

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 61

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Specially Produced for George Formby Fans
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Welcome to Newsletter No.61

Well it's certainly been active in the N. West with all this BBC Music Live activity flying around. Both Crewe and Penyffordd meetings reached their largest audiences ever with every seat taken, and Blackpool felt the benefit of the extra publicity with new faces turning up on the night.

Wedding - We are extremely pleased for one of our ex-youngsters - Martin Harrison who was married on May 20th to his bride Rose at the Baguley Gospel Church, Nr Wythenshaw, Manchester.



On the left is Martin when he was about 12 years of age and working hard at playing the uke. He later became quite a popular star in the GFS and known for his impersonations of various members. Martin hasn't been to any of the meetings for some years so we wonder if he is another youngster who has lost interest. We hope not! We all wish Martin and Rose - who's family comes from Guana - a very successful marriage and hope that soon they will be visiting us at the Sale meeting.

Clive Helme - We regret to report the sad loss of a dear member Clive Helme who has passed away. Clive was always the friendly type who, along with his late wife, Margaret, attended regularly the Blackpool meetings. He had been a Formby fan all his life and encouraged his son Steve, and grandson Alan Yates, to play the uke. Both made brilliant artists and up to a few years back they entertained regularly at the meetings. Clive, an old established member, has regularly made recordings of Blackpool meetings and posted them to his Formby friends in Holland. He was a man that loved all the old time songs and would spend many hours talking Formby. Clive was another wonderful character who will be sadly missed at the meetings. Our thanks to Clive's daughter Marilyn for the loan of the photo.



The Formby Story

Part 50 by Stan Evans

George had passed on and there was a scramble for his money. His family, who referred to Pat Howson as "That Woman" intended taking her to court to prove that George was forced to



alter his will at a time when he was too ill to think logically. They had no intention of allowing her to have one penny from the will but John Crowther, George's solicitor, and now representing Pat, supported her statement that George was adamant that the family should receive nothing!

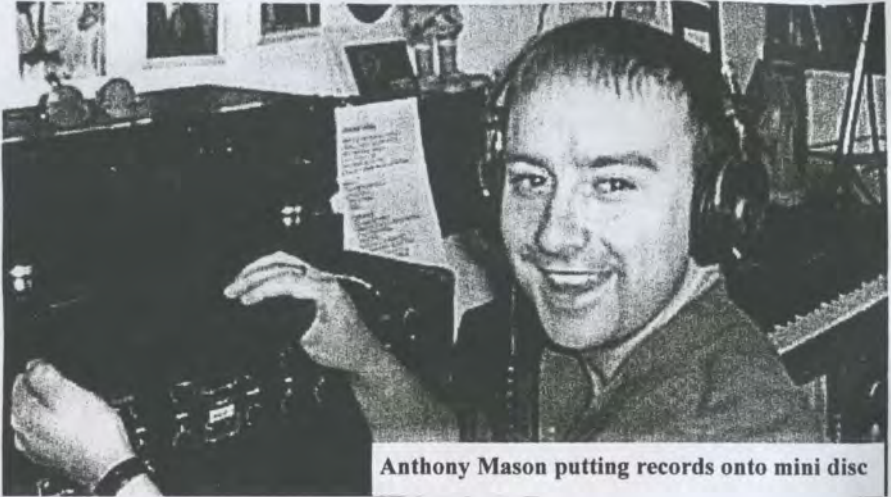
Pat tried to compromise by offering Eliza, George's mother, £5,000 and £2,000 for each of the three sisters, with nothing for the brothers, Frank and Ted. The family refused expecting to win the court case and take the lot.

Personally I don't think that George actually meant to condemn the family as a bunch of scroungers. But to safeguard himself he had no alternative. We've repeated many times over that George's main weakness was the inability to take on responsibility and this was another time when he simply couldn't commit himself to making the right decision. He'd been a big successful star but only because Beryl handled the business side. She would have handled the will situation in minutes while George was dithering and couldn't make up his mind.

So, what did he do? He left his entire estate to his girl friend, Pat Howson for her to shoulder the responsibility. Finally the family accepted Pat's financial offer which was very generous considering that she wasn't obliged to give them anything. She reported in the newspapers: "The money has caused me so much trouble that I wish I'd never become involved."

AUCTION - On the 20th, 21st and 22nd of June 1961 a three day auction was held at Beryldene, George's home, and such was the interest that people were queuing up in the street to view all the items. George's true fans were annoyed that the general public had been allowed to rummage amongst George's underwear. After the catalogue had been printed Pat removed several items from the auction and took them to Sotheby's to be sold for higher prices. These items were Beryl's jewellery, three ukulele banjos and one wooden ukulele - a Gibson which belonged to Eddie Latta, one of George's songwriters.

