

NETWORK RUSSIA SCOUT FELLOWSHIP
6th NOVEMBER 2004
RYDALL YOUTH CENTRE, RYDALL, NR AMBLESIDE, CUMBRIA

1. FLAG BREAK - PRESIDENT

Prayers were given for Anne Agnell, Peter Swetman, Kevin Robinson who are all recovering from illness.

2. OPENING REMARKS AND WELCOME - CHAIRMAN

Ben of Rydall Hall welcomed all. The Youth Centre where the meeting was held used to be a farm building for cows with a dung passage, the estate had been chronicled since the 1580's. Major restoration works are ongoing. On the estate you will find a game larder, ice house, a grotto and lovely gardens. The gardens were planned by Thomas Moreton from Windermere, who specialised in Italian renaissance work, in particular concrete works. A Christian community now runs Rydall Hall as a retreat. Camping is available on the estate at a low cost.

3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING AND ANY MATTERS ARISING

Approved generally by the meeting.

4. REPORT FROM TREASURER-MONIES, GOODIES -ERIC

Don explained the accounts that he has gone through with Eric. We started the year with ,2,352.46 and ended the year with ,12061.00 (the majority of the monies being held for the winter expedition. By the end of January after the winter expedition there was ,1,397.60. The accounts were approved by Eileen Wood and seconded by Dorothy.

There are some new lines, Teddies in Russian Network T-shirts ,2.50 and some more stocks of badges. Stock is around ,900.00

It would assist if people can pay their subs on time to make the banking easier, ie. not through the whole year.

5. MEMBERSHIP REPORT - FRED

49 paid up members, 71 members on the books, 9 members we are not sure of the position.

Tim raised the need for membership cards as proof of membership is often required for discount such as booking into BP house.

David Bull confirmed this will be looked into. He will ask someone at BP house to advise us on what proof they require.

David Bull also explained how he needs a record from Fred of all those fellowship members without a warrant so that he can organise the scouting magazine to be sent out to those people.

6. JOURNAL COMMENTS - CHRIS/STEPH

Barry was concerned that the newsletter didn't have much information in it last time. Neither Chris or Steph were available for comment. It may be because members are not providing them with information. We all need to pass information to Steph and Chris.

Barry explained the reasons for the font size on the last publication, ie. it was a clone of a brochure prepared for Gilwell.

Everyone agreed they would like a magazine, in paper form rather than on the internet.

7. REPORTS

\$ NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP FORUM AT BP HOUSE IN MAY

A whole range of fellowship present, to include deep sea scouts, a fellowship of people coming from abroad to support the world jamboree.

It was suggested we should have a constitution, accounts should be sent to headquarters every year via David Bull

\$ PROPOSED N.R.S.F CONSTITUTION - CHAIRMAN

Barry had prepared a constitution, two amendments have already been suggested.

One amendment related to the wearing of a scarf and badge by members if they wished.

Another amendment was to state that the accounts are duly checked but not audited.

Another amendment was to correct the reference to David Bull being an International Commissioner.

If approved the draft constitution will be provided to each member as an engrossment.

The constitution will be amended to refer to POR as being adopted for membership, such as CRB forms being required.

Members who have already been checked should ask their District Commissioners to countersign copies of the clear check and arrange for them to be sent to Fred the Membership Secretary.

\$ VISIT TO ORPHANAGE BY KOLICHEV AT KOLUMNA-MOSCOW

Eric reported that they went 2 weeks ago flying Aeroflot, Asla forgot to pick them up at the airport so they had to get a people carrier to take them at speed into the centre of Moscow.

We learnt it was important to take Alsa=s number with you, so that you can phone them if there are any problems.

The Orphanage was empty, the children had gone away for the weekend.

Margaret had said there were certain areas to be dealt with at the orphanage. The Director at the Orphanage had asked us to do different things, we have reverted to the original instructions. Catering in the Orphanage was good. We made enquiries about the safety of the area, everywhere seemed ok, no problem around red square. We obtained reports from the USA and British Embassys, again nothing of concern.

WHAT NEXT AND WHEN

Looking at going the last 2 weeks of July next year.

We would be going straight to the Orphanage but there would be the opportunity to see the sites in Moscow.

We were told some of the children have mental or emotional problems, we noted many of the children have been to Wales last year in home hospitality so they can=t be that bad.

Only 10 children are likely to be at the Orphanage while we are working there so there is not so much need for occupying the children while we are there.

