

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL (2) MIDLAND CHASE REGION

PRESS AND PUBLICITY NEWSLETTER

The regional conference, held at Tillington Hall, Stafford was very well attended with around 100 members supporting Regional President Heather Stern. The theme of the Conference was 'Homelessness' and speakers included Ian Dixon from The Salvation Army, Gill Brown from Brighter Homes, Stoke-on-Trent which provides creative support, housing and employment for the homeless and support and assistance towards independent living. Linda Williams from 'Arch' North Staffs explained that Arch is to support people to achieve a positive lifestyle. Arch supports people by helping to secure and maintain accommodation within the community, also by providing training for jobs. Soroptimist members at the conference provided food, toiletries, hats, scarves and warm clothes. All of the collected items filled 30 boxes and were donated to the charities attending to support the homeless.

JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2008

CANNOCK CLUB NEWS

Cannock Club has been very busy during the summer months with lots of activities and interesting events. Member Pam Smith is to set off on 31st August for Mount Kilimanjaro. Pam is climbing to gain sponsorship for four charities: Riding for the Disabled, St Giles Hospice, St Mary's Hospice and Project Sierra. Pam will be following in her daughter Claire's footsteps, who climbed Kilimanjaro seven years ago. We send you every good wish Pam from all of the Midland Chase Region. To support Pam and her climb, around 50 people witnessed an ancient Chinese tradition in high Green Cannock - it was the christening of a Lion!!! Pauline and Damien Ng, who are proprietors of China Garden, are to give the lion as a gift to the China Town Lions, Birmingham.

Pauline Ng, who is a member of Cannock Club decided to enact the custom of christening a Lion. Pauline painted the face of the lion to awaken it from its slumbers and fed it with fruit to give it strength. Passages from Chinese scriptures were read. The fully awake lion then danced to the drums and cymbals, presenting scrolls with words from the scriptures firstly to David Cox, to whom the lion will be formally presented, then to Trish Mellor, a friend and sister Soroptimist and then finally to Pauline herself. Tradition states that the scrolls must hang in the homes of the recipients to bring them prosperity and good health. Guests were then led into the restaurant where they enjoyed a banquet. The funds raised by the banquet, a raffle and a silent auction were donated to Pam's four charities being

supported in her climb of Kilimanjaro. The sum of £2700 was raised! Pam was further helped by Christine Smith-Toon who raised £300 from takings and a raffle organised at Teddy's Hair Design in Cannock.

In May, new President Lakhwinder Thompson, adopted The Railway Children as her special charity for the year because of what she had personally witnessed herself in India and the special link she has with the country of her birth. David Maidment, the founder of the Railway Children Charity came to give a talk to the Club. David told how the charity began in 1995 with the encounter he had with one small girl in Mumbai who was an abused street child and how this experience led him to try to alleviate the plight of the two million plus children who are living on streets all over the world. The charity is now active in more than ten countries including the UK where the charity runs nine projects and two phone lines. Further information can be obtained from www.railwaychildren.org.uk

Deputy District Judge and head of legal services for Staffordshire, David Goodman was a speaker at the 24th June meeting. Mr Goodman had his audience in fits of laughter as he told stories of his schooldays in Tipton and of his experiences travelling to courts around the country. Mr Goodman now combines these duties with being responsible for 97 per cent of all Staffordshire cases which begin in the magistrates' court and has overall responsibility for

the training of the 580 magistrates who sit in courts in Staffordshire.

MP Tony Wright invited Cannock Soroptimists to visit and enjoy tea with him on the terrace of the Houses of Parliament. This event was further enhanced by the presence of Soroptimists International Federation President Margherite Woodstock-Riley from Barbados who was visiting clubs in Britain.

The Club has welcomed new member Betty Morgan, we welcome you Betty to the Midland Chase Region.

Cannock Club also set the scene for the Barbados conference by holding a Caribbean evening as part of their summer celebrations. The Club has also helped to organise a Dragon boat race by working with the Rotary Club of Cannock at Chase Water. Soroptimists acted as stewards throughout the day and provided a lost and found base for children. This collaboration is what we as Soroptimists are all about!

