



RYE & DISTRICT BONFIRE SOCIETY

Minutes for the meeting held on Wednesday 14th January 2015
at the Queen's Head , Landgate, Rye, by kind permission.

Present :

Francis Warren, Sandra Warren, Paul Carey, Charlie Carey, Malcolm Mayhew, Simon Bowler, Rita Kirk, Jackie Rowe, Dave Barnes, Bob Booth, Margaret O'Neill, Ian Foster, Dave Lawton, Ruth Palmer, Willie Wicking, Patsy Hughes.

1. Apologies for absence

Marion Buss, Christine Chivers, Rachel Booth, Peter Chandler, Richard Todd, Pete Ridgers, Carol Arnold, Ashley Booth, Chris Beaven, Bob Mitchell, Laurence Chivers, Francis Rowe, Emma Moon, Hannah Moon, Charlotte Moon, Jimper Sutton, Joan Ridgers, Irene Cuthbert, Troy Beales, Charlie and Denise Saxby, Adrian Pettitt, Liz Mitchell, Brian Cutting, Andy Tollett, Margaret Stoodley, Neale East, Kevin Mayhew, Malcolm Cheese, Brian Gasson, James Foster, Dave Wood, Tim Watson, Wayne Wadey, Natalie Wadey

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th November were signed as a true record.

3. Matters Arising

Bob asked if there was any news of the missing Rye Fawkes Cape and Hat which were not worn by Jimper on the night of Bonfire as he preferred to wear his own pirate outfit. Charlie confirmed that these were left in Juta's garden with the chair.

Action: Paul to contact Juta to see if she had found the hat and cape in her garden.

4. Correspondence

Rita read out correspondence beginning with news from BONCO of the death of Barbara Nicholls of South Street Bonfire Society and Ken Funnell of Cliffe Bonfire Society.

Details were read out concerning Burgess Hill Bonfire Society Dinner Dance to be held at Hassocks Hotel on Saturday 7th February.

Details had also been received regarding the Sussex Bonfire Council Annual Dinner to be held on Saturday 25th April at the Horseshoe Inn, Herstmonceux. Copies of the menu etc were available for those present.

Sussex BONCO had also sent details of change of Secretary for Seaford.

Many letters and cards had been received thanking the society for their recent donations. These were from Rother Responders, Age Concern, members of the Peasmarch Memorial Hall Committee at Peasmarch and The Mariners, Rye.

Rita also made the members aware of the menu available for our own Not the Rye Bonfire Dinner to be held at the Kings Head Inn, (Top of the Hill, Rye) which was discussed later as an agenda item. Copies of the menu were available for those present.

5. Treasurer's Report

Ian circulated copies of the Profit and Loss account 1st February 2014 – 14th January 2015 which he had prepared. Ian then went through the items in detail.

Total fund raising to date amounted to £9,108.16, an increase of £2,000 on this time last year. This included new items of £200 raised for us by Rye Angling Club with a match organized by Andy Ashdown on our behalf. Ruth and her team were once again praised for the Table sales total for the year so far of £824.75 and Christmas raffle income of £920. Gifts and donations income – some including food and drink vendors and globand sellers on bonfire night totalled £1,136. Other Bonfire night items such as programme advertising totaled an all time record of £2,656, again a big thank you to Ruth and her team. Programme sales of £584. were considered low due to the lack of volunteers available to sell them. Bucketteers on bonfire night collected a record total of £4,714 and static collection tins positioned around the pubs and shops in the town amounted to a collection of £231.

Total income to date totaled £19,212.27

Total fund raising expenses to date amounted to £465.90 and included such items as the Dragon tableau £149, equipment rental and fire site expenses.

Other larger expenses included insurance of £2,374 and donations to good causes in the area of £2,250.

