round and let me know if you spot anyone who is always radiating loads of happiness. George was a Jolly Folk!

Penyffordd wants players to entertain at the Penyffordd Carnival on June 19th. Ring Dennis Lee on - 01244 544799.

The Formby Story

Part 38 by Stan Evans

It was confirmed that George was suffering from a coronary thrombosis which was due to overworking. Hundreds of letters poured in from all over the country and Beryl answered them all - even the simplest of notes received her attention. On the 13th of June 1952 she replied to a Mr Saich of Surrey: *How sweet of you to write such a charming letter to George, and I thank both you and your wife. His illness was very serious but I am pleased to say he is coming along quite nicely now, although he needs a great deal of rest.*



I note that you have seen in the newspapers about his retirement but when a doctor tells you that you must rest for 12 months to 2 years surely that is an enforced retirement. We do thank you for your good wishes for his return to good health, and may we in turn send you our very best wishes. Yours Sincerely, Beryl Formby.

Three months later and George was getting restless again. He was concerned about getting back into some sort of routine but the only careers he knew anything about was horse racing and show business. The thoughts of performing in big shows like Zip Goes A Million didn't please him so, like his father, he considered buying a farm and going into the racehorse breeding business.

On the 9th September, (Beryl's birthday) 1952, they wrote to their friend, Hilda of Bolton: *By the way, George and I will be removing from here shortly, and from the 1st of October the following will be our address - "Beryldene, Knocksinna, Black Rock, Dublin.*

So George, once he'd made his mind up, didn't waste any time in getting established in the horse racing business. The 24 room house they bought in Southern Ireland had originally been built as a night club and now it was to be George's racing stables. However, they soon discovered that George was only trying to re-trace his boyhood steps, - when he trained to be a jockey in Dublin. This wasn't exactly what he wanted and they were missing their Lancashire life.

At the end of 1952 George was progressing with his health but he still wasn't fit enough to go back into showbusiness. In February the following year they received a desperate plea from their old friend Josef Locke who was having serious problems with the tax man. He had to get out of the country quick so, due to George and Beryl having helped him up the ladder, he decided that he would give them the first chance to buy his home, at a bargain price of £15,000, plus the fact that possibly only G & B had so much cash available. The house was Fairhaven, Blackpool, and they snapped up the offer. More Next Month.

Llandudno Extravaganza - Due to the extreme fine weather the roads were packed and nose to tail all the way to Llandudno.

We arrived in the town centre and found the lads, - Ray Davies, Dennis Lee and Kevin Blanchfield, who were about to start playing in their canopy covered stage. They told me that they had been closed down the previous day for attracting too many people and blocking the streets. This resulted in an argument between Ray and the copper who told them to move on.

Apparently this year's event had been taken over by a different organiser who couldn't make his mind up on where the lads were supposed to be playing. When he told them to move to another spot, - again - they refused. However on day two they moved to the covered stage. Confusion arose again when the nearby shopkeeper came out and complained that the organiser had plugged into their electric without seeking permission. However the lads went on to perform and they soon drew the huge crowds around.

They had first class equipment - complete with mini disc player - and the sound flowed through the streets better than ever. The crowds soon joined in with Mr Wu, Windows and Blackpool Rock and soon they were asking for requests. They enjoyed "Out In The Middle East" and showed their approval by throwing extra money in the bucket.

Apart from the special annual event there was also a Transport Festival, half a mile away, which consisted of hundreds of old vehicles, - buses, lorries, caravans, campers, motorcycles, tents, trade stalls, entertainment etc. We searched the entire length of the field and finally found Liverpool's Stan



Watkinson and his brother Les who were staying there for the week. They invited us in and served up coffees. A very pleasant day out enjoyed by all.

Zip Goes A Million

- Received a phone call from Chris Jagus to say that he is appearing in "Zip" (as Percy Piggot). He wanted us to publicise his show which was at the Whitworth Civic Hall, Rochdale. It opened from the 4th to the 8th of May which gave me only two days to let you all know. "Far too late," I told him, "But if you'd let us know earlier we could have arranged a coach and possibly some publicity in the press." Great Shame.

