



RYE & DISTRICT BONFIRE SOCIETY

Minutes of the De-Briefing Meeting held on Wednesday 12th November 2014
at the Queen's Head , Landgate, Rye, by kind permission.

Present :

Francis Warren, Sandra Warren, Paul Carey, Charlie Carey, Malcolm Mayhew, Kevin Mayhew, Patsy Hughes, Simon Bowler, Rita Kirk, Dave Barnes, Marion Buss, Bob Booth, Ian Foster, James Foster, Neale East, Margaret O'Neill, Christine Chivers, Laurence Chivers, Wayne Wadey, Ruth Palmer, Chris Beaven, Richard Nutting, Julian Cheese, Willie Wicking, Hannah Moon, Ian Moon, Andy Tolleth, Margaret Stoodley, Pete Ridgers, Liz Mitchell, Robert Booty

1. Apologies for absence

Brian Gasson, John Izod, Dave Lawton, Peter Chandler, Richard Todd, Ashley Booth, Bob Mitchell, Irene Cuthbert, Carol Arnold, Charlotte Moon, Emma Moon, Francis Rowe, Joan Ridgers, Troy Beales, Charlie and Denise Saxby, Adrian Pettitt, Jackie Rowe, Dave Wood, Brian Cutting, Peter Read, Jimper Sutton, Tim Watson

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the Bonfire Planning meeting held on Monday 3rd November were signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Correspondence

Rita read out e-mails received congratulating Rye on a very successful event from Rabble, who sent a photo of our fireworks and bonfire which was on passed to Neale. Also an e-mail from Fishbone Ash congratulating us for all our hard work.

Details finally received from Hawkhurst Bonfire Society regarding the arrangements for their event on 22nd November. These were read out and a time arranged for 5.30pm pick up at Rye Station by the Rye Community Bus.

A last minute communication was received from Robertsbridge and read out regarding a change of arrangements for a reduced fire site due to the very wet conditions.

An e-mail was also read out from Rotherfield & Mark Cross informing us that any correspondence should be directed through their chairman Les Pike as they do not have a secretary at present.

5. Membership

Dave Lawton had to leave the meeting before the start.

6. Safety Issues

Ian. Ian reported that all was OK in the Control Room. There was nothing major except that the Police were opening roads when they shouldn't on the evening of our event. He saw the biggest problem to be that there were no marshals at the bottom of Rye Hill. He suggested that there should have been a barrier and an Inspire marshal here and at Dead Man's Lane. Paul suggested that we took it for granted that Inspire would be there as in previous years but Mark from Inspire had probably forgotten.

Patsy – Reported on a suggestion from Brian Atkins, who was a marshal on the Kettle of Fish roundabout. Brian's idea was that drivers unfamiliar with the area and trying to get to Dover might be provided with a small map to show the way through to Udimore Road to pick up the M20 whilst the through road was partially closed. Patsy also suggested that the Police who were present at the event were not familiar with the Town at all, appeared not to be fully briefed and unfamiliar with the layout of the area or had not studied their briefing packs.

Patsy reported that 3 arrests were made during the evening outside the Horizon Night Club around midnight which were not considered to have any connection with our event.

Simon – Volume of Police in Rye was questioned i.e. small number at the beginning. This was explained because the Police presence was staggered with reinforcements being provided all through the evening.

Neale - Reported on correspondence received regarding control on Monkbretton Bridge. Spectators were moved for safety reasons and Paul explained that this was due to the likelihood of the wind changing with the risk of ash in the eyes of the spectators from the bonfire. (In the event, the wind did move in our favour). Complaints were received that an Inspire officer was more officious than was necessary and some spectators were moved without explanation. However, the general opinion of the meeting was that Inspire carried out a good, safe job on the bridge.

Premature opening of Road Closures - One complaint was also received regarding a lady officer from Inspire who let a van through the road closure. It was the general opinion that the A259 was opened too soon, by Police who were in control of the road closures. Further problems were encountered by Charlie at Bedford Place Car Park where cars were attempting to exit whilst the procession was still in progress.

Paul – Paul commented that there was a great deal to discuss at the All Agency meeting which would follow the event, especially with British Rail.