Cannock Club held an incredibly special event for and also for the Midland Chase Region when International President Margaret Lobo was able to join them at a meeting. President Margaret Lobo gave a presentation after supper of on the current Soroptimist project. SI Perth, which is Margaret Lobo's home club has been a friendship club of Cannock for many years.

STAFFORD CLUB NEWS

Members from Stafford Club donated everyday essentials to fill an Aqua Box which will be sent to Rotary International to help people affected by the cyclone in Myanmar (Burma) and earthquake in China. The contents of the box are all things needed for survival and the empty box is then used to store clean water. The empty box is purchased from Rotary International and the money then helps towards transport costs.

President Judith Carder arranged a charity evening for members and guests at the Country Buildings, Stafford, with Nell Gwynn (Lesley Smith from Tutbury Castle). Nell described her life from poverty in the slums of London, fame in the theatre and finally as the favourite mistress of the King. The event which included supper raised a total of £640 which will go to two local charities - Staffordshire Blind and Oak Tree Farm Rural Project.

A further event was organised by President Judith Carder when a garden party was held at her home in Penkridge. This event raised £628 for charities supported by the Club and included - Project Sierra, Staffordshire Blind and the Oak Tree Farm Rural Project.

Staffordshire Newsletter ran a full page feature on Judith Carder which is a really good read and tells of Judith's interests, likes and dislikes. A really good read. Copy date 21 August if you wish to obtain it on the internet.

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS NEWS

The second pair of past Presidents' took the reins for the second quarter in July in our 25th anniversary year. A busy programme has emerged. Speaker Hazel Robinson came to speak on Women in Art. Hazel is a well-known Art-historian and has a large following in the area. Hazel presented slides of some wonderful pictures and explained to members the history of each particular painting. The Club undertook their annual visit to Gawsorth Hall for another Agatha Christie play 'The Hollow'. A wonderful evening was enjoyed and we enjoyed the open-air performance as usual.

Crime Prevention Officers came to speak to members in August and we were given plenty of hints and tips to keep both ourselves and our property safe.

A Champagne Lunch was held in August at the home of a member with 75 people attending. A variety of games and entertainment were arranged together with stalls, jewellery sales etc. The sum of £682 was raised to support the work of the local Douglas Macmillan Hospice in Stoke-on-Trent.

SUTTON COLDFIELD NEWS

In July, members visited Buzzard Valley, a local, family-run vineyard. Members were given a tour of the vines and were told why and how the vineyard began and has developed. The winery was visited and the process from grape to bottle was explained. Samples were available together with other products such as specialist oils which could be sampled before purchase.

Member and enthusiastic traveller GP Pam Munday gave an interesting talk on her visit to South

America. Spectacular scenery, unlikely animals, Inca ruins at Cusco and the lost city, Machu Picchu, with examples of carvings believed to have links with solar and planetary movements, the Atacama desserts with its salt deposits and a hotel built entirely of blocks of salt all this, with flamingos on Lake Titicaca. Pam celebrated her birthday with a 4 am start to see the sun rise over a plateau of volcano springs and her guides served up traditional hot chocolate, on a table (with a cloth) to the surprise of a newly-arrived party of photographers. The most impressive occasion was the San Pedro dance festival when teams of dancers in beautiful costumes gather around the local church. Before the dancing begins the Bishop's procession makes a circuit of the square before Mass is celebrated.

In August the speaker was Angela Reynolds. Angela spoke about 'Womens Health' from her perspective as both a nurse and a teacher. The report on this event was excellent and I am sure that Angela will have many other Clubs wishing to listen to her experiences.

A presentation was made to Sian Pemberton of the Norman Laud Association and Graham Rollason of Focus (on blindness). These two organisations received cheques valued at £1200, as a result of an antiques fair held at the town hall earlier this year by President Sandra Wilcox.