Serious Complaint - BE PROFESSIONAL - Some of the members of our Ladies Section are complaining about the state of some the men when they go up on stage. Instead of looking smart, like a PROFESSIONAL, they are all puffed out with baggy trousers and the reason for this is because they've got their pockets full of rubbish. One of them said, "Well you know what men are! They carry all sorts of things in their pockets: string, rubber bands, dirty hankies, bits of wood, empty matchbox, broken pens, folded paper, electric cable and much more. In fact their baggy pants look like a clown's cast-offs and not in the least professional.

So come on you scruffy lot. The ladies are looking for some polish in your act - especially those who are entering the Busking Festival in Southern Ireland - and they won't be satisfied until they see it. No more stuffed pockets on the stage. *Mind you - it's OK for the ladies. They have their rubbish stuffed in handbags - under the table, so perhaps we should start a new trend in the society. The German males carry handbags so perhaps we should do similar. Although the thoughts of Brian Edge and Dennis Lee carrying handbags is enough to turn the stomach.*

Uke For Sale - We recently reported the sad loss of Alan Whittaker. Well Liz, Alan's wife, wishes to sell Alan's uke banjo which was very little used. It is a Baby Gibson copy - made by John Claughton - and the price is £400. Anyone interested can ring Dennis Lee on 01244 544799.

Swap Shop - You'll remember our old pal, George Cheetham of the Sale Branch, and who has been a member of the GFS since day one in 1961. Well George is now in Conifers Rest Home, 253 Seymour Grove, Old Trafford, Manchester M16 0DS and he's feeling a little lonely without a television to watch. As he no longer uses his uke banjo he thought he would try to swap it for a tele. If anyone has got a spare tele would you please give George a ring on 0161 881 9380 and ask the carer if you could speak to George. He'll be chuffed.

Banjo Wanted (not a uke banjo) - George Sherwin requires a five stringed banjo so if you've got one to sell please give him a ring on 01695 723646. He's waiting to hear from you.

Uke for Sale or Exchange - Jim Knight of the Peniffordd Branch has got a large (Graham Greenfield) uke banjo, with big resonator - for sale at £500 O.N.O. or he will swap - with adjustment - for a Baby Gibson type of uke banjo. You can ring Jim on 01978 358472.

Warrington Special - We had 25 artists listed to play at



this special concert which was to raise funds to send 8 year old Jordan Stevenson on short holidays. To be sure of fitting them in a timed programme was set out which allowed 7 minutes to each artist sing two songs. It all went like a dream until we discovered that some - without notice - hadn't turned up.

However, this was soon overcome and the crowd of 135 enjoyed every minute. Our appeal for raffle prizes resulted in 50 excellent gifts being handed in and everyone well worth winning.

To help young Jordan, a charge of £1.50 - including a buffet - was made on the door, which went down extremely well. In fact, considering the occasion, the quality of the buffet and the performances, some felt that we should have charged at least £4 or £5.



Edna & Ron Rigby (our organist)

DISTURBANCE

Unfortunately we had problems when one of our old friends created quite a disturbance when asked to pay £1.50 on the door. To make things worse he complained about our valued organist (who is extremely experienced) and also the songs he was asked to play. The reason for asking for these particular songs was because we requested non-Formby songs from some of the more experienced performers to help create a variety type of show. He was fully aware of this when first asked and all the others agreed without complaint.

Before his performance he caused an argument and grossly insulted the organist, to the audience, claiming that he isn't good enough to back him.

It was stressed over and over again that the importance was to help the child, - who may have only weeks to live - and not to consider our own self importance. However, he was more wrapped up in his own self centred ego than some poor child who may have only weeks to live. Consequently he will never be asked to take part again.

After the show our organist complained that this same person upset him last year when he threatened to belt him over the head with his uke if he got a note wrong. This particular person boasts that he is a "Born again Christian" but, as I told him. "Christianity is shown by what you do in life to help others, - not talking

and bragging about it." Anyway, after being challenged by decent people, he left the hall and we got on with a very pleasant show. My apologies to all for inviting him along. Never again!!!!!!



VARIETY SHOW

The show went very well and the mixed audience was more than pleased.

Guests, Jeffrey Formby Booth, (George's nephew) and Geraldine Smith, (George's niece) were introduced and received a grand reception, Gerry Mawdsley brought the house down with his violin playing,

magic illusion and fire eating and they shouted for more. Our firm favourites, Alison and Jean performing Frankie Wood's puppets went down very well and it all came over so professional. Frankie was introduced to the crowd and again they showed their appreciation. Janet Hawkins brought her keyboard 150 miles to put on a solo spot and the warm Warrington audience showed their appreciation.



