

THE NORTH - WEST

GEORGE FORMBY

Newsletter 77

Vol. 7
No. 5
Nov 2001



Specially Produced for George Formby Fans
by Stan Evans, The Hollies, 19 Hall Nook, Penketh, Warrington,
Cheshire WA5 2HN

Tel or Fax 01925 727102

Welcome to Newsletter No.76

And once again we have had good attendance at all of the N. West meetings. At each of the Crewe and N. Wales meetings they can rely on anything up to 90 members turning up.

The Sale Branch is settling in the excellent new venue. It has a pleasant atmosphere, friendly regular members, club nicely decorated, not too big and not too small, easy to find, bar staff willing to join in the fun, what more could we ask for? I think you've cracked it this time Cyril.

David Bret is Still Peddling Trash

Stan Watkinson has just phoned. While he was driving to Penyffordd he was listening to Merseyside Radio and who should be on but David Bret, who last year launched his book, "George Formby A Troubled Genius." Stan was very concerned that Bret was allowed to trash George who is not around to defend himself. "It was a disgrace," said Stan, "and none of it is true."

Well, Stan, this is what I have been preaching for the past 12 months. The GFS and other GF societies should be following Bret round the country putting the record straight. At all the radio stations Bret is having a field day and nobody is doing anything about it. George, the mentor and role model should be protected. It doesn't make sense. Bret is using his latest wave of publicity to push his latest book on Elvis Presley. He'll have plenty to go on with that one.

Jean Nadin Sends Her Thanks

Dear friends at the George Formby Society, I would like to send a sincere thank-you for all the lovely cards, telephone calls, e-mails and lovely flowers I received during my stay in hospital. It really helped to know that so many friends were thinking about me. I am feeling much better now and I hope to be back at the meetings very soon. Thank-you once again. Love from Jean Nadin.

We are very pleased for you Jean. George's Light is still shining. Keep smiling.



Pleasant Surprise—Just phoned Anthony Mason to ask how he is progressing in Essex and he replied. "I'm back in Warrington and working at Gala Bingo hall."

So who knows? Maybe we can get him to come to some of the meetings. Or we might get some more excellent backing tapes produced.

DROP A LINE TO THE NEWSLETTER.

War-time News Cutting

NORMANDY BOYS THRILLED BY FORMBY'S VISIT



George & Beryl Formby, who have gone to Normandy to entertain our troops as they come out of the front line, are having a very interesting, as well as a busy, time. We have already reported how George drove a "duck" out to a ship off the coast to give an ENSA concert to sailors and a second performance to those who could not crush into the first one.



Some of their adventures are described in a letter which Beryl has written to the Editor of The Lancashire Evening Post. She describes the journey from London to the coast and the concerts given to the troops in the transit camps. She tells of the arrival of some of the wounded on this side, "We asked permission to talk to them" she says, "It was grand to see their faces light up when they saw George."

"One of the lads, who was lying on a stretcher, laughingly said, 'If you are going over there, by gum, I'll come back with you.' It was a wonderful treat to see how cheerful the lads were.

SINGING ON THE BARGE—Humorously, Beryl tells of the barge trip over to France, and a concert they gave on board. "But by golly, it was rough," she writes, "When George was singing the ship was rocking to about 75 degrees and it took me all my time to hold George down and keep the mike to his mouth.

The lads gave us a wonderful welcome as we landed on the beach. As soon as we got ashore we gave them a show—and were they pleased! I took over all the last Sunday newspapers on which I could lay my hands and they were tremendously welcome.

Please ask your readers to send out as much reading matter as they can. It is what the lads out here want" Beryl concluded with best wishes to all at home.

ANOTHER NEWS REPORT:- In his hotel in Bayeux, George Formby said, "Beryl & I could have flown over to France in comfort on a plane but we wanted to cross over just like the lads. We came over in a landing craft sandwiched between tanks. It was the roughest sea crossing we've ever made,"

Brian Edge phoned—"If you see any carpets flying through the air with Arabs on, armed with machine guns, don't shoot em down as they might be Allied Carpets."

DON'T FORGET YOUR NEWSLETTER—OR ELSE

ARTHUR NEWTON ACCOSTED DURING PERFORMANCE

80 members of the Crewe Society were witness to a brazen approach to Arthur Newton whilst he was singing his popular Formby number "*Back on the Farm.*" The hussy, who it must be said, made Fanlight Fanny look like Greta Garbo, somehow managed to get on stage during Arthur's spot and openly offered the Over Alderley performer a five pound note for a go on his ukulele. She voluntarily left the stage when Arthur refused her approaches but returned later, this time wearing nothing but three dubious looking and strategically positioned pigeons, which all flew off on hearing the audience applaud leaving the wretched woman without a stitch and poor Arthur with a very red face. The police were immediately informed but so far they have not been able apprehend the mystery woman. They have information that a woman of similar description has been causing disturbances over the past month or so in public houses in the Frodsham area. We can only hope that our concerts will never be tarnished with such bare faced effrontery in the future and hope that Arthur will get over his unfortunate experience and be able to sing his favourite number again. Only time will tell, but we all hope so.



