

## **Sue Laver Chairman of Edenbridge Bonfire Society 2002 to 2013**

Sue's involvement in Bonfire dates back to 1986 when she came back from a PTA meeting and told husband Charles that he was going to build a float for Four Elms School.

Nobody would have ever guessed the consequences.

Sue and Charles' involvement in the Society itself began in 1998 when it was announced at a public meeting that the Society was on the rocks.

By 1999 the new team had taken control and Edenbridge Bonfire Society was back in business. The year of the French Onion Seller.

After Ken Brown sadly passed away in 2002, Sue took over the Chairmanship - overtly supporting Charles (our renowned Field Marshal) but actually filling a much, much bigger role. Charles did lots of work - but it was Sue who quietly and surely lead the whole team.

Sue will be remembered for her extraordinary ability to get people to help - no pressure, no blackmail, we just seem to get just a little more involved each year.

It takes over a hundred volunteers to lay on the event - and pretty well most of them are there because they are Sue and Charles' friends.

That in itself is an incredible testament to Sue - not just knowing a hundred people but knowing them well enough to get them to give up their time and do unexciting things like manning road closures on a cold and sometimes wet November night.

A friend to so many and a natural and gifted organiser, Sue always spoke her mind - but in such a direct, open and above all honest way that she earned universal respect.

We never, ever saw Sue get stressed, except, of course, she did (just sometimes) lose patience with husband Charles!

Some might say that there are far more important or valuable things to do in a small community than organising Bonfire, however;

- Millions of people across the world now know about Edenbridge, we are certainly notorious, perhaps infamous.
- Over ten thousand line our streets each year.
- Bonfire is a welcomed boost to many local businesses.
- Hundreds have fun taking part in a unique and hugely enjoyable event which brings together young and old - and we don't get much of that nowadays

It is a legacy to our community, which few (if indeed any) could match.