



# Spotlight News



Volume 3, Issue 1

June 2102

## WELCOME '65'ers

At our Club AGM on the 18<sup>th</sup> April we were delighted to welcome our five joint Presidents for 2012-2013 – our 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.



From the left: Su Roxburgh, Pattie Burgess, Sue Solly, Jan McConville, outgoing President Ann Middleton and Maggie Bayliss.

The 65'ers theme is "We are Here 2 day; with Hope 4 Tomorrow" and during their year of shared office SI Stourbridge will be supporting the following charities: Acorns Hospice, Water Aid and FOAG.

Please see the Calendar section for a taste of our Club's entertaining and informative programme of events and speakers.

## Message from Immediate Past President – Ann Middleton

Thank you all for a wonderful year which started with a Royal Wedding Tea Party at Himley Hall and ended at the same venue celebrating International Women's Day on the bridge (see later for more information and photographs).

My personal highlight of the year was attending the International Convention in Montreal and having the opportunity to meet and talk to International President Alice Wells.

At SI Stourbridge's 'premier event' – the Literary Dinner on 11<sup>th</sup> November – we had a marvellous turn out with some 140 guests attending to enjoy the food ambience and presentations from three local authors – Nell Dixon, Edmund Bealby-Wright and Roger Ellory. This event raised in excess of £1000 for the Langstone Society a local charity which helps people with learning disabilities. Other events and social functions held throughout the year - including a year round collection of 'loose change' by Club members to support WaterAid - collectively raised for charities some £3,600. In a time of austerity and 'purse tightening' we should be justly proud of our achievements. Thank you all for your support during my year as your President.



From the left: President Ann Middleton, Ian Ferguson, Steve Parkes and SI Stourbridge member Marjorie Ferguson

## News from the Region

### SI MAR Study Day – Women in the Criminal Justice System

In anticipation of the future partnership work with the Prison Reform Trust and based upon an innate sense of the need to 'make a difference' for women caught up in the CJS, UKPAC SI MAR representative and SI Stourbridge Programme Action Officer Patricia Martin planned this Study Day which was held on 28<sup>th</sup> April.

With a small Team of helpers a venue was found and with some tough 'haggling' by SI MAR Treasurer Maggie Bayliss we acquired the Tally Ho Conference & Banqueting Centre, Edgbaston and were able to deliver a first class Study Day for 56 delegates at £10 per head with lunch!

SI MAR President Ruth Longville opened the proceedings and welcomed both speakers and delegates. Patricia Martin provided the background for the Study Day with her presentation entitled: Public safety and Justice for Women – are they mutually exclusive? The illustrated talk covered an introduction with some facts and figures about women in custody, the Corston Report (2007) with its recommendations and the government response and their proposals for action. The presentation went on to highlight the picture in 2012 using data provided by 'Women in Prison' to inform the audience of the limited progress made in 5-years. It ended with a plea for Clubs to get behind the partnership work with the Prison Reform Trust to lobby government to make good the pledges made in 2007.



From the left: Jill Parker, SI Stourbridge 'criminals' Bev Stewart, Su Roxburgh and Jane Flint-Bridgewater.

The second Speaker, Jill Parker JP gave the audience something to do – they had to become 'Magistrates for the day' and with tools provided they were encouraged to sentence three defendants who had each pleaded 'guilty' to an offence of shop-lifting! This inter-active session, using material developed by the Magistrates' Association, gave delegates an insight into 'structured decision-making' and the many issues which are considered by JPs prior to pronouncing a sentence and giving reasons in a criminal court.

The morning session was rounded off by Adele Brown a Probation Officer with the Staffordshire & West Midlands Probation Trust and who is the 'Women's Champion'. Adele described the many and varied programmes of work which are part of the new Community Orders and which can be very useful in sentencing women offenders coming before the courts for non-serious non-violent offences. Adele supported her arguments by giving us some statistics indicating women offenders given a community-based sentence are less likely to re-offend than if they were given a custodial sentence. She also gave a detailed breakdown of the costs involved in sending women into custody versus those sentenced to a community order.