Local favourite Alan Newton, jazz trombonist and popular uke performer entertained the audience with "*Love is like a Violin*" his virtuoso performance on that instrument will never be forgotten. This performance followed his very own version of "*When I come up on the Football Pools.*" Later Alan (trombone), Glenys (trumpet) and Jonathan (Clarinet) entertained with "*Milenberg Joys*" which was well received by the attentive audience.

One of the highlights of a very enjoyable evening was the stage debut at Crewe of nine-year-old Gregory Simister from Wirral who delighted the audience with "*You don't need a Licence for that*" and "*Leaning on a Lamp post.*" Gregory has only been playing 11 months and during that time he has developed a very pleasant stage presence with a confident style along with a pleasant smile for this audience and considerable skill on his ukulele. We will be seeing much of him in the future that's for sure. Well-done Gregory.

Another bright spot of the evening was the return of popular entertainer Stan Evans who soon had the audience singing and laughing in the aisles. His act, as usual was subject to our Official Censor (Connie) ended with Stan Singing the Josef Locke favourite the "*Soldiers Dream*" a version that Locke never himself envisaged. Stan was ably assisted by Colin Wood, Trevor Hughes, Arthur Newton, Alan Newton and our good friend Cliff Royle (I'm sure that face is familiar). Stan's act slightly overran, and as a result the last artiste managed to get on about two thirty in the morning!

As most of you are aware Stan is responsible for donating most of his life to producing our newsletter which gives us all news of local George Formby groups. The magazine is ever growing in popularity and all copies sold out quickly. So don't forget folks do grab a copy next month. It is only 50p - (20p goes to our club) and, for human interest, it is the best read available.

Other artistes were Connie Edge, Peter Cain, Alan Chenery, Carl Basford (who sang a song for Mary), Cliff Royle (his face seems to ring a bell) Vera Jones, Bill Turner, Gareth Sumner, Brian Edge, Don Chalkley, Walter Kirkland, and Ron Whiston (our man on the bones), Matthew Kelly (our Wild Colonial Boy), Jim Knight (our tap dancer), Trevor Colley (Mr Blackpool Rock), Jonathan and Pamela Baddeley, and Des Redfern (arrived 10.20pm but as he won the Stanley King Shield we will turn a blind eye). Finally if I missed anybody they can take it from me that "they were great!"

Jonathan Baddeley superbly introduced the evening and the concert was well produced by his lovely wife Pamela. Jonathan and the audience gave three cheers for Jean Nadin who was unable to come due to illness. Jonathan told the audience of Jean's appreciation of all the get-well messages, cards and telephone calls, during her illness. Jean is much improved but was not well enough for the long journeys but she asked for her wishes to be passed on to all concerned. Hip hip hurray! See you soon Jean.

Werrington Are Winding UP-

Just received a phone call from Bill Turner to say that due to lack of support in the running of the meeting and the handling of the heavy equipment it has been necessary to call a halt to any further meetings after this year. The last two meetings will be held on NOV 15th (third Thursday) - and DEC 20th (third Thursday).

However, on a happier note, they will still be staying together to hold concerts for charities, old folks homes etc.

SOUND EQUIPMENT-It will be necessary to sell off some of the equipment so if anyone is looking for speakers, mikes, monitor, music stands etc. give Bill a ring on 01782 304858 and he will give you some idea of what is available. Any money raised will be donated to charity.



We are very sorry to hear the news Bill especially as this is George's 40th. You and your gang have worked hard over the past few years with your meetings and it is a great pity that it should finish.

Only a suggestion Bill, but instead of donating the cash to charity why not keep it in a Charity Fund to support the concerts. It would be handy for equipment, repairs etc.

DON'T FORGET THE DATES-THIRD (not 2nd) THURSDAYS in NOV & DEC.



Cliff Royle The World's Fastest News Hound

NORTH WALES REPORT. OCTOBER 01.

Well we are getting some late nights. An 11.30 finish, so many would not get to bed much before one am. Still we again had an excellent night in spite of the temporary problem with the tape player. Anyway thanks to Geoff Shone, Alan Chenery and the others who finally got us on the air after the interval.

It is never easy to get someone to start off the evening but as usual Jim Griffiths did just that with his unaccompanied playing, and jokes with a good Lancashire accent. He was followed by Brian Edge who sang "Another fine scheme went wrong"; and it did. This is when the tape player took ill. Still, not to be outdone, Brian filled in some time with the joke about an escaped gorilla. You have to adapt quickly to problems.

MC Jim Knight also filled in with a few jokes, and then we were back to normal; but temporarily only using mini-discs. Jim organised a unique "bones" session with himself, Ron Whiston, and Walter "Ger Off" Kirkland playing to the accompaniment of the song "Them dry bones". An unusual combination. Of course there were a number of occasions when the "bones" were played during the evening. Should we now change the name of the Society?

Many of the familiar faces from Crewe entertained us as usual, with Alan Chenery in great voice singing one of the good old-time favourites, and Connie Edge being one of the two ladies (or was it three?) who performed during the evening. One other was Alison Nadin (what would we do without her?) who put on an excellent ventriloquist act following which there were many appeals for "More". The third female turned out to be a stripper. This part of the show had to be curtailed early since it was said that the Police were coming round to raid the Club.