PROFESSIONALISM

Dennis & Lesley Lee also delighted the crowd with their new Pink & Blue Toothbrush routine. They were really excellent and looked so professional. No doubt they've rehearsed this a few hundred times at home to get it so perfect. As usual Tom Meredith performed well with his Jolson impersonation and also did, Alan Chenery, Alan Newton, John Taylor, Pat Kelly (mouth organ), Cyril Palmer, Mary Atkinson, Des Redfern, Cliff Royle, Bill Pope, Arthur Newton, Ron Rigby our organist. Stan Evans was the Compere for the night.

Many thanks to Eva Evans for organising the buffet and all those who helped and supplied extra plates of sandwiches etc. Brian McCally and the staff at the Maltings Pub for cooking 200 chicken legs and loads of sausage, all those who brought wonderful prizes for the raffle, Dennis Lee & Lesley for supplying and operating the excellent sound system, Charles & Eve Stewart for operating the door system, all who helped with the raffle and especially to Denise Lynch (Ashley's mother) who contributed so much to the occasion, and those who came along to give support. Apologies if anyone has been missed out.

We raised £470 less £100 for food etc. leaving a balance of £370. Now totalling £1250 for two concerts. A wonderful achievement for N. West George Formby area. G & B would be proud.

Success at Blackpool - Well it

was finger biting time during the lead up to Blackpool's April meeting as we all wondered if the loyal supporters would follow us to the new venue. However there was nothing to worry about as Charles & Eve were delighted with the crowd that turned up.



Bromley Whittaker loves to sing the old music hall songs

CHARLES & EVE write - We wish to thank all the members who showed their support and loyalty to the Blackpool Branch at their first meeting in the new venue on Monday evening April 26th. It was a wonderful turnout, beyond expectations. The general verdict was that South Shore Cricket Club was comfortable, friendly and very easy to find from the motorway. We were gratified that so many found their way to give us a good first night.

Monday evening seemed a good night to choose when changing the venue because it gives good breathing space between other branch meetings. Among our local regulars which included Stan's fan club from Cleveley's were Frank Bennet, and our stalwart helpers Steve & Eileen Abbott and Alan Middleton.

Making the long journey from Crewe were Brian & Connie Edge; Cyril & Sheila Palmer, Walter Kirkland & Alice Cronshaw, Stan Evans, Jim & Joan Bramwell from Warrington, John Taylor, Bromley & Bertha Whittaker from Lancaster, and Paul, Tony and Elaine Kenny from Preston.

The cricket club members seemed impressed and enjoyed the entertainment. They were most co-operative and made us feel at home. We hope the improvement continues and look forward to the next meeting on Bank Holiday Monday 31st May. *Thank you Charles & Eve. It was one of the best nights ever and we were surprised with the turnout. I'm pleased we haven't lost Jim Greeves Fan Club during the move.*

What a Nice Man! - Arthur Sinnott of Liverpool writes -

... but I must say how much I enjoy reading the Newsletter, I read it from cover to cover and then pass it on. It always amazes me how many people are interested in George and his music. They show great enthusiasm whenever I mention him (especially the younger element). Many thanks for all your hard work. *Well it's nice to be appreciated isn't it?*

Penyffordd are entertaining the TV cameras at the next meeting 4th June

Aching Joints? - Like Ken Dodd said, "Once we get to 60 it all starts to click. . . . the arms, the legs, the neck, the back . . ." and like most other old uns I've been getting all sorts of aches in the back etc. At times I thought it was a case of living with it. Maybe Not!!!

One of my neighbours goes regularly to the gym to work out with some of the local over 60s. He told me that they all enjoy turning up but the aches and pains in the joints prevents them from getting down to working out thoroughly. Their instructor made some enquiries and came up with the name of a remedy that is in tablet or capsule form. They are "Glucosamine Sulphate" which can be obtained from the health shops. At first I thought "Hello, another cure that's bound to fail," but I did buy a box from the chemist, - cost £11 for 30 tablets, produced by Health Perception, Winkfield Row, Berkshire RG12 8NY.

