

Newsletter: February 2020

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Dates for your diary	Thu 19/03/2020 AGM, School of Music, Bognor Sat 25/04/2020 Chichester Street Collection Sat 23/05/2020 Plant and Book Sale, Emsworth
----------------------	--

Dear writers

I am sorry to inform you all that one of our most stalwart and loyal members for many years, THELMA PERCY, died on 18/02. Her cremation and service will be at Chichester Crematorium at 3.30 pm on Wednesday 11/03 at 3.30 pm, followed by refreshments at the Meeting House. Her charity for donations is "Friends without Borders." Please contact me (01243 823016) for details.

Local events

Agenda for our **Annual General Meeting**

Thursday 19/03/2020, 7.30 PM, School of Music, Sudley Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 1ER

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of 2019 AGM
3. Matters Arising
4. Reports
5. Election of officers (Chair, Treasurer, POC Co-ordinator, Campaigns Co-ordinator, Membership Secretary, Secretary, and up to three others).
6. UK National AGM, 20-21/6 Nottingham
7. Refreshments and future programme
8. Any other business

Please contact me to volunteer for our **Street Collection** on the morning of Saturday 25/04, and hope for good weather.

Other events

Tuesday 07/04/2020, 2pm Southdowns Peace Group Annual Tea Party at The Wheelwright Arms, 27 Emsworth Road Havant, PO9 2SN. Entry is £5 which will cover your annual subscription to Southdowns Peace Group for 2020. The afternoon includes speakers from Amnesty International to update us about their work, and other contributions. Refreshments will include vegan and gluten-free options.

If you would like to know more, please contact Stephanie Carn 01243 533393, stephcarn@gmail.com

Carry on writing!

Bob Dewick, Amnesty

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: February 2020

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Amnesty action: campaigns & letter-writing

Egypt Actions Update

Margaret Roberston, our Egypt co-ordinator, writes:

Sadly, the human rights situation in Egypt seems to be deteriorating rapidly at present so we are expecting further actions shortly on behalf of a number of cases including Azza Soliman and Ibrahim Ezz el-Din. Many thanks to those of you who took action on behalf of Ibrahim Ezz el-Din last month, especially to everyone who contacted me to let me know they had taken action (mn_robertson@hotmail.com). Meanwhile, we have been asked to write an urgent action appeal on behalf of **Patrick Zaki George**, a human rights researcher, who was arrested, detained incommunicado and tortured while in detention on his return to Egypt after studying in Italy.

Public Prosecutor Hamada al-Sawi
Office of the Public Prosecutor
Madinat al-rehab
Cairo
Arab Republic of Egypt

Dear Counsellor

Re : Patrick Zaki George

I am writing to express my dismay at the news that Patrick Zaki George, a human rights researcher, was arbitrarily arrested and detained at Cairo Airport on his return from studying in Italy. I consider that he is a prisoner of conscience detained solely because of his human rights activism and opinions expressed on social media.

His lawyers have reported that NSA officers kept him blindfolded and handcuffed throughout his 17 hour interrogation at the airport. He was subsequently taken to an undisclosed NSA location in al-Mansoura where he was interrogated and subjected to beating and electric shocks. The following day he prosecutors in al-Mansoura ordered him to be detained for 15 days pending investigation on charges of 'disseminating false news,' 'inciting to protest,' and 'incitement to violence and terrorist crimes.' Neither he nor his lawyers was given access to any evidence against him. A report on 8 February falsely claimed that he had been arrested in al-Mansoura, not Cairo Airport. NSA officers also held him incommunicado for 30 hours, exceeding the legal limit of 24 hours.

I appeal to you to release him immediately and unconditionally and to launch an independent investigation into his allegations of torture and ill treatment. Pending his release, I call upon you to ensure that he is allowed access to lawyers, family and appropriate medical treatment and is not subject to any further mistreatment.

Finally, I urge the Egyptian authorities to release immediately and unconditionally all prisoners detained solely for defending human rights and the peaceful expression of their opinions.