7. Updates from Captains

Fire Carts – Mayhew Brothers reported that next year we needed to stop the crowd coming between the fire carts at the top of Rope Walk. Charlie admitted that this was due to a manpower problem with more marshals required at the tail end of the parade.

Chairing Down – Hannah reported that the Centurions were grateful to be placed nearer the front of the procession. This made it easier for them to move to the head of the procession quickly to carry out the chairing down. However, they had expressed doubts as to whether they should or could carry out the procession again taking Rye Fawkes around the firesite to light the fire with the field very wet and muddy underfoot as it was on 8th November. They expressed worries about slipping and dropping the person being carried aloft. A long discussion took place about this tradition and Paul suggested that if conditions on the firesite in future years were as bad as this year then contingency plans should be in place so that the chairing down could still take place but perhaps in a different way.

Rye Fawkes Cape and Hat – Chris asked for help in finding these items which Jimper had declined to wear in the chairing down. These items were reported as being left in Juta's garden at the time of the chairing down but were subsequently found to be missing when the chair was returned.

Jim Hollands was thanked in his absence for helping marshals to ensure that Jimper was safely on time and in place for the chairing down. Rita said that she had e-mailed Jim after the event to thank him.

Dragon – Francis reported that the dragon was very popular with everybody, children and adults alike. It's updated fire breathing modifications were appreciated by all.

Pyrotechnics - Ian expressed his concern that 3 of his usual crew were unable to help this year but thanked Ashley and Laurence who managed to help him complete the fusing up on Friday.

However major problems were encountered by Ian on Sunday when he had to dismantle racking and clear the firework site alone in seriously muddy conditions. He commented that more troops would be needed on the ground next year.

Bucketteers – Patsy begin by apologising to Marion and Liz for giving away their buckets to other collectors minutes before they arrived. Patsy explained at length the circumstances; she had made the wrong choices and asked that they accept her sincere apologies.

Patsy gave the final figure for collections as £4,567.00, £500 up on last year, Liz G being the best collector. Patsy hoped that everybody felt really proud of themselves. Special mention was made of Ruths' helpers Brooke and Ronnie and young Elijah, Bob's 5 year old Grandson, who was in sight of beating Jimper with a bucket total of just over £200.

Feedback from Marshals – A list of comments from marshals unable to be present at the meeting was handed to Rita after the conclusion of the meeting and were therefore unable to be discussed.

Action – Bonfire Night Feedback from Marshals to be included on the agenda at the next full meeting in January

8. Any Other Business

Public Relations

Neale reported on the Press Release on Monday 10th November by Rye & District Bonfire Society regarding the tableaux of poppies commemorating the 100th anniversary of the start of the Great War. Our action in burning the tableaux on the bonfire after discharge was explained in the release and it was unanimously agreed that no further clarification was required.

A copy of the release was issued with the agenda and minutes at the start of the meeting in order that all members were aware of the exact wording.

Neale was thanked by all present for his work on behalf of the society in dealing with some of the unpleasant reactions to our act of remembrance.

Neale reported on the likelihood of obtaining a wooden fishing boat for next year's event. This was presently at Rye Harbour having its engine removed and Neale would let us know when it was available for us.

Fund Raising

Ruth reminded members that there would be a Rye Bonfire table at the Christmas Fair at St Marys Church on Saturday 29th November. With raffle tickets for sale for the Christmas Draw.

Ruth requested that more Christmas draw tickets should be printed which he agreed to do.

Ruth was thanked again for the work of her Team in making the Bonfire Programme such a success this year.

BONCO

Paul asked for endorsement from the Society to suggest at the next BONCO meeting on the 27th November that the BONCO meeting calendar be adjusted i.e. to move the November meeting up to the first week in December by which time all Societies will have had their de-brief meetings from their events plus SAG meetings and to move the Spring meeting towards the end of March by which stage the various local authorities would be calling for planning meetings.

Paul was given a unanimous vote to go ahead with this suggestion at BONCO on 27th November..

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Date & Time of the next Bonfire Meeting - Wednesday 10th December 8.00pm
at the Queen's Head Pub, Landgate – Back Meeting Room

This will be a social meeting with Francis, our Chairman handing out donation cheques to good causes chosen by our members and it is also hoped to show a DVD of our event of 8th November.

.....Chairman

.....Date