Two tablets per day are recommended so I took my first dose. Apparently the Glucosamine renews the connective tissues around the joints etc. and I must admit that within a day or two I was feeling relief. After about a week there was a tremendous improvement. The box lasted 15 days which might be a bit expensive for some members but after shopping around found that similar tablets can be obtained for about half the price. Highly recommended!!!!

Stan (super fit) Evans. Just booked for next year's marathon?

Sale War Theme - Commemorating VE

Day Sale held a successful War Theme Night. Alice, Walter, Cyril and the gang spent the afternoon dressing the room with union jacks, bunting and Winston Churchill posters etc. and the atmosphere was set for a great night. Some members came in over-tight battlefield uniform and everybody had a great laugh as each character walked in. Birthday Girl Marjorie Travis (right) cracked on she was 23 but we all know that she is at least 24.



Would you buy a car from Spiv Lee _____

Dennis Lee, who came as a war-time Spiv, with Lesley as an Army Officer, told us that they'd got lost on the way in so they had to get of the car to ask directions. They couldn't understand why everybody had curious looks on their faces. Dennis got the show going with a War-time Medley and from then on it was non-stop uke playing action. Alan Southworth, who normally operates the sound system wasn't with us so Dick Eaves was thrown in at the deep-end amidst cries of, "Up a bit, down a bit" or "Put a shilling in." However he coped well and survived the night. It was another Great Night enjoyed by all and many thanks to all who played a part.

Anything uke can do to help



■ **PLUCKY** performance . . . Formby fan Alan Newton

WHEN he's not chasing the bad guys, policeman and part-time fire eater Gerry Mawdsley plays a mean ukelele.

Plucky Mary Atkinson only took up the instrument seriously three years ago — at the age of 83 — and retired teacher Cyril Palmer recently discovered that his tenor voice is at its best when he's Leaning On A Lampost.

It Turned Out Nice Again for all three of them when The George Formby Society turned out in force at the Alliance Social Club, Orford Lane, Warrington.

They gathered to help raise funds for brave eight-year-old Jordan Stevenson, from Great Sankey, who is coping with chemotherapy to combat a brain tumour.

Pc Mawdsley, a juggler and uni-cyclist as well as a fire-eater, said: "We're all here to have fun — and if we can do a little good, that's a bonus."

Memories -

News Cutting sent in by John Guy

The "Sons Of Rest" home I went into was in Hickman Park, Bilston. I used to go there with my granddad. The main memory is eating an arrowroot biscuit. I only had one. I used to nibble the 'pimples' around the edge of the biscuit to make it last.

Arrowroot biscuits are not like they were in those days. They were crumbly, tasty and really delicious. I remember every moment I spent with my granddad. He was a very special man. I loved him, and he loved me.

He lived in our street, and ours was 'our house' but when we went to granddad's we would say 'going down home.' There were 10 of us. It was hard for mom and dad to manage, but having brothers and sisters is such a blessing today.

Our ages range from 79 to 59. There are 8 of us left. My granddad died when I was almost 4, and hardly a day goes by when I don't think of him - nearly 60 years ago.

GEORGE FORMBY

By the way, Tommy Burton was born in the house next door. All his family were musical and I can remember Tommy playing his dad's ukelele banjo singing George Formby songs when he was no more than a toddler.

The houses in Hartshorne St are gone now. No blue plaque to celebrate Tommy. No wall to put it on. Thelma Matteson - Newtown. *Apparently Tommy was a member of the GFS Thanks for the cutting John.*

Penyffordd -The TV cameras will be at the June meeting. They are producing a show on Peoples Hobbies which should be quite interesting. They will be interviewing some of the crowd - so you'd better look smart on the night!

Let's have a Lancastrian personality immortalised

IT'S Britain's most famous landmark – but it could be forever a little piece of Lancashire.

The public is being asked to come up with a name for a place on a vacant plinth in London's Trafalgar Square under the shadow of Nelson's Column.

Writer Sir John Mortimer – creator of Old Bailey barrister Rumpole – is heading a group to advise the Government on the future of the plinth.

Culture Secretary Chris Smith highlighted Trafalgar Square as "one of the key images of London" for people all over the world.

Mr Smith said: "For British people too it is a focus for national celebration in times of triumph and a platform for free speech all the year round."

He called for ideas which "reflect not only the cultural significance of the site but

By HUGH LAWRENCE
and STUART DRAPER

also its role as a location of both national and international importance".