In the afternoon we were treated to two presentations; the first from Sarah Simpkins, Stonham Bail Accommodation & Support Services (BASS) and then from Joy Doal MBE from Birmingham's ANAWIM centre.

Sarah works with people who have been bailed by the courts or released from prison with a 'tag'. Stonham provides accommodation in the community in a small number of properties across England & Wales. Typically 2 or 3 people share a house, each has their own bedroom but share communal areas and household duties and pay rent and other charges. Stonham does not cater for people under 18-yrs or anyone with a sexual offence (pending allegation or conviction). Stonham provides support officers to assist their clients with a variety of issues as well as to find stable long-term accommodation.

Joy Doal is the Project Director of ANAWIM and was awarded her MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 2012 for her work with women. ANAWIM is a women-centred, holistic 'one-stop-shop' addressing the complex inter-related needs of female offenders. The work undertaken at ANAWIM keeps women in the community whilst they 'payback' to society for their criminal activities. ANAWIM data shows this approach works to prevent re-offending.

## SI MAR Meetings

At our March 2012 meeting President Ruth introduced the audience to a lady who had 'truly inspired her' and by the end of the presentation that feeling was conspicuous throughout the Leisure Centre at Wolston.

Wendy Fryatt, CEO of the Black Country Food Bank took us along her personal pathway from 'no fixed abode' in the East End of London to her current role in the Black Country. Wendy told her story – warts and all – and but for the kindly intervention of a single woman who took her in and then helped her to secure accommodation in a hostel and access to other services she acknowledges that she herself might well have fallen into prostitution as a means of feeding herself.

Wendy's empathy with her clientele at the Food Bank comes from personal shared experiences – being homeless with little hope and unable to feed a family. Nevertheless, her Christian faith sustained her then and is as evident in her mission to day. When her husband was offered work in the Midlands Wendy and the family came along too. She saw many similar things in the Black Country as she endured in the West End and one night she felt a compulsion to 'make a difference'. The Food Bank started from a shoebox left on a needy person's front step and has grown into a 5,000 sq.ft warehouse storing 6.5 tonnes of food for local distribution to the needy. Wendy works with a number of local churches, schools and community organisations who donate non-perishable foodstuffs, clothing, bedding and toiletries. Often you may see groups outside Supermarkets asking people to make donations. She also sits on the Child Poverty Strategy group and visits local schools where often some children are going hungry during the term. One has to suspect that these same children have little food during the holiday periods and so Wendy has started to investigate with others a means of filling this need.

All this work is not only 'locally driven' – the Black Country Food Bank was one of the first to respond to the devastating floods in Cockermouth and over the week-end food as well as nappies and other essentials for babies were driven up in a convoy – one of the volunteers was our MAR President Ruth Longville!

**ACTION: Soroptimists in MAR check if there is a local food bank in your area and support them – THANK YOU.**

Wendy Fryatt CEO Black Country Food Bank



From the left: Lynn Stevens, SI MAR President Ruth Longville and Wendy Fryatt

The afternoon Programme Action 'slot' was filled by our speaker Lynn Stevens from Target TB in equally convincing style. Lynn provided a slide show demonstrating how her organisation works in the local communities in a number of countries where tuberculosis is endemic but treatable if antibiotics can be sourced and provided. Target TB utilise local people, after a period of training, to reach out to these small communities in difficult to reach areas. They walk, use mopeds or other means to reach the people in their villages. Once there they use their training to spot symptoms of the disease and then explain that it is 'curable'. Speaking in the local dialect helps to instill confidence and overcome the many myths and the social stigma still associated with TB. If the affected person is persuaded then a complete course of therapy including free drugs and antibiotics can be provided. The local worker will support those affected and often bring the required drugs to the village. At the same time as the treatment additional support can be given to the family and dependents to ensure their lifestyle is improved and other opportunities for family members (including education and employment possibilities) can be taken up. A recent innovation is some of these remote villages has been in helping them to create a 'garden' to grow food stuffs which aids healthy eating and helps to combat the disease.