It is difficult to pick out people for particular mention, since all are all worthy of note. However if I may confine myself to a few this time I would like to pick out Cyril Palmer from Sale with his songs accompanied on a Baritone Uke; Des Redfern with his Country and Western, and Irish Music and our two aspiring youngsters Gregory Simister (aged 10) and Stephen Ensall (aged 13). They are a credit to us.

As a result of our first Practice Night we have discovered a talented trio of learners; Deg Bruce, Phil Hughes, and Frank Humphreys who cheered us up with the "War Medley". Well done chaps; keep it up.' You were great. One thing that struck me during the evening was the number of people on the stage during the Thrash. On one occasion there were over twenty bashing away including Ashley Caldicott, and a new as yet unnamed lady; both seemed to be being well groomed by Connie and Brian Edge; not of course in that order. Among our new guests were Roland Crook and Brian Kenyon, the Vicar and his Verger from Helsby Church.

CONTINUED—They really enjoyed their evening and will be back again. Their interest follows a visit to the Frodsham Festival earlier this year.

SPECIAL NOTICE RE CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Due to unforeseen circumstances the Venue has had to be changed to the Penyffordd Village Hall which is a short distance from the Legion. Date and other details remain as before. This will be a TICKET ONLY evening and tickets will need to be purchased at the November meeting so that catering arrangements can be made.

MINOR JOTTINGS OF GENERAL INTEREST - MANCOT CONCERT—

Under the new management team, since Dennis Lee left us, we did a great concert for the church at Mancot on the occasion of their Harvest Festival celebrations. A dozen players took part, accompanied by some of our ardent supporters. We were provided with an excellent hot meal, and subsequently received a lovely thank you from the Rev. Elaine Hodge. Is it not nice to be appreciated?. My personal thanks to the team for their great support.

MRS. JEAN NADIN.

We are pleased to have Jean back with us once again. She is now almost fully recovered from her recent illness and looks really great.

VIDEO OF THE 40th ANNIVERSARY CONCERT/ EXHIBITION AT CREWE.

There seems to have been such a demand for the videos of this event that I have only just received mine from the producer Des Redfern. I must say it is an excellent production and a good two hours of varied entertainment. Something like that should be on TV instead of the rubbish we have to put up with day and night. I do not recollect anyone having written in to the Newsletter on this point so I would like to say “WELL DONE DES: YOU HAVE DONE US PROUD”. Please do not think I give this plug because I got mine free. I didn’t. Congratulations also to Des from the North Wales Branch for winning the song competition at the Blackpool Conference. It was a great song. The lad is full of talent.

And thank you Cliff you are certainly getting to grips with your computer Email.

You'll Be Welcome at Liverpool A Special



Stan

10 Year Anniversary Meeting is being held at Liverpool on Friday November 9th, but unfortunately, I can't attend on the night. In Warrington they are holding an 80th Birthday Party for my long standing friend, Gracie Fields impersonator, Ethel Guest, and they've asked me to handle the music for them. Stan Watkinson will be in the saddle for the night at Liverpool and he and Tom Bailey will appreciate loads of players



Tom

turning up. So! Do your best. Give Stan and Tom a treat and turn up to support them

Email from Philip Martin Williams

NEW BOOK ON JOHN E BLAKELEY—Hi, Just thought you may be interested in our new book "Hooray for Jollywood." For the past few years we have worked on a book on John E. Blakeley and the Mancunian Film Corporation. As you know, Blakeley was the first man to put George Formby into films. In the Appendix there is a transcript from a sketch/scene taken from the newly found version of Boots! Boots!

It will be published on 24th Sept and you'll be able to order the paperback through bookshops, A5 size with 198 pages inc. photos. ISBN number 0 9518012 4 4, £14.99

However, you can obtain a copy at a special reduced price. Order direct from the address below and you will pay only £12.99 per copy with free postage. If you would like to mention the book on your site we can extend this offer to all your readers. Cheques should be payable to P. M. Williams

John E. Blakeley was a rare breed in the annals of British film history for all the films he made were produced solely for northern audiences. Indeed, it's probably fair to say that they were despised in the south of the country. Through necessity, his films were initially shot in London, although they were planned and conceived in his home city of Manchester.

Made on a shoestring budget and usually bereft of a storyline his stock company of popular northern music hall eccentrics made them extremely popular with the Lancashire working-classes. His stars included George Formby, Nat Jackley, Norman Evans, Duggie Wakefield, Jewel & Warriss, and of course the inimitable Frank Randle.