The Evening Post has come up with a few famous Lancastrians who would fittingly grace such a historic monument.

The Red Rose county, after all, is at the very heart of Britain and has played a key role in the country's industrial, political, sporting and cultural history.

Honoured

Preston's very own Sir Tom Finney was a national hero when he turned out 76 times for England.

A statue of Sir Tom is planned for outside his beloved Deepdale, but why not one in London for one of the all-time greats of our national game?

Another equally-recognis-

able figure would be Eric Morecambe, perhaps in tandem with fellow funnyman Ernie Wise.

The Morecambe-born gagman will be honoured in the resort when the Queen unveils a statue later this year but the comic duo were perhaps Britain's Kings of Laughter.

Stan Laurel, born in Ulverston, who found fame in America when he teamed up with Oliver Hardy, and Wigan's greatest ukulele exponent George Formby, would be equally popular.

If culture vultures fancied something a little more modern and off-beat, then how about a statue of those worldwide plasticine phenomenons, Wallace and Gromit, created by Preston artist Nick Park?

■ What do you think? Should a Lancashire hero grace Trafalgar Square?

Write with your opinions to the Evening Post, Oliver's Place, Eastway, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 4ZA.



Young Jordan (see page 6) has just come back from a holiday in Majorca and his father told us that for the past months he not been eating food - - only liquid meals, which resulted in him losing weight rapidly. However, during his holiday in the hot sun he was constantly asking for solid meals. Wonderful! Let's hope that George's light is shining for the boy?



Other Peoples Faults and don't forget your own

For those who live in homes of glass should seldom throw a stone
It is very wrong to judge a man until he's fairly tried
If you still don't like his company - Well you can always say you tried.

George on TV - Just been watching a porogramme on BBC2 TV called "The Village" and who should pop up - three times - but George singing "When The Lads Of The Village Get Cracking." Great Stuff!

Stirring the Muck??? - You will remember we reported that David Brett - who we understand is notorious for dishing up the dirt on various top stars - has written a book on George Formby. Well he intends turning up at the June Wintergardens meeting in the hope that he will sell some.

Some months back we received a phone call from the Blackpool Gazette claiming that the book is damaging to George's name, and last week another call from a national press reporter confirming this. I also received a call from Brett who stressed that the details in the book are true but not harmful.

Apparently his book will be used in a series in either the Daily Mail or the Sunday Mail so all we can do is wait for the publication to come out and let him know our feelings at the June meeting. He is reported to have said that stars who are dead can't sue him in court.

My personal fellings are that these writers who dig up the dirt, - and at this stage I'm not saying that Brett is - are in it to make a name for themselves and to cash in on the money. They don't give two hoots for the adoring fans who receive great benefit from their heroes. I had a letter only today from the wife of a very sick man who can't walk or talk but who gets great pleasure from watching George's antics on screen.

Apparently the GFS President has a copy of this book so why haven't we had comments on the content in the Vellum?

George's & Beryl's friend - Tommy Trinder - His

catchphrase was "You lucky people" but Tommy claimed that nobody had been as lucky as him. He was born in Streatham, South London, March 1909, the son of a tram driver and educated at St Andrews School, Holborn, which he left when he was 12. He won a singing competition at a music hall in Islington. This led to a job in Casey's Court, a juvenile revue company, and sang, "What is a Mammy, Daddy - Everyone's Got One But Me." Tommy moved everybody to tears except his own mother who wished he'd get an honest job.



Years of hard work followed but in 1936 he was spotted by George Black who was so impressed he put him in his revue, "Tune Inn." After touring with this in 1939 Tommy arrived at the theatre with which his name would become synonymous - The London Palladium. After 10 weeks war broke out and the theatres closed. They reopened and Tommy joined The Crazy Gang in their show Top Of The world - at the Palladium. But 3 days later they closed again when the Battle Of Britain began. Tommy started again and in the mid- 50s returned to the Palladium to compere Sunday Night at the Palladium. He was a great supporter of Fulham Football Club and later became a director of the club.

He was also a great favourite of the Royal family and after a performance at Winsor it's said that the King told Tommy that he'd come on in the world since the last time he saw him. Tommy replied with, "Yes sir, and you haven't done so bad yourself." Tommy worked well into his 60s with pantomimes, summer seasons and one-man shows. Of his life he said, " I wouldn't change a thing . I've been everywhere and met everyone.. A marvellous life is the best business in the world. He died at the age of 80 in 1989.

