

## Soroptimist International Knutsford & District

Knutsford & District Soroptimist Club closed in 2001 and the remaining club members could not remember what the regalia had looked like.

Considering what would represent Knutsford & District, it having been recorded in The Domesday Book of 1086 as Cunutesford, was difficult. The town has historic houses and estates around it and history in the buildings in the town. It also has its own history from the first and second world wars.

The decision was that the representation was to be an event which occurs each year in the town, Royal May Day when hundreds of people parade through the streets accompanied by musicians and the May Queen is crowned. The pageant includes children in historical or legendry costumes accompanied by morris dancers, town criers and officials, among others. On the day there is a custom of 'sanding the streets' when the streets are decorated with coloured sands in patterns and pictures and mottoes.

Tradition has it that King Cnut, while fording the river Lily, threw sand from his shoes into the path of a wedding party wishing the newly weds great joy and as many children as the grains of sand at their feet.

There is certainly reference to the 'sandings' in the late 1600s and Queen Victoria recorded it in her journal in 1832 when she visited the town.

The 'sandings' are done by members of one family, the tradition being passed down through the generations.

The pattern chosen for the banner is one used in the decoration and the picture shows another example going back to the 1920s.

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