Due to the Formby family contesting the will, the £135,000 George left was largely swallowed up by legal costs and also death duties. Pat died in 1971, aged 46, from cancer and left £20,000 to two friends and song royalties to be shared with the Prioress Carmelite Convent near Wigan. **More Next Month.**



Anthony Mason putting records onto mini disc

ANTHONY MASON is currently working three days each week as a Radio Presenter for Radio Wythenshawe. Unfortunately the range is limited to Manchester but some in Irlam have been able to tune in. The frequency is 106 FM and Anthony's role at the station is to produce all the old time stuff from the 20s to the 50s. He spent a couple of days here at The Hollies putting about 100 old songs on to mini disk ready for his first day's presentation. The largest number of artists by far was George Formby Senior so some of the old granddads are in for a treat.

Even though you might not be able to hear the show you are welcome to ring him on 0161 935 4002 and the times are 1pm to 3.30pm on Thursday, Fridays, and Mondays and from 2pm to 3.30pm on Sundays.

It is great to see the youngsters progressing and working at the type of job they enjoy doing. Anthony could make an excellent presenter! He has all the knowledge of old style music and is very capable of handling the equipment. Who knows? He is working at a small radio station now but it is one step up the ladder to bigger things. Good for you Anthony!

Cliff Royle - Surprise player of the month is our brilliant N. Wales Reporter, Cliff Royle. His playing and singing at the June meeting was really excellent. It came as a complete surprise to me because way back in the early days I didn't expect Cliff to make the grade, but he's come up a winner and I'll put my shirt on him anytime. Good for you Cliff.

Music Live - Blackpool . . .

The Blackpool night fell on the last day of the Music Live Festival and the BBC Radio played their part in broadcasting news of our concert at the South Shore Cricket Ground, Blackpool. Anthony Mason and I performed on Radio Lancashire - interviewed by Norman Prince of The Houghton Weavers - the morning previous and several phone broadcasts were made during the week. Due to the amount of publicity we were concerned about the large crowd that might turn up, however, on the night, the steward at the venue brought out extra chairs and the new visitors fitted in perfectly. Charles, who works extremely hard for his meeting, opened the concert but had problems when the input plugs were slotted into the wrong sockets. However when this was sorted out the sound equipment went like a dream. As Charles said, "We'll get it spot on next time!"



Paul

YORKSHIRE - Once again (they arrived when needed) four of our friends from Yorkshire turned up and added a touch of quality to the show. Paul Mountain and Lionel Owen got up on stage dressed in dual purpose Arabian night-shirts and fezzes and - guess what they sang??? You've got it!!! "Out In The Middle East"



Lionel

and "Granddad's Flannelette Nightshirt" - which came over very well. Anthony Mason and John Shreeve played together, "The William Tell Overture," or as the Formby family called it, "The William To Hell Overture", or as the kids used to call it when the cowboy films were on, "To Der Dum, To Der Dum, To Der Dum, Dum, Dum." - or as the dustbinmen sing, "To the dump, to the dump, to the dump, dump, dump." Anyway, whatever the name they sounded great and the crowd applauded and shouted for more. Anthony and John haven't been to the Blackpool meeting for some time but after applause like that they'll certainly be coming again. John Taylor had them all smiling with Des Redfern's D.I.V.O.R.C.E in Billy Connolly style. John claimed that he was given an ultimatum by his ex wife, "Either me or that banjo has to go" and the banjo won. The new visitors were made welcome by Alan Middleton the M/C and some were asking for membership applications to join the society. Great Night. Many thanks to the buttie ladies and the raffle runners.

Just had Greater Manchester Radio on the phone wanting to know how they can find George Formby singing "Fanlight Fanny." And the number of the track. They don't want to buy a copy. They were just updating their records.

Where are the Youngsters? - To continue our

series on "What has happened to our young players" we have tracked down Andy Eastwood who is possibly the busiest member in the GFS - without doubt.

The first time I saw Andy was when he and family walked into the room at the Wintergardens. It would be around 1991 when the Warrington Exhibition was creating a lot of publicity throughout the country. Andy walked in, stopped, looked round, sensed the atmosphere and within a few minutes he was on the stage singing his heart out. Not a nerve in this lad's body!!!



Andy with Mrs Jack Cottrell and Alan Randall

Granddads come in very handy at times and Andy's granddad certainly played his part in getting him up the first step of the ladder when he introduced him to George Formbyism. At the age of six Andy was already hooked on the uke although he didn't start playing until he was nine when he saw "It's In The Air" on TV. At the time he was playing violin and piano.