I personally remember seeing Tommy on one of the Blackpool piers. It was Saturday afternoon - a bad time for theatres because most people would be travelling and on this particular afternoon the sun was blazing hot. The theatre was almost empty with no more than 40 people, but Tommy and the large cast worked like real troopers and gave first class performances. Tommy didn't let the fact that the hall was empty bother him and it was plain to see that he kept the cast and the audience in high spirits. I'll never forget that show.

Late News - Just heard that Peter Cain of the Crewe Branch has been taken into hospital with tummy pains and that is why he didn't turn up for the Practise Night. We in the N. West wish him well and look forward to seeing him back with us. Brian Edge.

Crewe Meeting

The highlight of the April Crewe meeting for me was the excellent performance given by young Frank Murphy. Frank has tried out almost every imaginable song since he started playing the uke but this time it was clear that he had been concentrating on perfecting his performance which was enhanced by a good backing tape. His hard work certainly paid off and what a difference the addition of a good backing tape makes to any ones performance. For best results performers should never be without musical accompaniment.



Ron Whiston
another Mr Bones

Heidi Greenfield then showed us all that the girls can perform as well as the lads if not better with a super demo of uke laying along with a very nice voice indeed. It was nice to have Johnny Haywood of the Midlands Branch with us and making his debut at Crewe.

Glenys Huntington gave us another excellent solo trumpet performance of Duke Ellington's 'Satin Doll'. How does she hit those notes first time? We are certainly privileged to have such a fine artiste as Glenys in our Branch.



Trevor Hughes

The jazz band tried out a new number "All of Me" which had been rehearsed at the Crewe Practise* Night. The backing tape had been made by our own Jonathan Baddeley who performed the vocals and the clarinet instrumentals, supported by Alan Newton (trombone), Glenys(trumpet) Steve Hassall(drums), Walter and Ron (bones) and Brian, Alan ,Conny, Carl and Peter (ukes).

Have you noticed what a good uke player Pamela Baddeley is becoming. I think it is time she made her debut. If you agree with me then please get on to her! Connie performed a new Stanley King number "Living in the Middle of Trafalgar Square" - a real Dickie Speake speed special! It has a really good lyrics - a great song and if I may say so she performed it well.

Thanks Brian. I like the bit about Connie performing a NEW Stanley King number. She must have been contacting the other side to get it because Stanley's been dead a few years.

Overheard in the bus queue

- Of course I believe in Astrology! How dare anyone even suggest that my wife doesn't have the same characteristics as Adolf Hitler.

Penyffordd Meeting - By Stan Evans. Well we certainly

missed Cliff Royle - our Pennyffordd star reporter this month as we've very little to report on the May meeting.

Anyway it was a grand night with no less than 65 paying the usual 50 pence - which included a delicious cheese pastry (how do they do it?) on the door and we were pleased to receive a couple of smart young men from the Essex Branch - Peter Harper and John Beck. John is



responsible for organising his wife in the making of these brilliant waistcoats that the members are now wearing and so he brought along a case - load to sell.

There was a lot of enthusiasm but unfortunately - due to all these cheese pasties - John had very few to offer that went the full distance around the bulging and well fed stomachs. Perhaps he will make another journey?



Ever cheerful Peter Harper made his debut on the Penyffordd stage but claimed that Dennis's tape was out of sine with his uke. Anyway, whatever the problem he came over very well and received the usual N. Wales welcome.

Once again M/C Ray Davies raised a few laughs when he threatened to blow the whistle on any artist who didn't have a smiling face. Peter and John (above) always have a smiling face so he had no worries there. It was nice to see Sheila & John Parry again from Ellesmere Port. Sheila is certainly becoming a uke practising Formby fan.

I was pleased to see that young Stephen Ensall (right) is still keeping up with his playing. He has got an excellent rhythm with his timing and some day he will make a very good entertainer. Another great night enjoyed by all.



The following day Eva & I were out shopping when who should we bump into but Dennis, Peter & John. We went back to my house where we had a great session of Formby chit-chat. A perfect ending.

Congratulations to our Newsletter Editor Stan Evans who with this issue has completed his fourth Volume of the magazine - no less than 48 issues of 20 pages per issue. This is quite a monumental achievement and is appreciated by all branch members.

