No Limit

The Yorkshire Ukulele Circle Newsletter - June 1996

George Crosland



It is with much regret that I record the passing away of one of our long standing members and stalwarts of the Yorkshire Ukulele Society and the George Formby Society. George hadn't been seen for the last couple of years but was a regular supporter until illness stopped him from attending our meetings.

My memories of George include a distinctive thumb roll, The Lancashire Toreador and the fact that whenever he sang "Smile All The Time", he always did so with a deep scowl on his face as he concentrated on his chords.

I bought my first real ukulele-banjo from George, a Cartwright which is now owned by Robin Bennison, when I mentioned to George that I had sold the Cartwright to Robin, he played hell, as if the uke still belonged to him and I found this to be quite amusing at the time.

George always (in my time of knowing him) played a lovely Abbott "Baby" ukulele, much in the style of the Baby Gibson's. I do know that he also played a banjo and the last time I visited him, he showed me a mandolin that he thought he might get a tune out of.

The picture here shows George in full concert dress and was taken for the show in Middlesborough which took place around 1993. George couldn't attend that concert because of failing health but he was presented in his absence with a memento from fellow members of the Burma Star Association.

The Yorkshire Ukulele Circle

MEETS ON THE 1ST TUESDAY IN THE MONTH AT
CARLGATE W.M.C. WAKEFIELD
AND ON THE 3RD TUESDAY IN THE MONTH AT
MIRFIELD CONSERVATIVE CLUB - BE THERE!

ONE SONG OR TWO?

What's happened to the Yorkshire Ukulele Society?
Whenever we perform these days we only get one song at a time. Some of us may be called up to play later on in the evening but this is by no means a certainty. On a personal basis, I prefer to play two numbers as it usually takes me one number to get things going. I feel that from the spectator angle it is also preferable to watch our colleagues performing two songs rather than watching a constant stream of faces all through the evening. In every other George Formby ukulele gathering the artists are always allowed to do two songs so what's gone wrong in Yorkshire? I am convinced that since we started this practise, the evening is slowed down as everybody has to be introduced twice. It just doesn't seem practical to me and I for one wish we would revert to the two song format.

Let me know your views.

The George Formby Society
meets at the
Winter Gardens,
Blackpool
on the weekend of June 22-23

Don't forget, your Editor needs to know:

- What does Charlie Hever spray on his tonsils every night!
- Why is Peter Pollard so good looking?
- How can Dennis Mitchell be so suave and debonair and live in Halifax?
- How did YOU get to be playing a ukulele?

Write to your editor with all your information:

Peter Pollard, 42 Ullswater Avenue, Dewsbury. WF12 7PW

If you can't think of anything to write, let's have some scandal about somebody!

Newsletters

It has been quite some time since we last looked at the Yorkshire Ukulele Society newsletter. Unfortunately, even a modest production like this takes a lot of effort and research to put together, all from one source.
I think it is important that the doings of the members of the Circle are chronicled in some fashion and a newsletter seems to be appropriate.

I would though appeal to all our members to get their thinking caps on and supply me with some 'copy'. One of my problems is that I might get some good stuff, but when I've found enough to fill the newsletter, the original stuff is out of date and as to be scrapped.
Some of you may be aware that their are other newsletters in circulation within the Formby fraternity. In the south of England ace ukulele player Andy Eastwood is producing a very professional effort which gives the reader a in-depth insight into what goes on within the local branch. This, in my humble opinion is what a newsletter should be for.

In the other direction, ex-editor of the Vellum, Stan Evans is producing a 20 page magazine under the guise of the North-West Newsletter which in your editors opinion is a direct threat to the Vellum and the George Formby Society itself.

We may not be associated with the G.F.S. but we are all Formby people.

He openly criticises the running of the Formby Society, he publishes articles about George Formby extracted from the archives of various newspapers which should be submitted to the Vellum. Stan in one of his "newsletters" states that we should all be supporting the Society, this seems to me to be a strange way of showing that support.

Of course, Stan isn't alone in letting the Society down, there are other misguided members who make regular contributions to this newsletter, nothing wrong with that as long as they realise that every article about George that misses the Vellum, is another brick kicked out of a wall that will one day collapse on these people unless they see sense.

Don't think that your editor is talking behind peoples back's, I will send this article to Stan in the hope that he will respond with his comments for un-edited publication in a forth coming issue.
Over to you Stan.

Uke Concert at Burn Airfield

A report from David White

Following or in spite of, a request about a Uke Concert, some members of the 'Circle' obliged by playing on Saturday the 4th June 1996 at Burn Gliding Club. This was coincidentally the same date as the Milton Keynes meeting, but in spite of this 9 players turned up.

The Auto Sleepers club laid on a meal for players and wives, who all enjoyed the pea and pie supper. The Auto Sleepers (Mobile Homes), are a good natured crowd and they thoroughly enjoyed the evenings entertainment.

One member, in his seventies, told me that he had met George in 1942, in Poulton-Le-Fylde, outside the house called Beryldene. He said that George always brought them i.e. his crew mates coffee, which they drank in their Bren Gun Carrier. The coffee breaks for the lads appeared to be on a regular basis. One day, George said he would like to try out a new tune for them, and played "Frank On His Tank". The Auto Sleeper member said that he had never heard the song again, so I was able to reassure him that the song was still popular. I was informed that George was a smashing chap, and nothing like his comic film image. George also turned up at the local Army barracks and gave the lads a concert. Another member had bought a uke in 1933, complete with case and some instructional notes, the price was 67 shillings and sixpence and wait for it, he still had it. He does not play it now but did not seem interested in selling it. It could have been a 'Dallas D' but as he had not brought it with him, I couldn't be certain.

Finally, Alan Guest, their Secretary, had just attended a auction, where one of George's motorcycles was sold for £13,000.

Oh, the concert, thanks to Lionel Owen Charlie Hever, Norman Wilcox, Tony Marshall, Dennis Wilson, Brian Webb, 'Tetley' Dave and 'Tall' Paul Culkin. High lights of the evening were Charlie's running banter (abuse?) with the Auto Sleepers members, and Brian Webb and the collapsible chair. Brian said he played better sat down, and being Brian, gave all of thirty seconds for this requirement. A folding chair, being handy was pressed into service. Whatever else these chairs do, there is no doubt of their ability to fold, as Brian found out half way through his performance. The audience found this very funny, and must have thought it was a comedy contortion act. Brian, to his credit, never stopped playing... a great trouper.

So that's all from Burn for this year. Incidentally, the first concert at the Gliding Club, was organised by the late Derek Teasdale, who was a glider pilot. I feel sure he would be pleased that his idea has carried on.