In 1947 at a time when the film industry was virtually on its knees, Blakeley did the unthinkable and opened his own studio in Manchester. At a cost of £70,000, Film Studios (Manchester) was equipped and housed in an old Wesleyan Church, on Dickenson Road, Rusholme. Known locally as the 'Fun Factory' or 'Jollywood' the studio carried on turning out the popular comedies. This book tells the story of John E. Blakeley his lifetime in the film industry and of a devoted family man. It also looks behind the scenes of film making both in London and Manchester. Many stories are told of the stars that worked at 'Jollywood' and many are featured in this book. Regards, Philip Martin Williams,

15 Welbeck House, Brook Street East, Ashton-under-Lyne, Lancs OL6 7TB.

Late News—CARL BASFORD—Just received a call from Brian to say that Carl has been rushed into hospital with liver problems and chest pains. It sounds serious so he needs a bit of cheering up. Carl lives at No. 1 Sheldon Grove, Chesterton, Newcastle U Lyne ST5 7PW. Our thoughts go to Carl who does brilliant work supporting the Crewe Branch. He has a repertoire of soft quiet songs. Drop the lad a card and wish him well.



Laughter Is The Best Prescription



Alice has an infectious laugh which sounds like someone firing an ack ack gun.

Happiness is catching. It may sound corny but it is true. Laughter is probably the best medicine. After a good laugh your blood pressure will be lower, your breathing will be easier and you will sleep better. Your lungs and heart will get exercised and special healing hormones will be released inside your body. The single most important thing you can do to put more laughter into your life is probably to spend as much time as you can with happy and cheerful people. If you spend your time with miserable people, you will eventually acquire a gloomy disposition yourself. Depression, like measles is contagious. Bright and cheerful friends will help make you bright and cheerful too.

Alice Cronshaw (left) is laughing at one of Jim Bramwell's jokes.

"He met a friend the other day who was looking very sad and down in the mouth. He asked him what was the matter and he told me that the doctor had just informed him that he only had six months to live. 'Never mind' said Jim, 'It'll soon pass.'"

Just Going Through

some old papers the other day and found a few interesting bits for the Newsletter.

July 12th 1936—George writes back to his songwriters: Gifford & Cliffe. "Dear Lads, Very many thanks for your song but I'm sorry to have to send it back to you as it is too blue. You are getting too much on the sex stuff! Try to clean it up a bit and send it along again. Also you will have to clean up "With My Little Stick Of Blackpool Rock" for I can't work it in the state it is in. The Records have refused it so you'd better get busy making them cleaner. You couple of mucky Bxxxxxs, all the best wishes, Yours Faithfully, George Formby.

LETTER FROM BILL OAKES 11/3/1992. I was serving in the RASC, a corporal in charge of our detail on D5 after the invasion. I remember George & Beryl Formby giving a show at Arromanche, France for us. They arrived at a small village called Rys, near the road to Bayeux. We were working unloading the ships on the famous Mulberry Harbour and being bombarded, erected a stage in the farm barn for them. Another supporting turn was Wilson, Kepple & Betty. We were bombarded night and day but that didn't stop them one bit. George & Beryl had a fine reception from us, Yours Faithfully, Arthur, William (Bill) Oakes.

C.E.FERRIS WRITES: March 1940 the 5th, 6th and 7th Battalions of the QBRs were formed as a nucleus for a new brigade. On 2nd April we sailed to France aboard the liner 'Duke of York.' Arriving at Cherbourg at dawn on the 3rd, George Formby and Beryl were on the quayside welcoming us to France. There was no time for a song before we were marched away to a transit camp. Regards, Charles Ferris.

Rio's grand...but it's nowt like Wigan Pier



Kevin GARSIDE

THE legend of George Formby stretches far and wide, but even he never dreamt that one day "ee-ba-gum", "put wood in th'ole" and "shut yer gob" would be heard on the streets of Rio de Janeiro.

In one of the most unlikely football alliances ever struck, hallowed Brazilian Jairzinho has pitched up in Wigan, the town of Formby's birth, to launch his very own football academy.

The plan is to unearth the best of local talent while introducing boys from Brazil to British football culture and one of the key attractions for Jairzinho was that staple diet of old Lancashire - the meat pie.

Throw in liberal helpings of tripe, bread and dripping and chip butties and the prospect of turbo-charged Brazilians leading Wigan to untold glory becomes a thrilling if weird prospect.

Tackle

In return, the youngsters from Wigan will learn the Portuguese for Formby's trademark phrase, "never touched me" as they glide through tackle after tackle before bending one in from 30 yards.

The association is the result of chance meeting in 1998 between Wigan businessman John Bolster and a Rio jeweller on a flight to Brazil. Bolster, a football fanatic, was heading out on holiday to Rio and discovered that his new pal was coincidentally the best friend of the great Jairzinho. Bolster was granted an introduction and subsequently learned of Jairzinho's academy at Sao Christavo FC.

An approach to Wigan chairman Dave Whelan at the gym both was followed, resulting in Jairzinho's journey to the former mill town that nestles between the footballing heartlands of Liverpool and Manchester. Jairzinho could not resist, the pies that is.

"It is a great honour to come to Wigan and see the facilities and fans. It is a great town with a lot of potential which we hope to unlock," said the 56-year-old genius, who, alongside Pele, led perhaps the greatest side of all time to the World Cup in 1970, scoring in every round.

"We want to set up an academy in Wigan so we can bring young players

BRAZIL HERO JAIRZINHO SWAPS SUN, SEA AND SAMBA FOR MEAT PIES



adidas

IT'S AS EASY AS PIE for Jairzinho to fit into Wigan life

over from Brazil and send Wigan players back to Rio to make the most of their great potential.

