

# Пожарная безопасность друзей из России



## FIRE SAFETY FRIENDS OF RUSSIA

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## NEWS LETTER No. 2

Here at last, but long over due the next news letter. Only three months late, but with good reason. Although late I am deliberately writing more than one so that the information is in a digestible size and not a huge book.

Following the successful delivery of the vehicles and container, there followed a long and trying experience for Sergei [Deputy Chief, Kursk Region Fire and Rescue Service] getting everything cleared through Customs. I forgot to put the container on the list as humanitarian aid [after all it was just packaging!] so on arrival the Kursk Region Government had to pay import taxes for it. Thankfully they recovered the cost later by selling the container. Also, with the language difficulties, we have found a need to describe every item in extreme detail, including vehicle spare parts, supplemented with photographs. There is also a need to ensure the DVLA documentation is absolutely spot on.

As there were problems with, in particular, getting the container contents cleared I decide to visit Kursk again in March and meet with Customs. Arrangements were made for the meeting but it was not necessary, as finally, all the contents and container were cleared by Customs the day before the scheduled meeting.

The vehicles had been temporarily withdrawn for the winter period for servicing, some modifications and more comprehensive training.

My stay was short, only a week, but very busy. To learn something more about the fire service in Russia, I spent a day on Station 10, my very good friend Sasha's Watch. He is the Watch Commander and with his wife Natasha and her parents my close "Russian Family". Not the full 24 hour shift, just 9 am to 5.30 pm.



CONTAINER FINALLY CLEARED BY CUSTOMS



SASHA 3RD FROM RIGHT - STN. COM. 2ND FROM RIGHT

The day was much the same as on any UK station except we had to cope with temperatures as low as -20 C in the early morning and snow up to our knees. After the normal checks of equipment the first task for the day was a visit to a residential care home. This consisted of a walk-through drill assuming a small fire in a sewing room, followed by an inspection of the fire precautions in the building.

The general fire safety plan for evacuation and firefighting appeared much the same as in UK i.e. automatic fire detection, escape route plans on every floor and section of the building and lists of residents on boards in every section. Hydrants were situated within the grounds. The home contained small self contained flats for husbands and wives as well as separate rooms. They have problems we do not normally encounter, such as the obstruction to escape routes due to heavy snow and icing up of exits doors. It was difficult to tell what structural fire containment was provided. As an ex fire officer and fire safety consultant, I had a strong desire to carry out a full survey, an urge I managed to contain.



**CLEARING THE FRONT OF THE STATION**

I was a little embarrassed over lunch, as I had asked what I should take and was told nothing. Normally each member of the Watch take in their own food. On this occasion they sent out for various meats, cheeses, bread, cakes etc. It was impressed on me that they do not normally have such luxury and that it would go into their history as the firemen's banquet.



**FIREMEN'S BANQUET**

In the afternoon, a visit was made to a local school to check the arrangements were satisfactory for use as a polling station for local elections at the weekend. Nothing had been prepared so they were given instructions by Sasha to complete the measures by the next inspection in a couple of days time. Checking the hydrants was quite an experience. Pacing out the distance from the hydrant sign is all very well, but with distances like 11 m away and 8 m to the left and the hydrant buried under 1 m of snow and 0.25 m of ice the length of each pace has to be pretty accurate to stand any chance of success finding the hydrant. Although riding in the fire appliances I did not experience an emergency run. As is the way of the world, less than half an hour after saying goodbye to the Watch, they had an emergency call.



**HYDRANT TESTING**



I had a further meeting with the Mayor of Kursk who gave instructions at the meeting to incorporate the safety manual into the school curriculum, something I had not expected to achieve quite so easily. At the meeting I passed on a letter from Rob Campling, then Deputy Mayor of Chichester City. Our congratulations to Rob on his subsequent election to Mayor. The Mayor of Kursk was keen to progress links with the City of Chichester.



**WITH VICTOR SORZEKOV, MAYOR OF KURSK**

The Mayor of Kursk also again pledged support for the work of the Trust in Kursk and the setting up of a Branch in the City.

He also agreed the need to train Kursk Fire Service personnel in maintenance of the vehicles and equipment and operation. He agreed to part finance their visit to England for that purpose.



A visit was made to the students of English at the Kursk State University which I found very rewarding and was encouraged by the students keen interest in England. The students are pictured with their tutor Natasha Zheleznyakova, Sasha's wife [Front 3rd from right], who started this whole venture as a result of my meeting her during one of her visits to England with some of her students. The Professor of Languages, Viacheslav Buzhinsky showed considerable interest in the work of the Trust. He has expressed a wish to provide as much support as he can.

I was unable to meet with Anatoly the head of the Burns Unit at Kursk Regional Hospital but managed to speak to him over the telephone about arrangements for his visit to England.

I had several discussions with Sergei with regard to the necessary paperwork and approvals for the setting up of the Branch in Kursk, plus preliminary requirements with regard to training and the administrative problems we need to avoid with future supplies of equipment.

On the fund raising side this year, Jon Goddard has again made a great one man effort with £250 raised. The dinner at the Parsonage, Worthing, sponsored by the owner Wayne Lowery, raised just over £1000



**Many thanks to all our supporters for the  
magnificent help you give**

*Chris Holgate. Chairman*