Now a semi-pro. Andy has played alongside Max Bygraves, Roy Castle, Michael Barrymore and on TV and Radio. Last January he performed at The London Palladium and, being a shrewd businessman, has played his latest CD on radio. Andy, who is taking his final music exams in June, is the first ever to take an exam on a uke. After the exams he will become a full time professional. A few booking are lined up and he will be playing with the 20s trio "Red Hot and Blonde" as well as giving private tuition. PS - If anyone wants a CD - it's £9 plus 75p p&p, from Andy's home address 81

Glenville Road, Walkford, Dorset, BH23 5PX. *Well I'm very pleased for you Andy. Someday, when you're at the top of the tree, we will be able to boast that we encouraged that young man. All the very best Andy. Keep working at it.*

Paul McSharry Is Featured in the Next Issue.

Penketh Carnival is to be held on Saturday July 1st at 1.30pm. They supply us with a Marquee, an Electric Supply and about 50 chairs for the audience. If you are interested in coming along give me a ring on 01925 727102. Stan Evans.

Burtonwood Carnival supply us with a Music Hall Marquee and we are requested to put on 3 half hour spots in their programme. The date is Monday 28th August at 1.30pm. Ring me again if interested.

Formby Hall - Sunday October 22nd at 7.30pm. Now this is a semi-professional show so confident artists are required for the occasion. It is not purely a Formby event but a Variety Show revolving around George and his era. As a rough draft we require a Formby Group Thrash to open the show. Followed by various variety acts that will fit in with 1930s/40s. We hope that the Jazz Band will be with us to close the first half and open the second, which is followed by more variety acts. The show will finish with a Group Thrash performing The War Medley - There'll Always Be An England and Land Of Hope And Glory. To help the delighted audience to march out with smiles on their faces we will give a short tribute to Josef Locke.

As explained the above is a rough draft only and we are open to ideas. The theatre management have expressed that they would like to stage something on George because of his popularity but it would be too much for the average audience to listen to Formby for two hours.

GEORGE'S FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY - The year 2001 is the Anniversary of George death so the Formby Hall Show will be a trial run for a big event that we hope to stage next April. More on this later but it will be exciting I assure you.

Frank Randle - Paul Clarke on 01745 571400 is looking for a copy of a Frank Randall documentary which was shown on Channel 4 TV about three years ago. I'd also like a copy myself so if you've got it please give me a ring. I wonder if there is a Frank Randle fan club? Must ring Wigan - perhaps they'll know!

Uke Banjo For Sale Email from Lesley Hughes of "Bramblings" 65 Weybourne Rd, Farnham, Surrey GU9 9EX who wishes to sell a Dallas "A" model which is in excellent condition except for one replaced peg is different colour. Price nearest to £75. With case. If interested you can ring Lesley on 01252 323965 and please mention that you read it in the Newsletter.

Crewe's BBC (Music Live) Festival Concert

The B.B.C.'s Music live millennium Festival coincided with the Crewe Society's monthly concert and both Connie and Jonathon Baddeley spent a lot of time and effort advertising our show on radio, in newspapers and on local notice boards. It certainly paid off for the society enjoyed a record attendance of 108 - a feat considering it was a bank holiday weekend. The Chairman of the "GFS" Dennis Lee, along with three members of his committee were present .

Club faithfuls Ramon and Audrey Lewis, Hazel and Derek Stamps, brought along Mary & Harold Skelton, who were over here from Australia and appropriately Jonathan Baddeley played two live recordings of George on Australia radio that were broadcast fifty years ago.



From Australia, Mary and Harold

It was good to see Pete, Jenny and Adam Smith again. They were at one time regulars at Crewe but cannot get over as much as they would like to due to clashes of dates of our respective societies. Adam has certainly turned into a fine performer with a good voice and a great right hand. Perhaps I should not forget to include Pete in these remarks as Adam is really a chip of the old block their performances on stage being almost identical.

Another most welcome visitor was Alan Harris and his friend Jack Transport all the way from Leeds. Alan is the nephew of the late Stanley King a very popular variety performer who popularised Walter Langshaw's song "Princess Lulu" by performing it accompanied with his unique style of uke playing in the film "Somewhere in England" which starred Frank Randle and Harry Korris. Stanley wrote lots of comic songs for the uke and often attended the Blackpool conventions. Alan, part of a big family of uke players achieved nation-wide fame a few years back when the magazine "Yours" published an audio tape of Alan's songs, some of them his own compositions.

Alan performed a Billy Scott composition, I'm told written for Frank Formby, "It's Another Fellows Job By Now" and has his own group called "Hot Rhythm and Dynamite Cabaret Band Show". Come and see us anytime!

Graham Greenfield and his daughter Heidi came along but regrettably neither were able to perform on the night through illness. We look forward to seeing them again soon for apart from being a very good entertainer on the uke Graham plays the saw and can do some remarkable achievements on the hose-pipe! Heidi takes some beating on the ukulele. She is a truly excellent performer with a lovely natural style of playing.