"The Brazilian youngsters can learn about English fitness levels and the Wigan lads will be taught Brazilian-style skills and technique. The Brazilian boys are very keen to come to England and want to play in the Premiership - after all Wigan is just a few miles from Manchester United.

"It is a great opportunity for them because many of them are from poor families and some don't

even get fed properly. The academy will provide a unique blend of footballing cultures which could provide future Ronaldos and Rivaldos for Wigan and the English league."

After hanging up his boots in 1982 having hit 34 goals in 82 appearances for his country, Jairzinho took up coaching at Sao Christavo and by 1991 he had unearthed the precocious talents of future World Footballer of the Year Ronaldo.

When introduced as a guest of honour at the weekend to watch Wigan play at the JJB Stadium, he

was given a hero's welcome. Bolster is as thrilled as Jairzinho with the turn of events. He said: "I was really impressed with Jairzinho's coaching academy. I saw a lot of the boys being coached and many were from very poor families.

"But they loved the game so much and wanted to come to Europe to follow in the footsteps of great players like Romario, Roberto Carlos and Ronaldo. I thought it would be a great idea if I could get an English club to set up a sister academy to coach the Brazilian boys.

"I brought two young players over from Rio for a couple of months and asked the Wigan Athletic coach if they could train with them.

"Within days the coach was ringing me up saying these lads were a different class and could they take them on.

"I told them they weren't for sale but were just for demonstration purposes to prove what was on offer. We are now in negotiations over the academy."

He's got it, by George!

HERE are some handy local phrases to help Jairzinho settle in the town where George Formby was born:

- Ah'm eawt a flunter (I don't feel well).
- Ah keeps gooin mazy (I've had a dizzy spell).

- E wer born wi cramp in is fist (He's tight with money).
- He'll fricken a police orse (He's not pretty).
- Ast owt on thee? (Have you any money?).
- Astbrowtitwit? (Have you brought it with you?).



STAR: Jairzinho

STAR: Formby

GF Memorabilia Wanted

- Von Hoffman, who has his London home plastered with all sorts of musical memorabilia, is looking for anything on G F senior & junior, Cylinders, 78s, Original song sheets, photos, etc. Also anything on Harry Champion, Little Titch, Gus Elan, Old Time Music Hall Posters etc. Or any snippets of information on any of the old stars. If you've anything to offer please ring Shirley on 0208 5172389 or leave a message.

News from Jon & Pam Baddeley— In late



July I was asked by Barbara Adams of BBC Radio Stoke if I would display a collection of George Formby memorabilia for a Collectors Day on the 20th September 2001. Barbara is one of the longest serving broadcasters on Radio Stoke and a life-long Formby fan. Of course I was only too pleased at any opportunity to promote our George and therefore the answer was a resounding YES.



During mid August, Barbara again contacted me to see if a number of us could also be there so as to play our ukes as and when asked. Also, from this time right up to the 20th, Radio Stoke frequently played a trailer for the event with George singing in the background. The trailer itself ended with George uttering those immortal words: TURNED OUT NICE AGAIN HASN'T IT; and the day itself certainly did.

I arrived at 8.30 in the morning to set up and from 10.00 the doors of the Visitors Centre of Spode in the centre of Stoke were open to the public and what a day we had. I say we because during the day, a number of uke players turned up to entertain at the drop of the proverbial hat.

Thanks are due to the unstinting support of Brian Edge, Alan Newton, Bill Turner, Cliff Royle, Arthur Newton, Peter Cain and Carl Basford. During the day, we must have picked up our ukes at least thirty times to sing a song or three. Many thanks also to other members who also supported us particularly Mary Newton who was with us for most of the day. For the record, on Radio Stoke, we were featured three times during the day. I was interviewed when setting up and also when the event was in full flow in the afternoon. However, the most important broadcast was just after 3pm when we performed a medley of three of George's most famous songs.

At the event, hundreds of people attended and saw various collectors memorabilia on display, and there was also a valuation service-a bit like The Antiques Roadshow. The seven hours passed all too quickly and this was due I'm sure to the public's interest and it was a pleasure to hear their memories of George and to answer questions about the items on display and anything else to do with him.

We are indeed very lucky that various presenters on Radio Stoke have more than a passing interest in our George and I'm sure that the local George Formby Societies will only benefit from the day itself and the genuine love and warmth for the legendary George Formby. So as the song goes - HERE'S TO THE NEXT TIME.

Thanks Jon & Pam.

IT MAKES MY DAY WHEN I RECEIVE AN ARTICLE FROM YOU

George's Wroxham Home (Heronby) is for Sale.

Some 10 years ago we received a number of phone calls from Heronby neighbours. They were fighting government planners who were insisting that George's holiday home on the Norfolk Broads should be pulled down to make room for a new bypass. The neighbours, determined to win the battle, called on the GFS to support them. We spread the news among the members and about six players turned up to give concerts on the beautiful Heronby lawns.

After years of fighting, I am pleased to report that the neighbours have finally won the battle, and the house is now up for sale. So our George Formby players can be pleased with themselves for their effort.