This is the first time people from our group have been over to organise a future event. A grant from headquarters and the County=s were of great assistance. It was however suggested that the network should also contribute. It was proposed by Peter Hobson that we support this trip to the tune of ,400.00 this was proposed and seconded.

Barry raised the question of the network assisting members with the cost of running around after some of the fellowships visitors from Russia being funded.

Fund raising needs to be considered to assit.

Barry mentions he has had a donation of ,2000.00 worth of tents available to be taken to Russia.

ORGANISATION OF WHAT NEXT

FUNDING AND MATERIALS (NEW RULES AND CUSTOMS)

COMMENT AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

SAMARA JABOREE 04 - PETE AND BARRY

Arrived in St Petersburg. The Hotel was hard to find. There was the suggestion that the Hotel couldn't register us. Asla sorted this out. We went into home hospitality, the leader shared a flat. We went by train to the campsite. Toilets, no showers, the river was used. The camp was fantastic. The children learnt new activities to include knife and axe throwing, visiting a banya. Lots of chances for the scouts to mix with other international scouts.

Cheshire scouts were also on the camp having flown in to Moscow. Met by courier to go to the Hotel Rossia, check in was ok. Toured Moscow for 4 days. We travelled to Samara by train, then by coach which meant we avoided the steps down from the station to the campsite. We were swamped by Russian scouts when we arrived. The camp chief told them that the oldest English scout was on camp with us. After the jamboree we travelled back to Saratov by road and stayed in the updated Hotel Alvaros. The scouting contact in Saratov is still a NORSE member. He arrived to meet us at the camp and was not particularly welcomed by the organisers, personal interpreters were laid on for us but we had arrived with our own interpreters. These problems were overcome and they all became friends eventually. The Saratov site is now an aircraft museum with a midday gun. We spent a day on the beach in wonderful weather.

Both groups had problems with contacting the camp organisers, emails were left unanswered, they persevered through their own Russian contacts.

CAMP STAFF PROGRAMME - BILL

The programme has been running for 3 to 4 years. We had 8 last year. We extended invitation to a wide number of people we knew, 9 came over we hoped to involve scouts from Georgia and Kasakstan. Two from Omsk went to Tolmers, 4 from St Petersburg went to Helsey Wood Kasakstan scouts went to Hellsley wood for 1 week before going on to Bradley wood. All went to the London experience and the highlight of their experience is seeing the sea. All gained a lot. Anna and Andrei didn't stay the 3 weeks. Andrei had to be back to go to a wedding. Bill gave thanks to Dennis Spruce from mid Herts, who came to Bill's aid while Bill was ill in Italy. He took control of receiving these scouts and was wonderful. Thanks also to group headquarters, and the network for financial assistance. Still waiting reports back from the Russian scouts. Last year we did receive 7 out of the 8 reports. Bill would like someone else to take over control of this for next year, but feels it is really worthwhile. Volunteers are sought.

A former member from Coventry, Paul Hanson was linked to scouts in Volgograd set up a trust fund and forwarded a cheque for ,486.00 as that fund has been closed down. The trust had originally been set to encourage educational activities for people from eastern Europe. The scidmores hosted some Russian scouts last year and have volunteered to host 2 Russian leaders next year.

UPDATE OF CURRENT POSITION OF RUSSIAN SCOUTING RE: WOSM

David Bull reported that the links we have should be developed. The organisation that was recognised by Wosm was Arnso, in organisational terms Arnso did not fulfill their promises, numbers have been falling and many of our links are not part of Arnso.

On the advice of the Chairman of the Eurasia scout committee the situation within the rusdsain movement was unsatisfactory, not just because they haven't paid their fees, and that they should be suspended from the world scout organisation.

Anatoly kept away from Arnso, he is member of parliament, and had worked for an oil company, an officer in the red army and organised a social programme for the veterans of the Afganistan war. He learnt about scouting from an American army person involved in scouting, he is trusted as an individual and has put forward a proposal to the wosm, he leads the scouts navigators organisation, communications should be quite good.

The wosm took the recognition away from Arnso and gave it to the scouts navigators organisation. There were concerns about this and a committee meeting was held last week. The world scout

conference would have to consider those concerns next year, in the meantime the existing recognised meeting is Anatolys movement.

Irrespective of the different fractions in Russian scouting we should encourage our own links, encourage some unity and forge links with this new group. We don't know the numbers involved and we don't know how effective they are. We anticipate the new movement will be the recognised movement in Russia. Arnso are criticised for not following through with their promises and although we recognise their concern about how they have been replaced by another recognised group from WOSM.