The magazine is a great asset to branches as everyone has an opportunity to have their say about things that are going on and it is a useful tool to help building up our artistes morale. In addition it is an excellent diary of branch activities.

When I ring Stan I always say "Is that the office?" as that is just what it really is as a fair proportion of Stan's home is totally dedicated to George Formby and the Newsletter. It is a store for the paper he uses for the newsletter, a place for his fax machines his computers and photocopiers, telephone and everything else he needs to produce 20 pages each month.

Before I write more I have to say a special thanks to Stan's long suffering wife Eva who must be very special indeed to put up with all that lot around her and folks ringing up around the clock. It may well be Stan's hobby but it really means a lot to us. All the branches should use the magazine to their best advantage, those who do not are missing valuable opportunities.

Individual members should also do their best to contribute something, however small, as it takes a lot of writing to fill twenty pages each month. Stan will welcome the contributions particularly the small ones as they are useful for filling up gaps. So please, everybody do try your best to fill Stan's postbag.

From us all - "Well done Stan" and here's to the next Volume.

Hey Stan we've got to watch out with the spelling of this word as it seems we keep getting it wrong. I've had a couple of complaints from readers and that won't do. (I know we have that arrangement that if they complain to you then you blame me and if they complain to me then I blame you but it can't go on!

PRACTICE, noun. A doing or effecting; custom; habit; actual performance; exercise of any profession; medical treatment; training; drill; dexterity.

PRACTISE, verb t. To put into practise; to do or perform frequently or habitually; to exercise, as any profession; to commit; verb i. To perform certain acts frequently for instruction or amusement. I hope that you will print this Stan then if either of us get it wrong in the future it will be your fault.

Oh no it won't! I've just bought a computer programme that scans the report and allows me to chop it up as I wish. If there is any doubt on spelling I will leave it 'as is' for you to get the blame. How's That?

Words of Wisdom - from Joe Taylor -

Irony is buying a suit with two pairs of trousers and burning a hole in the coat.

Tact is the ability to see others as they see themselves

If money is the root of all evil - give me a cutting

If your mind goes blank: How do you know?

Are disappointed fish gutted?

How do "Keep Off The Grass" signs get there?

After an all night sitting the House of Commons All Parties have now agreed that it must have been the curry.



A Young Joe Taylor

Mr Harold Poskitt was today presented with an illuminated address by his neighbours who set his house on fire.

At London Zoo, last week, a man threw his mother-in-law into the crocodile pool. He is being prosecuted by the R.S.P.C.A.

How to rear children: Buy a book on Child Psychology and belt them over the head with it.

At the Old Bailey today a man was jailed for his beliefs: He believed the nightwatchman was asleep. And in the same court another man was jailed for shopping: - When the shop was shut.

Mr Royson Davies, a Scunthorpe man, wants various parts of his body to be used in transplant operations. He's just offered his seat to a lady on the bus.

Joe has written a book - "How To Speak Wiganese" which sells in all the best book shops at £95. 50. Each month we will give you a few extracts from it. Here's a few to be working on.

Thammun gerrit thisell: (You must get it yourself) - Initot: (Isn't it hot?) - Gerritetten: (eat it) - Supitup: (Drink it) - Eesgooinwom: (He's going home) - Issit thimam: (Is it your mother) - Purrimineer: (Put him in here) - Thallafta gerra newun: (You will have to get a new one) - Leruss gerra answasht: (Let us get our hands washed) - Sumovus wilafot gerrof: (Some of us will have to get off) - Shut thi gob: (Close your mouth) - Gerrumin: (Buy a round of drinks)
Thank you Joe. Let's hope they practise these at the N West meetings.

Harry's Page - Hello, I'm back again - As you know, I



was a professional boxer in my young days and I did very well for myself. I was very nervous for my first fight and when the referee shouted to me "Two seconds" I thought he was referring to corner men and I shouted back, "I've only got one!" The ref looked at me as if I was a fool - it's a true story.

At the start of the first round the opponent came out like a mad bull and knocked me all over the ring. I was glad when the end of the first round came. The second said, "You are doing all right, he hasn't laid a glove on you yet." I said, "Well keep your eye on the referee because somebody's knocking the living daylight out of me."