Yours sincerely

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: February 2020

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Group AGM: 19/03/2020

Treasurer's Report

Bognor Regis, Chichester and District Amnesty International Group
Treasurer's Report to AGM 19/03/2020

Income	Expenditure	Total (£)
Subscriptions		666.00
Donations		55.00
Arias for Amnesty		347.80
Street Collection		362.69
Amnescoffee morning		150.00
GreetingsCardsCathedral		34.17
	Secretary	-75.94
	Membership Sec	-7.32
	Other postage	-2.70
	Rent	00.00
	Greetings Cards postage	-11.66
	AIUK affiliation fee	-72.00
	AIUK Donation	-1500.00
	<i>Brought Forward</i>	710.37
	Balance	656.41

Thank you to everyone who helped or contributed towards the group finances in any way last year. Thank you in particular to those who organised our main fundraising events

- The street collection, Jillie and all those who helped collect, or played music*
- Rebecca who organised 'Arias for Amnesty', together with Steph and Chris, her fellow musicians*
- Maggie and Gary, who hosted the Amnescoffee morning, as well as Kath and Margaret, who baked cakes, and those who attended or donated.*

We have sent £1,500 to AIHQ this year, as well as the affiliation fee. Some £90,000 has been donated by groups to AIHQ as of the end of November. I think the amount we send as a percentage is very commendable indeed. Thank you again, for the subscriptions and donations, as well as the support for the various fundraising events we undertake.

Breege Gallagher

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**. Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information
For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: February 2020

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



Review of the Year: Campaigns

Action for Individuals: The group continues to focus on human rights abuses in Egypt. **Margaret Robertson's** fantastic work to co-ordinate the group's actions concentrated on on-going support for Azza Soliman but also included action on other human rights defenders in Egypt such as lawyer Hoda Abdelmoniem, human rights defender Islam Khalil, politician and activist Ramy Shaath, transgender activist Malek al-Kashef, housing rights researcher Ibrahim Ezz El- Din, human rights lawyer Mahienour el-Masry - and on the case of Aser Mohamed, 14 years old when he was arrested and 'disappeared'. We publicised Azza's case at our Barnham AmnesTea for International Women's Day in March 2019, when we stood "hand in hand with Azza" - the action featured in the Bognor Post on 15 March and in the Amnesty Group's magazine; and at the 2019 Embassy Crawl. We had some good news: many of the prisoners for whom we have written have been released.

Write for Rights campaign: Our annual event at the Cathedral Green repeated last year's successful deployment of Kath's pop-up Christmas tree. Cards from Amnesty HQ supplemented the lovely cards produced at the Cathedral print-making workshop and by Chris Gilbert. The Write for Rights cases were also highlighted at the letter-writing evening hosted by Stephanie Carn in December.

Other campaigns: Actions were taken via the newsletter and at public and letter-writing meetings on:

- The UK arming Saudi Arabia, fuelling the conflict in Yemen.
- Families Together campaign with Oxfam, UNHCR, Refugee Council, British Red Cross and others to urge the UK government to change the rules that keep refugee families apart.
- Saudi women human rights defenders Eman al-Nafjan, Aziza al-Yousef and Loujan al-Hathioul.
- On behalf of the Pakistani Catholic John family, at risk of deportation from Sri Lanka.
- Iranian human rights lawyer Amirsalar Davoudi

A year in the life of an Amnesty Group: Chair's report, March 2019 - February 2020

A successful concert Arias and Songs for Amnesty in October: our grateful thanks to the Bognor School of Music and to the talented performers Rebecca Grove, Stephanie Peak and Chris Coote.

Working with other groups and organisations to promote human rights:

- We promoted local refugee football team Nations United, as part of the Amnesty Football Welcomes 2019 campaign.
- Margaret and Kath joined the Amnesty Embassy Crawl organised by the Lambeth Amnesty Group in September 2019. This enabled us to promote Azza's case at the Egyptian embassy, together with other groups working on behalf of Egypt.
- Margaret and Steph attended a lunch & meeting in Horsham with other Amnesty groups to work on promotion of Egyptian human rights cases in September 2019.

Our Pumble (= PUb RaMBLE) followed the Centurion Way to West Dean: our thanks to Peter James for planning such a lovely walk and venue - it's great to meet up with group members outside a meeting!

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>

Newsletter: February 2020

Bognor Regis, Chichester & District Group



We had a very successful year financially, as you can see from the Treasurer's report, and our thanks to all who contributed to this.

My grateful thanks to the members of the Committee for their hard work, support and friendship over the last year; and to the group members, their friends and families that were able to support our actions and events this year: I hope you enjoyed them as much as I did. Do consider coming along to help the Committee members in 2020, even for just one event: the work we do is serious, but the Committee never takes itself too seriously and we are a friendly bunch!

Kath Shakespeare, Chair



<< Morris Dancing Band, performing for the Amnesty Street Collection



Arias and Songs for Amnesty (l-r, Chris Coote, Rebecca Grove, Stephanie Peat)



<< Write for Rights on the Cathedral Green

If you no longer wish to receive information about this Group, please reply to this newsletter with a request to **Unsubscribe**.

Please let us know if there have been any changes in your personal information

For more information about this Group, go to: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/groups/bognor-chichester-and-district>