Our show featured a couple of Formby numbers which are not often performed. The first one titled "I'm shy" did not, as one might imagine, feature in the film "Much Too Shy", but from the film "Spare A Copper". It was never recorded by Formby. The song, not a conventional Formby style number, but a love song, was well performed by our very own resident trombonist Alan Newton. The other one was of 1941 vintage "I did What I Could With My Gasmask". This was well performed by Jonathan Baddeley accompanied by one of his own excellent backing tracks. It is great to hear members tackle new songs, in fact we owe it to our excellent audiences that we should constantly try to add to our repertoires new material.

Ray Bernard and his banjolele accompanied by Karen on the piano gave a splendid performance of "Swonderful" which was very well received by a very appreciative audience. Ray later entertained on the ukulele.

A notable absentee on the night was Mary Newton. Mary has had an operation on her foot which involves keeping off it for about five weeks. We all wish her well and look forward to seeing her again soon. However our good friend Arthur was present and he was accompanied by his son, Philip, daughter Linda and son in law Adrian. They clearly enjoyed the proceedings especially Arthur's "I wish I Was Back On The Farm!" an appropriate number for Arthur who is a retired farmer! A very nice chap too!

We were delighted to welcome Mr and Mrs Brian Ensall and Stephen of the Penyffordd Branch - their first visit to Crewe. Young Stephen has improved his act considerably in the last six months. Always delightfully smart on stage he has developed a lovely style of playing and now has his own unique backing music which is so essential to a good act. Keep up the good work Stephen. Stephen's father Brian is also a nice singer.

Unfortunately one of two artistes did not perform for one reason or another during the evening. There were certainly lots of performers to get through but it really is our wish that everyone who wants to perform has the opportunity to do so. Any artiste wishing to perform on the evening should remind the assistant M.C. of their intentions.

Dennis Lee's contribution to a great night out was a sound recording of George and Beryl along with the Warrington banana merchant Fred Bailey. They were trying out a newfangled type of recorder and they were trying it out and we all were very privileged for the rare opportunity of eavesdropping on that unique private occasion. Thanks Dennis. *And Thank You Brian.*

Andy Eastwood Sunday Telegraph stated that Andy - a music student at New College, Oxford, had persuaded officials to accept the playing of a ukulele as part of the exams. Great! Andy.

In praise of the great fish 'n' chips

BLACKPOOL battered by Morecambe? Well, we've certainly been beaten to what could have been an excellent summer event in Blackpool. Morecambe is to host the Great British Fish and Chips Feast...with a little help from its friends on the Fylde Coast.

The celebration of the seaside's favourite fare takes place over the weekend, June 24 and 25, and includes displays, exhibitions and talks involving organisations and businesses.

Local chip shops, cafes and restaurants are being encouraged to become official Feast Partners, providing special promotional offers and menus over the weekend. Other strongly themed fish and chip events will be performances of Fish and

Factfile

- Lancashire and London both lay claim for the origin of Britain's most famous meal
- In London's East End, chipped "pommes de terra a la mode" were introduced from France and added to traditional fried fish dishes.
- Lancashire boasts the very first chippie at Bury. At one stage almost 75 per cent of all Red Rose county spuds were used for chips.
- Southerners are more likely to eat frozen and oven chips

Chips - The Musical, a musical tribute to the, er, pioneers of the fish and chip movement. On a more serious note, tessions will feature songs, stories and music, telling the tribulations of the Fleetwood, Grimsby and Hull commercial

than Northerners.

- Chip butties are twice as popular in the North
- As far as it is known, Victorian novelist Charles Dickens first mentioned a fried fish "warehouse", in his novel *Oliver Twist*, published in 1839.
- Dr John K Walton, social historian at the University of Central Lancashire, said during the Second World War, the Minister of Food declared fish and chips the only takeaway food not to be rationed.

fishing trade. Other aspects aim to recreate the resort's heyday as a centre of seaside entertainment - with daily shows by Keith Clifford (Last of the Summer Wine and Coronation Street) and Alan Randall in tribute to entertainers such as Frank

Randle and George Formby. Former Morecambe and Wise scriptwriter and radio comedy producer Mike Craig will also share anecdotes about the famous duo and other showbusiness stars with resort links such as Thora Hird and Albert Modley. There will be Punch and Judy and traditional pierrot shows and two 1940s Leyland buses will link the various Feast venues - with period-clad drivers and conductors leading passengers in communal singing of popular '40s and '50s songs. The full programme, which will be printed in a commemorative edition of *The Fish and Chips Feast News*, is available from tourist information centres in June. For more details contact Heather Worley on 01524 582902.



George Formby - one of Morecambe's famous entertainers

Oh Dear What Can The Matter Be?