[See later article about potential SI MAR joint project with Target TB].

## 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the SI MAR Public Speaking Competition

On the 24<sup>th</sup> March our 10<sup>th</sup> and largest yet Public Speaking Competition was held at the Dudley Council House where we were joined by both the Mayor and his consort.



Fifteen students from eleven schools competed to win the first prize of the SI MAR Trophy and a cheque for £150, second prize of £75 and a £25 third prize. In addition each contestant received a Book Token for £25 and a Certificate of Achievement from their sponsoring SI Club. The topics for the competition chosen by the students included:

- Is honesty always the best policy?
- How technology has changed my life
- Is punishment fitting the crime?
- Is a lottery a good idea?
- Do we have a fair taxation system?
- Should euthanasia be made legal?



The winner was Tom Cadwallader from King Charles 1 School sponsored by SI Kidderminster who debated on the fairness of our current taxation system.

## Flagship Project – VAW

Have you read the HM Government paper which came out in March 2012 entitled: **Call to End Violence against Women and Girls Taking Action - the next chapter?** [[action-plan-new-chapter.pdf](#)]

I would recommend that those Club members with a specific interest do read through the relevant sections of this paper to better understand what has been implemented and how government strategy in this area is likely to develop.

**Forced Marriage** – During late 2011 the Home Office published a consultation document (CD) on Forced Marriage – seeking views of whether it should be made a criminal offence in the UK (currently it is a ‘civil’ matter) - with a response deadline of 30<sup>th</sup> March 2012. At the same time Karma Nirvana devised a postcard campaign in support of the government initiative. Clubs across our region and beyond were asked to respond by returning the completed postcards and addressing the questions raised on-line in the CD. In both these areas we were fortunate to have assistance from colleagues at SI Bilston & District and SI Lichfield & District who had been preparing a ‘model’ response which they shared with SI MAR Clubs – thank you. As your Programme Action Officer I responded on-line on behalf of SI Stourbridge to the CD and returned the cards. Jasvinder Sanghera of Karma Nirvana personally delivered over 2500 postcards to No.10 Downing Street on the 29<sup>th</sup> March – a percentage of these had been answered by Soroptimists.

**RESULT: HMG announced on the 8<sup>th</sup> June that Forced Marriage would become a criminal offence. WELL DONE EVERYONE!**

## The ‘Matrix’

SI MAR Clubs were asked to provide an update on the five areas covered in the VAW – Stop it Now Matrix (or Table) which was originally forwarded to Teresa May MP in October 2010. At UKPAC the format of the Matrix has been simplified to assist input of information from Clubs. Club & SI MAR PAO and UKPAC Rep. Dr Patricia Martin replied for SI Stourbridge.

## Trafficking

Several initiatives are currently underway at Clubs across SI MAR and beyond. We made significant inroads with the SI Poole campaign on 'Banning Sex-for-Sale' advertisements but they are still well short of their 100,000 signatures to force a debate in Parliament. If you have not collected any signatures from friends, work colleagues, neighbours or relatives please download a Petition Form and get collecting! [[Paper Nov 10 Petition PDF.pdf](#)]

**STOP THE TRAFFIK.**  
PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BE BOUGHT & SOLD



The latest initiative on human trafficking has the backing of the Home Office and the Department for Communities and Local Government and is being promoted by **Stop the Traffik**. It revolves around a Taxi campaign. This approach was trialled at a Workshop which I attended in late 2011 and I was very enthusiastic about its potential and the relative ease with which we as Soroptimists might join in with the support of our local councils (Sandwell and Dudley). Essentially it means we raise awareness with local taxi drivers of the signs associated with human trafficking and they carry 'stickers' in their vehicles which gives information about trafficking and a helpline number to call. Already drivers across Merseyside have been issued with stickers and a number of other areas are showing interest and/or getting involved in working with **Stop the Traffik**.

