

Star's tribute will pack a punch

Budleigh's celebrations to mark Reg Varney's centenary are continuing in the lead-up to the much-loved actor's birthday, including a special appearance in the town by his granddaughter.

Fans of British sitcoms including *The Rag Trade* and *On The Buses* have been visiting Fairlynch Museum in their hundreds to see the 2016 exhibition which has been staged as a tribute to the actor. Entitled *Our Little Clown*, the museum's displays reveal that Reg was a talented artist as well as a musician and a successful comic actor.

During the weekend of Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 July visitors will be able to travel in appropriate style to Fairlynch on board an open-top double-decker 1957 vintage Bristol LDL bus. Reg's granddaughter Leah will be in attendance on one of the days, dressed in costume as a clippie. What more could *On the Buses* fans want?

The bus will travel around the town in a clockwise direction, starting opposite Fairlynch at 11.00 am on Saturday and Sunday. It will pause at the Public Hall to pick up more passengers, continuing along Upper Stoneborough Lane to the junction of East Budleigh Road, then turning right along Coastguard Road to return to Fairlynch. Circuits will continue on both days until the museum closes at 4.30 pm. Each circuit will take about 20 minutes, allowing for loading and offloading, the pausing places and photo shoots.

The celebrations at Fairlynch will open on Friday 8 July with *Punch and Judy* shows at 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm, accompanied by refreshments including Pimms, served in the museum garden. The museum itself will remain open until 8.00 pm on Friday. On Saturday and Sunday it will be open from 11.00 am to 4.30 pm. Refreshments and home-made cakes will be available.

Fairlynch spokesperson Michael Downes said of the weekend event: 'It will be a really colourful and entertaining time for all the family. Admission to the museum throughout the weekend remains free. Of course we welcome donations to both Fairlynch and the British Heart Foundation which the museum is supporting this year. We are really grateful to WHOTT, the Westcountry Historic Omnibus & Transport Trust for facilitating the bus tours, for which there is no charge.'

Friday 8 July: Fairlynch Museum open from 2.00-8.00 pm. *Punch and Judy* shows at 5.30 pm and 6.30 pm.

Saturday 9 & Sunday 10 July: Fairlynch Museum open from 11.00 am – 4.30 pm, with vintage bus tours of Budleigh Salterton.

Monday 11 July: Fairlynch Museum is closed; normal opening hours from Tuesday 12 July.