Connie Edge was sat on the

During the Chester "Music Live" show Connie Edge and Alice Cronshaw went in search of toilets only to find that they were all engaged, except the Disabled Toilet. "You keep watch and I'll go in first" said Connie, which seemed a good idea at the time. However this chap walked in with head bandages, a broken arm, splint up one leg and and hobbling on a pair of crutches. Alice felt so sorry for the man that she completely forgot to keep guard.



We know where you're go - ing

SHOCK - The man walked straight in on Connie and both gave a loud cry! The poor man, who was rattled to the bones, quickly gathered himself together, did a quick turn and hurriedly scrambled through the door, without the aid of his crutches. The latest news is that the man has been completely healed but is now suffering from nervous shock.

Three Cheers for Alan & Chris Williamson



who are members of the Liverpool Branch. Alan has his own taxi business while Chris is a nurse at the local hospital. They both enjoy listening to the old songs and turn up regularly at the Liverpool meeting June 7th was the 25th Anniversary of their Wedding and we wish them the very best hoping that they enjoy another 25 years. Alan is secretly learning to play the uke so one of these Friday night we will be pouncing on him to do a turn.



Liverpool had its quietest meeting ever with only 14 members turning up for the June meeting - plus about 20 venue members who always join in with the songs. Anyway it turned out a good night because we took advantage of John Shreeve and Des Redfern who sang about 300 songs each

Great Tape for £1.99! -

Eva & I called in at CJ Hughes store at Widnes and while she was looking round the clothing section I wandered off to about six banks of shelving that were offering Tapes and CDs etc. I picked a a tape of Billy Cotton and his Band - only £1.99 - which included 24 tracks from the 30s and 40s. "After You've Gone" - "Shine" - "I Took My Harp To A Party" - "Swonderful" - "Somewhere In France With You" - "Nobody Loves A Fairy When She's Forty" - "I've Gone And Lost My Little Yo Yo" and - George's "I LIKE BANANAS, with extra verses. Pegasus have produced it and the ref. is PGN MC 827. It's well worth buying. The CD was about £2.99.



Dennis Lee on Music Live - The morning of Bank

Holiday Monday found me gazing at the sky and praying for some kind of decent weather - (or a miracle). Whilst setting up the equipment at our pitch in Chester City centre it felt cold and I decided not to connect the mini disc player until the last minute in case of damp. Everybody arrived in good time and we went through the final details of the programme. The fourteen players from N. Wales were joined by ten from Crewe which made a grand turnout. The group looked really smart in their now familiar waistcoats and bow ties and were a credit to the GFS.

HERE'S THE MIRACLE!!! - Almost at the instant we started to play the sun appeared and both our half hour spots saw our 200 plus audience bathed in hot sunshine. The group played upstairs on a balcony looking down on the audience whilst some of us went downstairs to mingle and play amongst the crowd. Alk George's old favourites were played together with the Wartime Medley during which the audience joined in the singing. A couple of Arabs in the form of Alan Chenery and Jonathan Baddeley did the sand dance to the strains of "Out In The Middle East"

The group was well disciplined and did all that was aswked of them. Lesley as usual did a great job in operating the sound system which went without a hitch. The Chester City organiser came round at the end to congratulate us on our performance and later there was a short clip on TV. Many thanks to all who supported the event in any way.

A letter of thanks arrived from Chester City which finished with, "Stars of TV and Radio!!! Terrific!! You put on a marvellous show! *Thanks Dennis for the report. We are sorry that the photo didn't turn out good enough to reproduce.*

Auctions - Bob Muirhead Warns. Stan,

I was interested in the Ebay item in the June NW News and thought I would warn any members to sup with a long spoon when thinking of bidding for items. I have been using Ebay for some four or five years and made some interesting purchases which were mainly ukes or uke related items. I also have a good deal of knowledge on the current state of Porcelain and Philately market on the US site, via members in the States. At the moment Ebay is full of folk bidding like crazy on almost anything and prices are out of sight, I purchased an item some 18 months ago and have seen two similar items go for 150% more in the last few weeks. Stan, you will remember we discussed a "George Formby Complete" going on Ebay for around £30.00 and you obtained a similar copy for me for less than half that in the UK. See you at next Liverpool meeting. *Thanks Bob.*

1940's Wartime Week-end by Les Pearson .

On Sun 28th May, Margaret Moran and I put on our uniforms and joined in the fun at the East Lancs Railway Wartime Weekend. Rail enthusiasts travelled back to when steam filled the air and the Germans were on the march. Children were evacuated by special train while British and German troops battled on the platform in an authentic flashback to the Second World War. All the stations were decorated in 1940s style and the signs were made to look like a Guernsey town. Later a parade of wartime vehicles travelled through each town and an address was given by a Winston Churchill look-alike. A Queen Mother look-alike also made an appearance.