It is understood that George couldn't settle in Heronby after receiving a summons to appear in court for spending over £150 on repairs. This was the law at the time. To save embarrassment, George didn't turn up at the courtroom, A disguised Beryl went instead under the name of Mrs Booth. If anyone is interested in buying George's holiday home, with a swimming pool, 5 bedrooms, drawing room, study, sitting room, play room, utility room, 2 bathrooms, conservatory, boiler room, kitchen, and its own mooring bay attached, hundreds of most beautiful coloured birds of all shapes and sizes, peace and quiet from any noise, freehold etc. It will cost you £775,000. 00.

No Limit—Just had a visit from London's Van Hoffman who is a dead keen GF senior and junior fan. He arrived on his most wonderful motor bike which was covered in GF photographs. It looks real GF smart! Van is touring round the N. West visiting various members of the GFS. At home he has a great collection of GF memorabilia and enjoys getting up at the meetings singing GF senior songs. More on Von and his bike in the next issue.



Sale Is Settling In—Once again there were welcome surprises among our guests. Most notable the arrival of George (Mr Bones) Cheetham, chauffeured by Les Pearson. George, now 80 years of age, is both a founder member of the George Formby Society and also an Honorary Member.



For many years he was the regular rhythm accompaniment at the Blackpool Conventions, and at the Sale monthly meetings, and often filled in the role of Master Of Ceremonies.



Old Bones Player—George Cheetham.
Some say good old George.

“The Royle Family” added eight to our total. Not, I hasten to add, the seedy TV family, but the more refined Cliff & Margaret Royle with family members and friends. Before the interval Cliff surrounded himself with his “Harem” (his words, not mine) of seven lovely ladies and together they us through the War Song Thrash.

From Huddersfield we were pleased to see John Beevers. John has been to Sale many times, but not for quite a while. He is an accomplished performer, quietly confident and a pleasure to add to our cast list.

Liverpool’s Stan Watkinson made a welcome reappearance. He claims to be a banjo player rather than a singer, but his medleys always get a good reception. Stan Evans, Brian & Connie Edge, Jack & Pauline Valentine, and Margaret Moran made their first visit to Timperley, adding nicely to the

entertainment. There is a little rivalry between Brian Edge and Alan Southworth to see who will play a Walter Langshaw song in Walter’s hearing. This time Brian got in with “The Bowler Hat That Granddad Left To Me” but Alan quickly added Walter’s “Princess Lulu” So I declare the contest a draw. Added to those already mentioned there were contributions from Alice Cronshaw, Walter Kirkland and Paul Kenny.

Although we were in a room to ourselves, we can be heard in the adjacent members room. Near the end of the evening this brought requests for “Granddad’s Flannelette Nightshirt” and “Lamp Post.” Alan & Paul were happy to oblige before the evening was brought to a close with a final short thrash. My thanks to Les Pearson for his thoughtfulness in arranging to bring George Cheetham, and for taking charge of proceedings after the interval.

Thanks Cyril. I like your opening line “some welcome surprises among our guests” What about the Frank Bruno look-alike that made an unexpected appearance?

Olwen Gale reports— Dear Stan, When Dennis was alive I hardly ever found much on George Formby to tell you about. But now from my extensive reading I am finding items all the time—funny?



This cropped up in a Thora Hird article—”Thora grew up next door to Morecambe’s Royalty Theatre which was managed by her father and first appeared on stage at eight weeks old. When she grew up she swapped working on a Co-op cash machine for the silver screen after being discovered by George Formby, who was playing at Morecambe Winter Gardens. George was considering making a film called, ‘As You Are’ and he noticed that the play of the same name was on at the Royalty Theatre. It was there that he saw Thora and asked her to go on to the casting for his film.

The picture was never made, but Thora secured a contract with the Ealing Studio, - and so began her illustrious film career.”

At the moment I am reading “The Lancashire Life” magazine and just found a three page article on George Formby. The mag goes on to plug David Bret’s book on George

Many thanks Olwen, - keep reading the magazines.

It’s A Small World! - In the last issue Neil Forshaw appealed for anyone who might know a music hall artist by the name of Ralph Fothergill. Neil had been to an auction and purchased a box of miscellaneous stuff including Ralph’s passport. Well Joe Taylor read the article and, living in Newcastle upon Tyne he put a notice in his local Evening Chronicle. Within a few days he received a letter from Richard Fothergill who has written two books on the Fothergill family.

Apparently Ralph was the black sheep of the family. He wouldn’t attend school so, at the age of 13, he was forced by his father to find a job. He ran away from home and, like GF senior, slept rough. He sang for bowls of soup in the Seaman’s Mission. Ralph was born in 1887 and died in 1977.

So isn’t it amazing what our little Newsletter can do. We might not be as big as the News of the World but we always get results. Our thanks to Neil Forshaw.

Jim Bramwell bumped into an old friend who was looking really down in the dumps. “What’s up? you look sad.” - “Oh”, he said, “My wife has left me, I’ve just had my car stolen, my cat has just died, I’ve lost all my wages on the horses, my television has blown up, and to top it all I’ve just been made redundant.” - “But,” Jim said, “You’ve still got your little part time job on the market. What do you sell?” “I sell lucky charms.”

