

Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Town Council held at the Town Hall, Rye, on Monday 10 September 2018

PRESENT Councillors Michael Boyd (**Mayor**), John Breeds, Jonathan Breeds, Cheryl Creaser, Rebekah Gilbert (**Deputy Mayor**), Charlie Harkness, Pat Hughes, Jo Kirkham, Ian Potter, Ray Prewer, Andi Rivett

IN ATTENDANCE Richard Farhall - Town Clerk; Paul Goring – Rye Town Sergeant & Rye Town Crier; Jessica Neame – General Assistant; Martin Wright – Town Hall Attendant; Rex Swain (Rye Town Crier – retired); 6 members of the public

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm.

72 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence – and the reasons as lodged with the Clerk – were accepted from Cllrs Sam Barnes, Justin Erswell, Bernardine Fiddimore and Andy Stuart.

73 CODE OF CONDUCT

There were no disclosures of interest nor requests for dispensation.

74 REX CLIFFORD SWAIN

Cllr John Breeds proposed (*see APPENDIX*) – and Cllr Kirkham seconded – that Rex Clifford Swain be appointed an Honorary Freeman of the Town.

RESOLVED (unanimous) **That, in pursuance of sections 249(5) and 249(6) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council of the Antient Town of Rye, assembled especially for this purpose, hereby resolves to admit REX CLIFFORD SWAIN as an Honorary Freeman of the Town, this being the highest distinction within the Council's power to bestow, in recognition of his rendering of 19 years' eminent service as Town Crier and inimitable contribution to the heart of the Town.**

The meeting ended at 6.40pm

Date Chairman

Note After the meeting, those present reassembled in the Town Hall Garden to witness the Mayor unveiling a plaque commemorating Mr Swain's period of office as Rye Town Crier.



The One and Only Rex

A Ryer Through and Through

Rye Town Crier, Rex Swain, recently celebrated his 87th Birthday. His boundless energy in carrying out up to 100 functions a year in his distinctive Town Crier 'uniform' has not diminished one iota since he was 18 and representing Rye in a different outfit. Rex was captain of the famous "Rye Aces" Cycle Speedway team who swept all opposition before them on their dirt track at the old Football Salts. He is a man of many talents and was part of the team from Spun Concrete who were responsible for building the new lighthouse at Dungeness.

Although born in Hertfordshire, Rex has lived in Rye for the last 69 years. His recollection powers are formidable. When he is on good form he issues forth with a constant stream of anecdotes, recalling family, friends, heroes and villains he has known or only heard of over all that time. From donkey drops and the fastest underarm bowler you ever saw in North Mimms through Miss Wilkinson's oversized toilet seat, the hooting train that brought his mother 27 alarm clocks, Sports Day in Rye with the greasy pig and old Nutcracker Noye as well as The Stutterer and Old Crusty Crampton, right up

to the present time and the day that Paul Merton was married (in Rye). If you are lucky he will tell you about his mother and Jock in Barcelona and give you the history of Rye Town Criers. He can sing and recite. Ask him to tell you the “Bricklayer Story” which explains why Paddy The Hod Carrier is not at Work Today.

During his time in Rye he has also been Captain of the Pipemaker’s Arms darts team and played at County level. For a while he was also Captain and, subsequently, Chairman of the Rye Bowls Club. He has also appeared in pantomimes for Rye Players. However, it is as Rye Town Crier for the past 18 years that Rex has really ‘put Rye on the map’. For a while before Rex took over in the role, Rye was without a ‘proper’ Town Crier.

When I was Mayor from 2010-2012 Rex accompanied me to many local events where he was always the centre of attention with tourists and locals alike jostling to have their photographs taken with him. With his uniquely engaging and wonderfully outgoing manner he has been the supreme ambassador for Rye way and above the call of duty.

There must be literally many thousands of people throughout the world whose cherished photographs of him continue to be the ultimate advertisement for our fabulous Historic Town.

I therefore have no hesitation in recommending him for the highest honour we can bestow – namely, The Freedom of the Town of Rye.

John Breeds