

### **WHOTT assists Reg Varney centenary**

Bus tours of Reg Varney's adopted home town were organised by the West Country Historic Omnibus and Transport Trust (WHOTT) over the weekend of 9-10th July. WHOTT was approached by Budleigh Salterton's Fairlynch Museum which mounted an exhibition of Reg's life and work and needed a real bus to complete the picture.

Bob Crawley, Chairman of WHOTT, said "We located some red KSWs and green FLFs, some of which were used in the original series of "On the Buses", but in the end the offer of a rare open-top LDL which once operated for Devon General and Western National was too good to miss. Thankfully the weather was kind and we carried record crowds of enthusiasts and the general public who either remembered Reg as a local resident or had come especially for the event."

The tours commenced from the museum and conveyed visitors around the sites so beloved of Reg in his latter years. The exhibition was opened by his daughter Jeanne who still lives in the town, and his granddaughter Leah also joined the bus dressed as a clippie. The event was organised in support of the British Heart Foundation.

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS**

Reg Varney was born in East London on 11th July 1916. Starting as a club pianist, he became an army entertainer and Shakespearean actor, but is best loved as cheeky driver Stan Butler in "On the Buses" which ran from 1969 to 1973, for which he took his PSV test so that he could be filmed driving on the road. After retirement he moved to Devon. It is little known that he was born with a heart condition and suffered a number of heart attacks. He died in 2008.

The Fairlynch exhibition entitled "Our Little Clown" continues until 30th September 2016 although the bus tours ran only for the centenary weekend. Reg was also a talented artist and some of his paintings are on sale at the museum.

25th Sep – Coldharbour Mill steam day with WHOTT feeder bus

23rd Oct – Coldharbour Mill steam day with WHOTT feeder bus

27th Nov – Coldharbour Mill steam day with WHOTT feeder bus

1st Jan 2017 – Coldharbour Mill steam day with WHOTT feeder bus