George Formby player, Paul Harper, who is a member of the Sheffield Branch, had a very busy weekend with three shows plus entertaining on the railway station, on the coaches and in the N.A.A.F.I. Paul is the son of the late Wally Harper, a good comic in his time and the nephew of Robert Harper who is better known as Bobbie Ball of Cannon & Ball.

Les also handed in a copy of a the German Identity Cards which was to be distributed to us British after we'd surrendered to the master race.

Inside the card it read, "Always carry this identity card. The bearer must, on demand, surrender it for inspection and / or endorsement to authorised personnel. You are responsible for this card, and must not part with it to any other person. Loss of this card must be reported immediately to the authorities. *Or vee'll chop off zee head!*



Alan Newton - Crewe's little genius writes in. Stan, Glenys and I have just had a George Formby experience which is worth putting in your Newsletter. On May 21st we went to hear the Cheshire Police Band play at an open air concert in the grounds and gardens of Cholmonely Castle, South Cheshire, and on their programme of music was an item "George Formby Selection" in which they played "Lamp Post" - "Auntie Maggie!" - "Flannelette Night-shirt" - and "Blackpool Rock."

I didn't realise that George's music has infiltrated the brass band world. We can certainly recommend to everyone a visit to the castle gardens, with beautiful settings and acres of land with lakes, tea room and cricket matches played most Sundays. *Thank you Alan. I remember visiting a fair ground some 10 years ago and a huge fair ground organ was belting out George's songs. It sounded great and I went over to the man to tell him how well it sounded. "I love George Formby's songs" he replied, "They are far better than all this modern stuff."*

Soon after, Eva and I took the grandchildren to Pontins holiday camp and the noise was dreadful. They were belting out all this modern pop stuff throughout the camp and it was impossible to hide away from it. We walked into a hall where some dancing was going on and as soon as we walked in we heard a selection of George's songs being played on piano by Brian Smith. It sounded great!

At a Pontins Hotel, some time later, I took my uke to play in the bedroom and as soon as we arrived we discovered that the organiser had instructed all the entertainers to go home because they were not wanted for the week. A young pianist was kept on to quietly tinkle the keys while a few people sat around chatting. But when he heard that I had a ukulele in the bedroom he insisted that I brought it down to play and sing with him. I did this much to the concern of the lady organiser who apparently didn't like music or any form of entertainment. Within minutes the room was filling up and they were all joining in with a singalong. "Leaning on a Lamp" never sounded better!

After arriving home I received a phone call from the woman telling me that in future I am banned from attending any of her organised weeks because I drove everybody into their bedrooms. "You had no right bringing your ukulele and singing George Formby songs," she said! "Thank goodness" I thought, "At least I won't be losing any sleep about it."

Uke For Sale - Arthur Collinson on 01227 275524 wishes to sell a Ron Spiers "Supreme" uke banjo complete with shape velvet lined case. The uke is in a most excellent - mint - condition and has a wonderful tone. Price £550. Recommended by Ray Bernard

Sale Report by Les Pearson . . . We were low in number at the May Meeting but had good variety on stage and a few new faces in the audience. They said they'd enjoyed the concert and will be bringing their friends next time.

Cyril Palmer announced that Martin Harrison was to be married the following day so we all wished Martin and Rose all the very best for the future. We older ones at Sale remember Martin as a young boy when he had a brace on his teeth. His mum and dad would bring him by car to be left with us and then collect him after the meeting.

We were pleased to see Alan & Carol Middleton from Blackpool and even more pleased that they'd brought along octogenarian Frank Bennett to give us a few numbers. Walter (Bones) Kirkland did a fine job with "Dem Bones" - where on earth does he get his energy from? Eddie Bamford performed and then told me to 'watch this space' as we may be in for a big surprise.

The Pam and Jonathan Baddeley Duo sang a nice happy song with, "Does Your Dream Book Tell You That" and it is nice to know that Jon's back problem is not stopping him from performing.

Brian & Connie Edge had the room rocking and Margaret Moran brought a few tears in Frank Bennett's eyes with "With A Song In My Heart." Thanks to the girls on the door and Alan Southworth and Dick Eaves on sound. Cyril finished off with Delilah, which is known as his 'cafe song' as he can't leave the Deansgate cafe in Blackpool without singing it. *Thanks Les.*

Les Pearson also wrote. . . . George certainly rode a motorcycle because I saw him riding one. I'm not sure of the year or make of machine, but on one occasion we were setting the course out for a motorcycle scramble near Lyme Park and about 9am a large car pulled up towing a trailer which was loaded with two scramble bikes. Three men got out of the car and drove the bikes for about an hour.

As we were working setting out ropes, toilets etc. we didn't know the men but our clerk of course knew because he'd been informed that a VIP would be present on the day. George had turned up to have a private ride before the crowds turned up but the clerk didn't tell us until he's left. *Thanks again Les.*

Old Time Music Hall is held at The Ellesmere Port Boat Show and it looks as if they welcome amateur groups or artists to perform. If interested in doing a spot you can ring them on 0151 355 5017. Let me know how you go on.