Now, irrespective of what Stan Evans and Brian Edge told you about my boxing career it isn't true that I had handles sewn to my shorts so that they could carry me out. And it isn't true that I sold advertising space on the bottom of my shoes.

CONDEMNED MAN - Did you hear about the condemned convict who was due to be hanged? As they were walking across the yard the convict - just to be sociable - said, "It's lousy weather!" The guard replied with, "I don't know what you're complaining about, I've got to walk back in this!"

The condemned man was led inside and the hangman asked him if he could give him a last request. "Yes," he said, "Keep your trap shut."

SPIRITUALIST - This spiritualist had a poster pinned up on her front door, - "Please don't knock as it causes confusion." Bye for now! See you next month with some more old jokes.

Graham Geenfield is appearing at the Albert Hall, Bolton on Sat 29th of May and Sunday the 30th. The show is called "Pop Went The War" and features Graham as George Formby and Glen Mortimer as Max Miller. The Andrews Sisters and Vera Lynn are also featured. Saturday is an afternoon and night showing and the Sunday performance is night only. Price about £6.50.

Penketh Carnival - Saturday July 3rd, require us to do a show on stage for the radio - apart from our usual star performances in the marquee. So either come along to play or give us your support. We will hold the usual **CAR BOOT** table so if you've any unwanted items bring them along.

Internet - The Internet is now spread all over the world and you can obtain all sorts of information from it: songs, films, singers etc. and any other information you require. You can even order your groceries to be delivered.

We have a Web-site for the North-west meetings so that anyone travelling into this area can contact us and pay a visit to one of the meetings. On our site we have brief life stories of George and his father and details of recordings made and films etc. Anyone in the world can plug into this information within seconds.

At the end of the information we give details of other sites relating to George so that anyone can obtain more information on the Formby family and the GFS.

Well I was surprised to learn that one of the GFS site owners has been given firm instructions that they mustn't publicise the North West meetings or they will be castigated. - or was it castrated? I can't remember. Whatever it is it sounds painful! And here am I thinking that we are supposed to be promoting George Formby - Silly Me!

Talking About The Internet - Jim & Kaye Hurn, of New Zealand, sent a message through the Internet asking for banjo uke songs with simple chords. At 64 they have just bought a uke and started an old folks skiffle group. I sent them a couple of songs and within a few minutes they'd received them. What a wonderful machine it is.

Another Request came through the Internet asking for the words to George Formby's "Window Washing Song" (that's what he asked for) for his 89 year old mother. She was surprised when her local window cleaner had never heard of the song. She intends singing it to him while he is cleaning the windows.

Come On - Get Your Money Out!!!

To all those who are travelling on the Southern Ireland Trip and have not paid the final balance - Dennis Lee is after you. Please make your cheque out to Dennis who will be very pleased to receive it. **DENNIS MUST SETTLE THE ACCOUNT BEFORE 1st JUNE.**

A restaurant has been booked for us to obtain a grand meal around the half way mark of the journey between Dublin and Cork. **BUT - the price is £12 per head.**

Now if anyone prefers not to have a meal it is suggested that we can pack some sandwiches and stay on the coach. Please notify us on what you wish to do. Looking forward to the trip - exciting isn't it? Hope you've been practising.

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 - MOVED TO SOUTH SHORE CRICKET GROUND, Common Edge Rd, Blackpool. DATES CHANGED TO EVERY LAST MONDAY IN THE MONTH. Tel Eve & Charles Stewart on 01253 768097 - Future Dates: - Mon May 31st, June 28th, July 26th. Adm £1 including light buffet.

Liverpool - Broadgreen Conservative Club - Every 2nd Friday in the month - Ring Tom Bailey on 0151 289 1711 Bring Your Uke.

Sale - Woodheys Club, 299 Washway Rd, Sale - Every 3rd Friday in the month - 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 MEETING ON FRIDAY the 29th October 1999 - BE PROFESSIONAL.

Werrington Branch (Near Stoke) at the Werrington Village Hall - Every 2nd Thursday in the month, Ring Bill Turner on 01782 304858.

Westhoughton - At the Red Lion Pub - opposite the Police Station, next meeting Wed 26th May. Ring Gerry Mawdsley on 01942 817346

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. Or order a minimum lot of 10 copies for £3 plus 60p post and sell them to raise funds for your branch.

Deadline for next issue - 15th June

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