A profit for the year to date was declared of £4,980

The donation to be given to St John's Ambulance was discussed as Ian had not received an invoice as such only an indication of the expenses that they had borne in bringing equipment into Rye on the night of Bonfire to provide first aid cover which amounted to £2,700. It was presumed that under the new organization they would be expecting a figure of half this amount. Ian explained that St John's were in a transition period as far as their organization was concerned and under the old organization we would have paid £450. Views on other first aid cover was aired and a discussion around the provision that Ninfield and Northiam had which included St John's Ambulance and the Red Cross.

It was recognized that we could not run the event without St John's due to their highly qualified personnel on standby who were able to treat any wounded on the spot without the necessity of transferring to A& E.

The use of local organizations such as Rother Responders was proposed by Patsy suggesting that a change in their insurance cover may make it possible for them to be considered to provide cover at a future Rye event.

Paul proposed a donation of £1,000 to St John's Ambulance which was seconded by Simon.

The poor amount received from Globand sellers was discussed. Ian explained that we could not contract out this concession as Rother District Council had only allowed us one license for the evening. However RDC had then proceeded to issue other licenses to sellers who also turned up on the night.

Action: Paul confirmed that he would strongly object to this tactic by Rother at the upcoming SAG Meeting.

6. Membership

Dave queried the membership dues to be charged for the 2015/16 season. It was confirmed that the present price would stay the same as it covered the administration cost. Ian commented that it was not a major fund raiser as in other societies who had a different structure.

A plea went out that we should have membership forms available for meetings for members without computers.

Action: Rita to send membership form to Simon to make copies to be provided at each meeting.

Discussion took place with regard to other ways of including 'sleeping' members in our activities as well as encouraging new members to join.

It was recognized that Nikki reminded members personally by phone who had not paid by July but it was thought that an initiative was needed in March and April to sign up new members and engage our 'sleeping' members to come along to assist with fund raising and general help. It was also suggested that a list of events throughout the year that we organize should be included.

The conclusion was to provide a Membership Form, News Sheet and a New Year Call for Help.

Margaret offered to be involved in the production of fliers etc and Neale's help was suggested (in his absence). Ian also offered to lend a hand.

Margaret offered to hand deliver any literature around Rye although Ian confirmed that the Society would provide the funds for postage.

Action: Margaret to get together with Neale to discuss ideas and involve Ian where possible.

7. Safety Issues

SAG Meeting Friday 3rd October

Paul confirmed that he would attend the next SAG meeting of all agencies which would take place in Rye Fire Brigade Station at 2.30 pm on 30th January. Simon asked to be included as he would be available on that day. Paul flagged up a problem with changes in various agencies, namely the Police whom we worked well with in the past but the relationship had proved problematical this year. However, he reported a really good relationship between Rye Bonfire and the Fire Brigade and Ambulance personnel.

Paul confirmed that RDC would be asked to explain their strategy of giving out licenses to all and sundry (Globand sellers).

Various issues would need to be addressed such as more marshals to be used at the Landgate before the crowds congregated in force. Simon suggested deploying two Inspire Security Guards from the fire site at a time when they were not necessarily needed to augment Bonfire Marshals in this area. The use of ropes as a barrier between marshals, Inspire and Police was suggested as a strategy to hold the crowds back as was used in Lewes.

Discussions then took place around problems encountered with the effectiveness of Silver Command, the relationship between Inspire and the Police and the shift change of the Police at a strategically important time during the evening.

Paul confirmed that the problems encountered due to lack of Marshal placements at the bottom of Rye Hill would be addressed for 2015.

Ian explained that he had been informed by the Highways Agency that we will no longer be granted road closures automatically. In future all societies using the A259 would have to adhere to a diversion which would allow HGV vehicles to move from West to East around the area during the event. The only alternative was a limited 15 minute road closure which would not be acceptable.

We would be required to work with Balfour Beatty in future and it was envisaged that the arrangement would be particularly difficult during the first year in getting all the paperwork in place before our event. Strategies were discussed which would involve a small road works which would allow a diversion as per normal. This would be a long term strategy i.e. looking at 3 to 4 years ahead.