TAMWORTH CLUB NEWS

SI Tamworth's first full dinner meeting in May was a very nostalgic one. President Lisa Hardy asked members to wear hats, dresses and gloves, just like the early members did at all their meetings. Members responded with great enthusiasm and everyone looked wonderful. The speaker was local historian Peter Edden who gave a fascinating talk about Lady Julia Peel, the wife of Sir Robert Peel and he joined in the spirit of the evening by wearing an embroidered Victorian waistcoat.

The Diamond Anniversary Charter Dinner saw President Lisa Hardy, along with current and past members and many members from the Midland Chase Region and were joined by special guest Margherite Woodstock-Riley, who flew over from Barbados for the event. 220 guests attended the evening which included the lighting of the Candles of Friendship, a four course celebration meal and a short

presentation on 60 years of Soroptimist International of Tamworth. Each lady guest received a special gift of a silver lapel pin made by one of the members.

The Salvation Army Christmas Concert - 'Rejoice' evening performance commencing at 6.00 pm. on 14th December in Symphony Hall, Birmingham. Clubs within the vicinity of Tamworth can travel by coach by booking with Pauline Wright at a cost of £16.50 for both concert and travel. Friends wishing to attend the concert independently without booking the coach can purchase a ticket at a cost of £10. Enquiries to Pauline.wright26@ntlworld.com or telephone 01827-738655.

WOLVERHAMPTON CLUB NEWS

Wolverhampton Domestic Violence Forum provided speaker Kath Cole-Evans, Strategic Co-ordinator to speak to Wolverhampton Club. The Forum brings together a range of agencies providing services and support to women and families experiencing domestic violence and abuse, and is a charitable organisation. Members of SI of Wolverhampton agree with the WDVF that domestic violence is a crime and is unacceptable in our community. Members were impressed by the work and the commitment of the WDVF and forum's own member, Anne Kavanagh thanked Kathy on behalf of the club for her informative talk.

PLEASE TURN OVER FOR ADVANCE

INFORMATION REGARDING MIDLAND CHASE

REGIONAL CONFERENCE 18-19th APRIL 2009

**ADVANCE NOTICE OF
MIDLAND CHASE REGIONAL
CONFERENCE**

18-19th APRIL, 2009

at

**PATSHULL PARK HOTEL, GOLF AND
COUNTRY CLUB,
PATTINGHAM, SHROPSHIRE WV6 7HR**

Pauline's theme for the conference is:

**Water and Friendship -
Essential and everlasting**

Patshull Park Hotel, Golf and Country Club is a 3 Star property situated in secluded Shropshire countryside and set amongst mature trees, acres of rolling parkland and expansive lakes. Gardens originally designed by the renowned 18th century landscaper, Capability Brown.

Tarriff:

Full weekend rate - conference, all meals on Saturday and Sunday, accomm. in single room £202.00
As above sharing a twin or double rm. £162.50
Day Rate (Saturday, incl. lunch.) £ 39.00
Saturday evening, dinner/entertain. £ 25.00
Sunday - Day Rate - Conf.+ Carvery £ 39.00

Tea and coffee throughout the day is included

Accompanying non-Soroptimist partners and friends:

Saturday - hot + cold buffet lunch only £14.95
Saturday evening - dinner + entertain. £25.00
Saturday evening - dinner, B+B (share) £84.50
Sunday lunch only £14.95

Golf - match play Sat/Sun (resident per round)
£ 30.00

Trout fishing (if resident)

Local walks in surrounding countryside

Use of Health and Leisure Facilities FREE

As above if non resident (payable on day) £7.50

Patshull is easy to reach -

**M54- Junction 3 - just 10 minutes to Patshull
Birmingham - 45 minutes to Patshull**

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
OF STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS**

ANNUAL CANDLELIGHTING EVENING

To be held on

TUESDAY 9th DECEMBER 2008

At the

**SWAN HOTEL
St Edward Street, Leek**

Tickets: £12.00 per person

7.00 for 7.30 pm

Information from:

**Mrs A Shaw, 1 St Teresa's, Cotton
Oakamoor, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 3DN
Telephone: 01538-702113
Email: anne@shaw9811.fsnet.co.uk**