A Spectators View by Pam Baddeley . . .

I stood in a crowd of about 200 people who had gathered to listen to members of the George Formby Society sing and play on Bank Holiday Monday in Chester. People were stamping their hands and clapping their feet and singing. The atmosphere was electric! One gentleman turned to me during "Lamp Post" and asked for a dance! I'd never seen him before in my life, but I did dance with him and it seemed just right for the occasion.

The crowd consisted of youngsters jumping up and down in time to the music, teenagers, older people and visitors from many parts of the world. A French couple saw us between performances and intimated that they had thoroughly enjoyed the concert and were looking forward to the next spot.

Congratulations to all those who took part on that day and particularly to Dennis and Lesley Lee for organising the event. It was said that BBC Music Live was going to be "A Perfect Day" and because of you all, it truly was for me. Pam Baddeley.
Thank you for the report Pam.

For Sale

- Mrs Audrey Schofield of Burnley, on 01282 431148 has got a collection George's 78s for sale, Ukulele Man and On The Beat - Window Cleaner 2 and Lancashire Toreador - Feather our Nest and You're A Liaty - Five & Twenty Years and Sitting on The Sands - Windows and Keep Your Seats - Bed by Half Past Nine and You've Got Something There - Why Don't Women and Running Round the Fountains - My Ukulule and Went All Hot and Cold - British Isles Medley.

ALSO A BANJO - She also has a 5 stringed banjo which is well worn but loks like good quality with pearl spots and case. Open to ideas on price.

Lawrence Jones

of the Liverpool Branch was on TV last week hoping to go into politics. To help raise funds for the Southport Pier he has bought a plank to be named, "George Formby" and is currently making arrangements for us to put on a little show in Southport. More news as it comes in on this.

Football

- In general the Formby fans don't support Football and you rarely hear them discussing football results etc. But I wonder if I'm the only person in the country who hopes we get knocked out in the first round? WHY? Well, if we win the competition they'll ram down our throats for the next thirty years, morning, noon and night, on every channel, on all radio stations and in every newspaper.

Westhoughton Progressing! Neil Forshaw



Gerry Mawdesley

Reports- The May Meeting at the Red Lion Pub started a few minutes late as Gerry Mawdesley and Terry Talbot had to test some new speakers but it did allow time for some of the long distance travellers to get in and settle down.

Cow-Yeader (native of Westhoughton) Glyn Mitchell and Mike Turner, from St Helens, received warm applause for "Sgt Major" and "You Don't Need A License for That" and then Gerry raised the mikes to the roof for 10 foot tall Andy Little who sang "Mother What'll I Do Now" and "I'm Saving Up For Sally." Stewart Didsey gave us "Fanlight Fanny" and Harry Baron, after apologising for turning up soaking wet, due to 'surfing the net' all day, came on with "The Bowler Hat Me Grand-

dad Left To Me."

Dennis Mitchell gave a polished performance with "Madam Moscovitch" and Frank Crummit's "The Prune Song."

Gerry ran a George Formby quiz which was won by Alan Southworth and Roy Fielding, from Huddersfield, gave us "Sweet Sixteen" and then played a medley on the harmonica. Mike Turner was just getting into top gear with his spot when the butties arrived and everybody's attention was switched to grabbing a sandwich. Stan Chadwick claimed he was a little nervous as he sang "Little Ukulele" but he had nothing to fear as the merry throng helped him out.

Alan Southworth sang "Night-shirt" and after a quick thrash Gerry closed the show at 11.25pm. Our thanks to Gerry for organising and Terry for PA service. *And thank you Neil for the report.*

George in Jerusalem - Just had a reply via Charles Stewart - from L. Lautenberg who appealed for a copy of GF Senior singing "Standing At The Corner Of The Street." Within a few days he'd received the copy we'd sent him and he was as chuffed as little mint balls. "It was a delightful surprise" he wrote, "And I will treasure it forever." Well we are pleased also to have been helpful.

Confusius He Say:- Marriage is like peddling a push bike up a steep hill with two flat tyres and a slack chain. You've got to keep at it!

Penyffordd June Meeting by Cliff Royle

Although just before the start things looked rather quiet we had almost a full house of both players and visitors, and among the latter there were some new faces we were delighted to see. There was special guest Beryl Eissens who works for a Radio Station in Australia. Rather strange that she came with Stan Evans who just happened to have



The Formby Booths and Beryl Eissens

left his wife Eva at home that evening, - another miracle? There was another young lady from Australia, Zoe, who played a violin accompaniment to Bryn Wright. Pity her playing was overpowered by the sound of Bryn's uke and deep powerful voice. Unfortunately I couldn't get her to play a violin solo. Pity!

