

S.I. Chester 1940 - 2000



S.I. Chester club Insignia measures 5 ¼" (13.5 cm) long by 3 ½" (9cm) wide and is made of blue enamel on silver. It is hallmarked by Chester Assay Office 1946-1947, weighs 11oz, and is of Britannia quality silver (i.e. 10 dwts, meaning 10/12th silver and 2/12th alloy).

The Insignia was designed in 1940, by a founder member. The club obtained estimates from local jewellers but they were too expensive. By 1944 the club were considering having a badge of base metal or even plastic. By 1947 it was decided to proceed with the original design at, what was then, an exorbitant amount of £35.

The Insignia consists of a shield depicting on a blue enamel background, three silver wheat sheaves, being the ancient symbol of Cheshire, one of the granaries of England.

Above the shield the emblem of The Soroptimist International Association forms the crest, below which is the Soroptimist motto LOOOKING FURTHER and the name CHESTER.

The shield is supported on either side by a garland of oak leaves, with acorns on either side, and joined, at the base by the figure of a stag. These represent the nearby Forest of Delamere. It has also been suggested that the acorns represent the Verdun oak, 'The Earl's Oak', planted by Earl Haig on a visit to Upton, Chester. Below the stag is the date 1940, the year in which the club was founded.

The original club was known as The Soroptimist Club of Chester but the name was changed and when I became a member, in the mid 1980's, I joined S.I. Chester. I am one of only two members in the new Chester club, who also was a member of the old club.

It was decided to represent the old S.I. Chester club with the Club Insignia. This was to be worked in blue and silver thread and it was considered appropriate that a member from the former club would undertake the task. The Insignia has been stitched in cross stitch for the shield, and skeleton stitch has been used for the garland of oak leaves. The rest has been stitched in running stitch, back stitch, lazy daisy stitch and French knots.

Wendy Thompson