

Reeve Talks Bungay

THE last month has been quiet as far as engagements are concerned, though I attended a most enjoyable celebration of the Chinese New Year, hosted by the Mayor of St Edmundsbury, Patrick Chung, at Bury St Edmunds. It was a wonderful show and we were treated very well. But the relative lull has provided the opportunity to look forward and plan events this year in Bungay. With my social committee I am planning a celebration for the Queen's 90th birthday, in line with communities up and down the country. It will be on Friday, June 10, and will be on similar lines to the one in September to mark the date Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch in this country's history. It will be a free event for the community. All children will have a free hot dog, there will be face painting, and a competition inviting children to come along dressed in crown or sceptre (or both), with prizes for the best three in each age group.

Other children's entertainment will include a Punch and Judy show, and for adults there will be music from the Bungay Choral society, a brass band, a bar and a hog roast. The Royal British Legion will take part in a ceremony, and as dusk falls the town beacon will be lit and the evening will end with a fireworks display.

It should be another vibrant event, and I am grateful for the financial support that has been promised so far towards the cost of the event. I'm hoping other contributions will be forthcoming in due course.

Incidentally, the Queen still seems young compared with Albert Goudge of Ditchingham, who I visited at All Hallows day care centre on his birthday recently – he was 102, and still in reasonable health and good form. Sadly, though, I have also attended the funeral last week for Malcolm Bedingfield, who was 92. He's the fourth feoffee of the Town Trust we have lost in little over 12 months, and played an active role in many Bungay organisations over the years. Our condolences are with his family.

Looking further forward, the Bungay Festival will take place again in July, and it will include the popular Town Reeve's Ball, which John and Jayne Groom will once again organise. The marquee for the ball is likely to be at the old grammar school field this year, with parking on Skinner's Meadow opposite. Make a note of the date in your diary – Friday, July 15, and if you want to book a table of 10 it would be a good idea to do so early, with numbers limited to around 300.

I'm holding a coffee morning on April 20, hosted by Roger and Sue Allen at their home in Earsham Street, in aid of all Hallows, and I'm also planning more fundraising events later in the year.

Finally, I'm delighted that the Castle Trust and the museum trustees have acquired the King's Head Hotel for the town. It is brilliant news. It means the museum can expand and be sited in the town centre, and the potential for the site as a whole is huge, with its links with the Castle. Congratulations to those who are driving this project forward – it will be a wonderful asset to the town and district.

Eamon Gaffney
Town Reeve of Bungay