Email for Cleaning Windows—Dear Stan, I have

been given your Email address by Christine Booth and was wondering if you could possibly help. My company is producing a children's party C.D and wants to record an adaptation/ cover version of 'When I'm Cleaning Windows'. In order to do this we must obtain permission from the original copy write owner to adapt the song. Unfortunately we don't know who the publisher is or who to ask. Can you shed any light ?
Martin Berger, Weststar Holidays.

No problem Martin. EMI own all 100% share of the song and you can write to them at 127 Charing Cross Rd, London WC2 0EA. Send me full details for our Newsletter

REPLY— Thanks for your help. The children's C.D features cartoon characters called Sid the Seagull, Lizzie The Lizard and Captain Custard.

If permission is given, the song 'When I'm Cleaning Windows' will be adapted for Captain Custard who is a naughty practical joker (He loves to throw custard pies) The song will have a special dance that all the children on Weststar Holidays Parks will learn. Approximately 30,000 children will see and hear the song along with a number of adaptations of other material on our parks in Cornwall and Dorset. Other adaptations include 'Secret Agent Man', 'Money Money', 'Schools Out' and 'Star Trekking'.

This will be the third album of adaptations, which has proved to be very popular with our guests over the last eight years. I hope this is of use, Thanks, Martin Berger, Entertainment Executive

Not A Patch on George & Beryl! - Did you see the news

item on TV? Ex Spice Girl, Gerri what'sit? Took a small group abroad somewhere to entertain the troops in GF style. The coverage was backed by shots of Bob Hope and Vera Lynn (no George). They weren't too bad at first until they started stripping off and displaying their bums. Well they always say, "If you've no talent just strip off."

Vague Request—Have you heard of a singer named Sonny Knowles?

He sang a song and the last line was "When I'm Cleaning Windows." If you've heard of Sonny please let me know because Tim Sheehan of Cork wants to know. It's not the one GF sings.

A lady uke player from Chester	10% of accidents are caused
Went into a field and undressed her	by drink drivers while the
A policeman on duty, said, "Oh what a beauty."	other 90% of accidents are
And it took him three hours to arrest her.	caused by those who are sober

Boss: Why are you late? I fell down the stairs sir. In that case you should have been earlier

Miss Burke Remembers—I went to the same school as young George and remember that he always had a perpetual and infectious grin. He never had a straight face and was always giggling. All the children would be sat all round the large table and George would set them all off laughing. We were taught in a convent and the straight faced nuns were not pleased.

Eliza was dumpy and very plain, Typical Lancashire housewife with a round, homely face. Very ordinary. Eliza's father and brothers had a horse drawn taxi business in Wigan. They gave their old clothes to GF Senior to use on the stage.

I was with my mother walking through Warrington and we spotted that young George was performing on the stage that night. They decided to go and see him and Eliza invited them back stage.

Eliza toured round the theatres with GF Senior leaving the children with the servants. The children would go to school in very expensive clothes but they looked neglected with matted hair and unwashed clothing.

After GF Senior's death, George took over some of the bookings and while he was performing at Warrington, Eliza was approached by the owner of Harrison's Little Theatre in Earlestown. He was trying to get Eliza to invest money into the building and Eliza was all in favour until my mother warned her not to do so. The theatre had been losing money for quite a long time and was bankrupt. Eliza didn't have a business head and if my mother hadn't talked her out of investing she would have lost all her money on the venture.

Eliza lost all her money with bad business deals and through trying to keep the children in the same class they had been used to. The money left by her husband soon dwindled away so she and the family looked towards young George as the breadwinner. To earn money Eliza formed an act with other members of the family and persuaded top theatre managers to give them bookings.

Eliza was inexperienced in performing and the verdict was that they were a disgrace. George was disappointed with his mother going on stage and refused to have anything to do with it. George & Beryl kept apart from them. Thanks to Joe Cooper for interviewing Miss Burke.

PALACE | Commencing
Monday, JULY 12th
Theatre : : Bradford | 6-35, TWICE 8-45
Telephone 407. | MATINEE: Thursday at 4.0

FIRST VISIT HERE!
PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF

Mrs.
GEORGE FORMBY
WITH THE **SEN.**
FORMBY FAMILY

including
FRANKIE, LOUIE AND RONNIE
Following in Father's Footsteps.

TOMIO & VAL | The **WILLENORS**
The Comedy Conjurors. | Royal Command Comedy Cyclists.

HENRY D. | **JOHNNIE** | **RHYTHM**
ADAMS | **REGAN** | **RANGERS**
Lead in Comedy Juggling. | The English Comedians. | Music on the Range.

PELL & LITTLE | **WHEELER**
AND **WILSON**

Have you ever had one of those days?

The other morning, after washing the pots, I heard a noise of water dripping under the sink and when I investigated, discovered that the drain system under the sink had perished and all the water had gushed down into a very large pan that was stored underneath the sink. I pulled all the perished bits and pieces of pipes away— which left a gaping hole in the bottom of the sink. I then bent down to pick up the pan full of water and, - without thinking (well it was early morning) emptied the full contents of the pan down the sink. I realised the huge blunder I'd made when two gallons of cold water gushed down through the large hole in the sink, hit the shelf underneath and bounced up my legs saturating me wet through. The back kitchen lino was flooded.