David Bull notes that people who were involved in the administration and organisation of Arnso have moved away from the politics of the organisation and now concentrate on running their own groups. It is important that a good and effective scout movement operates in Russia. If the organisation gets going the numbers involved could be huge.

Network Russia has been there all the way through this and needs to be there to maintain the links and support.

Bill raised the question of Segey Serotkins wish for us to organise a trip to eastern Siberia, should we communicate with the new organisation, the answer was yes. Kevin was struggling in any event to liaise with Arnso scouts in Eastern Siberia and Urkutz David Bull is in touch with a lady called Veronica who is communicating on behalf of the new organisation.

\$ WINTER EXPEDITIONS 05 TIM/PAUL

Two winter expeditions have already occurred. The second being the more successful although it was run on a more commercial basis. Last time we took 55 people with us. We have been asked to run this again for new leaders who have already had members of their groups attend before.

We have 14 booked and another 3 may be interested. Flight prices have been going up. Lufthansa flights have gone up ,100.00, so we have sourced a new airline.

We hope to make it an annual thing. It is a tremendous experience for the kids, we had hoped leaders who went on the first trip to take up and organise their own trip, instead they have asked us to organise it for them. We need 9 months to generate interest. It has been thrown at us to organise for next February. We want new contacts, new groups for the UK going to Russia, not our own groups that already have the opportunity to go to Russia.

-25 means you should be looking to have an age limit. We have set it at 16 last year. We may however consider taking children from 14. The camp Directors and the local expertise was very good. They gave the impression that they specialised in youth groups. We will restrict numbers to 20 this year. Tim is still waiting a response from the Losova camp to confirm the dates.

\$ GIL WELL REUNION 04 CHRIS

We scaled down our operation. Chris fronted it leaflets handed out.

\$ NEXT YEARS GIL WELL REUNION

To be considered at the next meeting

\$ SUMMER EXPEDITION TO SIBERIA 05 - KEVIN

Kevin has struggled to gain a LIN BUT HOPES THAT DAVID BULLS NEW LINK MAY ASSIST Asla and key travel are saying that costs have gone up, the estimate of ,1000 is unrealistic

The suggested itinerary 14.5.05 to Rossiya hotel flight to urkutsk overnight (cheaper) 5 hours Moscow to urkutsk (350 areoflot) London to Moscow (202) with British Airways. 10 nights in urkutsk, 4 nights in Moscow.

7 interest parties at the moment

The cut off time for final numbers would have to be the end of the year. Not sure of the advertising that has been done for this.

\$ MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

We would like to get some younger members to keep things moving.

\$ PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL OR EVENTS - BARRY

Barry has seen some postcards organised by another network which he thought appeared to be a good idea. It may be costly. We should look at sponsorship or alternative ideas.

Tim felt we should focus our promotional material on things that young people have an interest in. The orphanage trip and charity related trips are likely to be more successful in this area.

We should try to get a couple of youngsters to write a report for the scouting magazine.

The campstaff programme attendees may get a report in to scouting. The best route is to go through the network or explorer group reports.

Local press may also assist.

\$ FUND RAISING TO SUPPORT FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES

European voluntary service grants are available to assist in bringing camp staff from Russia.

David Bull also has access to grants within the movement. We should look to planning a year by year plan. Gilwell camp staff leaders programme fees could be tied in to this.

\$ UPDATE ON SUPPORT MATERIALS - GRAHAM

The leaflet has been updated, Barry is determined that it will be updated annually. Bill has assisted they are available from headquarters.

The craft information booklet is complete, we need to finalise the other areas. Songs, games and food. Barry has been trying to translate some of the songs but queried the way in which the information should be provided. It was suggested that the music and words should be Russian with some phonetic translation and a summary of the meaning of the song in English.

The booklet will be produced in A5 format.

Headquarters will organise the production, copying, printing.

8 AOB

Eric commented that the meeting was organised for November for financial reasons, it was cheaper, 1 month later than normal.

There were concerns that some letters went astray and we didn't know certain people were attending.

We need to have a system for confirming numbers.

Individuals should confirm their booking

Everyone should ensure subs are paid on time.

We would like to have young people give presentations on their trips.

Next meeting 12th March 2004, Tim and Pete to source venue.

9 CLOSE, FLAG DOWN