We have been assured by Balfour Beatty that in no way do they wish our event to stop and are well aware of the impact on the community of Rye Bonfire to Hotels and local trades in general. Ian will keep us posted on progress.

8. Outstanding Issues from Bonfire Marshals

The report from Hannah Moon was addressed by Charlie:

a) There was only one Rye Bonfire banner at the front of the parade. Ian confirmed that we would provide two more banners for the future.

b) Gaps in the parade – caused by stops to light the Cracker Cage and the concertina affect on the parade when this occurred – Charlie commented that this was the nature of parades.

c) Landgate crowd control - already discussed this evening. The problem was being addressed by the use of Inspire Security personnel added to Rye Marshals.

d) Farer dispersal of Police on the Fire Site – there was only one officer present this year. Simon confirmed that Inspire took responsibility with one Inspire officer at the front and one at the back of the parade as it entered the site although a third Inspire Officer, who should also have been present, was dealing with another issue at the time.

e) The delay in getting a First Responder to a Hastings member who was a casualty on the fire site - discussion took place as to a safe position for the St John's Ambulance personnel to be present on the field for quicker and easier response. In this instance the casualty had a minor injury that was dealt with by Hannah Moon who is a qualified First Aider.

Action -Paul would communicate these problems to St John's at the upcoming SAG meeting.

9. Fund Raising

Quiz – now postponed to late February or March at The Kings Head Inn (Top of the Hill).

Bonfire Boys Boot Fair at Jempsons Monday 6th April -Confirmed by Francis

Auction of Promises – 14th May Awaiting confirmation from The Mermaid Inn, Rye.

Clay Pigeon Shoot - Last Week in July – Dave confirmed that 2 more traps were required – agreed by Ian.

10. Not the Rye Bonfire Dinner 14th March, The Kings Head Inn, Rye Hill

Two dates were discussed, namely the 14th or 21st March. The 14th March was confirmed as the most convenient for those present as the 21st March was the date of the Wedding of Derek Stone and his future Wife to be to which some of our members had been invited. It was therefore thought prudent to telephone the Kings Head Inn (Top of the Hill) during the evening to confirm this date. The date was therefore agreed at Saturday 14th March. Menu's were available for those present to make their choices, the cost being £18 for 3 courses and £15 for 2 courses.

Menu's would also be circulated on e-mail with the information that transport would be available at a minimal cost of £2 to the Pub from Rye and Peasmarsh. Rita would collect names of those wanting transport in order to liaise with Patsy on pick up times.

Cheques made out to Rye Bonfire Society with choice of menus to Rita by latest 11th February meeting or to Rita at La Villette, Church Road, NEW ROMNEY, Kent TN28 8EX.

It was proposed by Rita, seconded by Patsy and agreed by Ian that, as last year, Tony Heritage and Mark Bridgeland and their partners should receive invitations and attend as guests of Bonfire in recognition of their assistance in the bonfire build.

11. Any Other Business

Inspire

Simon asked for ratification to employ Inspire once again as the Security personnel on site for 2015 Bonfire. Simon made us aware of other tenders which had been received and confirmed that Inspire were proposing to charge the same this year as in 2014. The only derogatory comment was by Bob who commented on the premature opening of the road closure by Monkbretoon Bridge which was on the orders of the Police to get the road clear.

It was unanimously agreed to employ Inspire once more for the 2015 event.

Rye Community Transport

Patsy made us aware of the withdrawal of part of the funding for the service. However, the service was still supported by organizations in the town such as Rye Masonic Lodge and Rye Town Council plus their own 200 Club. Patsy made us aware that she would be applying to Bonfire for a donation this year.

Patsy confirmed that one of the new buses to the fleet would be dedicated to our President Jimper Sutton at a special ceremony when he was well enough to attend.

As well as the dedication to Jimper, Patsy asked for permission to add an inscription to Rye Bonfire Society on the bus.

This was agreed by those present.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Date & Time of Next meeting – Wednesday 11th February, 8.00pm
at the Queen's Head Pub, Landgate – Back Meeting Room

.....Chairman

.....Date