Ken Howe, entertained us before, and also his wife Sheila, who promised to come along again. Pam *Badderley* volunteered to sing a couple of melodies while her husband Jonathan is not too well. He admitted that he did not know what he would do without the support of Pamela.

Jim (never had a music lesson) Knight provided some rousing sing-alongs on the keyboard. Our Crewe friends, Walter Kirkland rattled his bones and Brian Edge rendered a song about wanting to be twenty again. Don't we all?

We were entertained by Dennis Lee and Alan Newton, an excellent pair! And then a quadruped in Kevin Blanchfield, Geoff Shone, young Frank Murphy (aged 9) and that delightful young niece of Geoff's, Stephanie, aged 10, complete with a uke and a smile.

The Miracle Man, Stan Evans, and the Magic Lady, Alison Nadin, performed their acts. In addition to singing (No, not Bananas) Stan performed his miracle with a rose he trapped in the *bedroom door* and Alison put on a excellent show with her two puppets. Someone said that they thought the grey haired puppet was actually me. Had it been so I would have had a smile on my face! If you know what I mean. I was eventually called upon to M/C and now I realise why Dennis, who has many other duties, passes the job over. Until you have a go you cannot realise all that is involved. *You've got it wrong young Cliff!!! I didn't go to the meeting with Beryl! In fact I spent half the night watching the door waiting for her to come in and apparently she'd been sat watching the concert just one row in front of me. I've spent the last three days explaining to Eva but she won't believe me. And I didn't trap the rose in the bedroom door! It was the toilet door! - there's a big difference to the story! The other thing is that you keep spelling Pam & Jon's surname badly! It's not Badderly - but Baddeley. . . .And I thought it was me that was going senile! But I did enjoy your performance on stage. You were great!*

Cliff Royle's Mixed Bag. We had an excellent turn out in Chester at the "Music Live" event, at which we were joined by our Crewe friends. It was a great event and a rough estimate put our audience at something like *four to five hundred*, and they enjoyed every minute of our performances.

Strange things happen in life don't they? A couple of days before the event I received a call from a George Morgan. He'd recently joined the GFS, and thought my name in the Vellum looked familiar. It was; from the cycling association in the 1970's. He came to Chester to join our merry throng and has threatened to come to Penyffordd with a number of his cycling colleagues; just for the pasties.

Our next public performance is for the British Legion where we will be playing at Rhyl on June 18th. *You are right Cliff! Strange things certainly do happen in life and none more stranger than the Chester crowd that shrunk to 200 when Pam counted them and then swelled out to 4 or 5 hundred when you took a head count. and back to 200 for Dennis Lee. Now that's a miracle even I can't match! Thanks for your report.*

Young Stephen Ensall was entered into a talent competition by his mum and dad at the Deeside Millennium Stadium and when they arrived on the day felt quite overawed as it was a big occasion with plenty of good talent. It was a large outdoor stage and an auditorium packed with people.

Anyway, Stephen, with TV experience behind him, wasn't in the least deterred by the occasion and went on to take first prize which was a 15" high engraved trophy for him to keep. Well that's wonderful Stephen. Best of luck to you in the future. It's grand to hear of these young boys being successful.



Just Like George! -

Charles Stewart and Eve are organising a show for the Fleetwood ex - naval veterans for Wednesday the 21st of June at the Fleetwood Conservative Club, Lowther Rd, and Jim Bramwell, Stan Watkinson and myself have been invited to entertain.

Well it is a pleasure to serve these Fleetwood veterans. George and Beryl were extremely fond of the Fleetwood Trawler men and raised a lot of money for them. We feel as if we could be carrying on with George's work.

George Campaigning

N. West Meetings

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

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

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

Sale - Woodheys Club, 299 Washway Rd, Sale - Every 3rd Friday in the month - Ring Cyril Palmer 0161 748 6550 Adm £1.

Crewe Branch - Wistaston Memorial Hall - Every 4th Friday in the month - apart from Dec 19 (Tues) - Brian Edge on 01270 569836.

Westhoughton - The Red Lion Pub (Opp. Police Station) Ring Gerry Mawdsley on 01942 817346 - Every last Wednesday in the month. Uke Tuition.

Blackpool. SOUTH SHORE CRICKET GROUND, Common Edge Rd, Blackpool. DATES CHANGED TO LAST MONDAY IN THE MONTH. Tel Eve & Charles Stewart on 01253 768097.

To receive N. West Newsletters by post please send a cheque for 50p plus 25p postage (or £2.25 for 3 months) - (£9 for the year) payable to S. Evans - Address below.

Please join in by sending your articles, stories, jokes, etc to Stan Evans, The Hollies, 19 Hall Nook, Penketh, Warrington WA5 2HN

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