Ruardean Lord Mayors

Ruardean to revive its Lord Mayor tradition

Holding Court - Kia Miles, Ruardean's Lord Mayor back in 1947, hears a defendant as villagers gather in The Square

The ancient office of Lord Mayor of Ruardean is to be revived this weekend.

A Sergeant-at-Arms has been appointed and three hapless parishioners have been "charged" to appear at the Mayor's Court in the Village Hall on Saturday. "This is an honorary office that is very much part of Ruardean's history," said local councillor Reg Duberley.

"Originally, it was staged to provide some fun in the village, before the days of the carnival and television and other home entertainments."

Reg added: "In years gone by, the Lord Mayor was selected because he was the tallest man in the village, although the rules were adjusted somewhat for the last mayor, the late Jim Whittington."

The idea of reviving the office was mooted by the new carnival committee at Ruardean and Mr Duberley has agreed to research and organise the court.

His butchery business Duberley Bros is sponsoring the event.

The mayor-elect is Neil Jones of Varnister Road.

He has excellent credentials as the grandson of a former Lord Mayor Kia Miles.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is Gordon Burgh, also well-qualfied as a one-time RAF security man.

"I will be the prosecuting solicitor," said Reg.

"We have three defendants. One lady is charged with cruelty to a perambulator. She delivers newspapers in it and one of the wheels came off.

"She is also up for bribery because she proffers biscuits to dogs to stop them from biting.

"I have another lady up for putting her washing out on a day other than St Munday.

"My third defendant, and this goes back a bit, bulldozed a pile of snow that stopped people in Mountain View from getting out."

Reg added that the new village pound might have to be brought into use if any

of the defendants, or their hangers-on, prove difficult to handle.

When the court is convened, Reg will welcome the Mayor-elect who will be sworn in by the rector, Canon Cliff Davies.

And what sort of penalties can the defendants expect? Will the punishment fit the crime?

"This is up to the Lord Mayor, but a likely fine would be the cost of two pints of beer, which he will probably consume right away," added Reg.

"I'm hoping that this will once again become an annual event in the village and that as many people as possible will support it."

Proceedings will start at 7.15pm.

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