But that's not all! In haste, before Eva could see the mess I was in, I dashed to grab some old newspapers, spread them all over the floor to soak up the water, and walked on them to speed up the task of soaking up the flood. After about half an hour, and convinced that nobody saw my dilemma, I picked up all the soaking wet newspapers only to discover that the black print had transferred itself to the lino and you could actually read yesterday's news backwards on the floor. I quickly grabbed the mop and bucket to remove the print and found that the print is indelible and impossible to remove. At that point Eva entered the arena with the words: - "What on earth is all that black print doing on my clean floor." Not a word of sympathy for my saturated, cold wet legs and squelching slippers

WHOOOPS— Margaret Moran rang, "You've made a big slip up Stan in the last issue. The GM Radio show that Cyril Palmer was on is presented by Phil Wood and not Phil Collins, and they say, 'Put more Wood on the radio' not on the fire. You see, it all makes sense when you think about it. They are saying that there should be more of Phil Wood on the radio."



Marvellous Margaret. It's like I've always said, "It takes a woman to sort these things out."

Hold on:- Eva has just come up with a joke she's heard on TV.

Why did God make man first? Answer: He always makes a rough prototype before producing a perfect model.

Another Good Find! - In Widnes Market the other day I

stumbled across a Double CD called "The Diamond Accordion Band—100 Favourite Singalongs" It contains over two hours of well known medleys like, Lil' Old Winedrinker, Blueberry Hill, Who's Sorry Now, Pal Of My Cradle Days, Paper Roses, Rambling Rose, Crazy, Spanish Eyes, Forty Shades of Green, etc. and loads more. It is a very well made CD with a great compilation of songs. Produced by Prism Leisure PLAT CD 4915 and the price is £6.99. Well worth buying.

Date Change for Blackpool From Charles Stewart

Further to our 'phone conversation I wish to remind you of the dates for the next three meetings. Monday October 29th and Monday November 26th. But we've brought forward the December meeting to the 17th. Best wishes ...Chas.

SO DON'T FORGET—THE DECEMBER MEETING IS ON DEC 17th.

Trip to Amsterdam

—Possibly all seats may be booked by the time you receive this issue but it's worth giving Colin & Christine Wood on 01270 663558 (Email chriswood@claremont44.fsnet.co.uk) or Alan Chenery on 01270 257085 (Email alanjoseph@carringtonway.fsnet.co.uk and, who knows, there may be space available. The trip is on Friday May 31st to Monday June 3rd 2002 and the price is £170 per person. £30 deposit is require to book space.

I've just received an Email from Dennis Lee saying that they won't be with us as they have other plans. That's a great shame. Apart from being one of our top entertainers Dennis is also our Hall Booking Manager. He hunts out all the big pubs and cafes where we can entertain. We must work on them.

A FEW OF LIFE'S MYSTERIES

What use are men's nipples?

Why do kamikaze pilots wear helmets?

What is a free gift? Aren't all gifts free?

What was the best thing before sliced bread?

What is an occasional table the rest of the time?

Does a born again Christian have two belly buttons?

What happens if you get half scared to death twice?

How do you know when you've run out of invisible ink?

If a mime artist is arrested, has he the right to remain silent?

If swimming is good for the figure why do we have fat whales?

If you ate pasta followed by antipasta, would you still feel hungry?

If you can't have your cake and eat it, what else can you do with it?

If it is true that we are here to help others, then what are the others here for?

Mary had a little lamb, a lobster and some prunes. A glass of wine, a piece of pie, a plate of macaroons. She gobbled down a sponge cake, and what else we do not know. But when they carried Mary out, her face was white as snow

The Epilogue

—I leave you with a thought that each of us is a mixture of good qualities and some, perhaps, not-so-good qualities. In considering our fellow man we should remember his good qualities and realise his faults only prove he is, after all, a human being. We should refrain from making harsh judgements of a person even if he happens to be a dirty, rotten, stinking, low down, bone idle, good for nothing scoundrel. Amen.

N. West Meetings

North Wales Branch - British Legion, Penyffordd (10 miles from Chester) Every first Friday in the month. Tel Geoff Shone on 01244 544605 Adm 50p. Where can you get a better bargain than that?

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 - LAST TWO MEETINGS BEFORE FINISHING (See Page 5 for details) THURS NOV 15th and THURS DEC 20th. Bill Turner on 01782 304858.

Sale - NEW VENUE - AGAIN—Timperley Liberal Club, 43 Park Road, Timperley. 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 - 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. Every last Monday (see page 19 for December only date change) in the month -Tel Eve & Charles Stewart on 01253 768097.

W o n d e r f u l B u f f e t .

Wintergardens GFS Meetings:

Sat & Sun 24th & 25th Nov 2001

No dates yet for year 2002

N. West—Two Lancashire Lads

Web Site: www.thehollies.u-net.com/formby.

E Mail: stan@thehollies.u-net.com

For 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 Front Cover

DON'T FORGET YOUR ARTICLE—OR ELSE