**ACTION:** SI Stourbridge PA Officer will report further at a future Business meeting.

**Gift Box** - Recent information informs us that Stop the Traffik have secured a Box – which is described as a walk-in piece of public art that tricks people by luring them inside with enticing promises, only to be confronted once there with the truth of human trafficking. This sounds like the UN Gift Box but the Charity (STT) are seeking donations from £5 - £15,000

to cover the cost of a bolt to hold the box together, £25 for a helpline to reach 500 people, £50 to train a volunteer or the top sum to purchase a whole box. The latter sum will also secure a site and enable transport of the box after the Olympics to be used elsewhere to promote awareness of Trafficking.

## UK PAC STUDY DAY

Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at Leeds trinity University

### Educating

Read

Inspire

Teach

Achieve

Registration from 9am with first Guest Speaker, Juliet Lyon CBE (Director, Prison Reform Trust) at 10.05 to be followed by Linda McAvan MEP at 10.45.

Breakout Sessions (1&2) from 11.30 until lunch at 13.00.

Breakout Session (3) 14.00 until 14.45.

Claire Young (Social Enterprise Champion & Apprentice Finalist 2008) from 14.45 to be followed by Sue Biggs (Federation Programme Director) at 16.10.

Tea and departure 16.30.

The Breakout Sessions include:

Mentoring led by Rebecca Sykes

Enterprise led by Rita Britton

Grooming led by Helen Westermann NSPCC

Rebuilding Lives led by Cellar Project

Building a Learning Community led by Cary Lynott

Valuing Yourself led by Sarah Legg

Registration Fee £58

Contact: Margaret Cook, UKPAC Study Day Registrar, 42 Rombalds View, Ilkley, LS29 8LT

## Club News & Activities

In November last year we joined with our SI Hereford colleagues in the Council Buildings at the opening of the Hereford Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre ([hrsasc.org.uk](http://hrsasc.org.uk)).



From the left: Maggie Bayliss, SI MAR President Ruth Longville, Ruth Jones, President Ann Middleton, UKPAC Chair Jan Hemlin, PA Officer Patricia Martin

Following a welcoming introduction from Jocelyn Anderson and several short but poignant presentations, including one from Ruth Jones (history of the foundation of rape crisis centres with statistics across the UK and local to Hereford), Val Lund (National Champion of the Rape Crisis network in England & Wales) and Nick Ross (Ministry of Justice) we were given a light luncheon and had time to visit the poster exhibitions and talk to colleagues. As SI Stourbridge PA Officer I was delighted to make the acquaintance of Jennifer Lumsden-Gordon who heads up services across Sandwell & Dudley (Sandwell Women's Aid).

**ACTION:** Further information to be provided at a forthcoming Business meeting.



President Ann Middleton and Sue Reid

At our Dinner meeting in February we were enthralled by the exploits of a young lady Sue Reid, a local lass made good. Sue started work as a 'Saturday girl' at W H Smith and worked on the shop floor there for 12-years in the Travel dept. until she was made redundant on a Friday evening when the travel arm closed. On the following Monday after an interview she was offered a job with Co-op Travel which she took up after a short Bermudan holiday! Over the next few years with the personnel development programmes and the support offered at the Co-op Sue became a Regional Manager and a Call Centre Manager selling holidays. Two years ago Sue was promoted again to become General Manager Distribution responsible for 35 Travel shops plus a number of home-workers with a turnover of some £100 million business! Even given the current austerity Sue told us that people still want a holiday.

Another side to Sue's operations at the Co-op include being the 'lead' for strategy and fund raising. Each employee is given 22.5-h paid leave to work in the community per year. In 2011 this totalled 32.5K hours work for local communities and equates to £470,000. The Co-op provides grants of up to £2000 in the Spring/Autumn to grass root community groups and this is considered to fill the company's corporate responsibility commitment. Every 2-year the Co-op select a 'Charity Partner' and their last one was Women's Aid. Together they agreed a target for fundraising – it was £100,000. They actually raised £170,000 in the first 12-months!

On top of all this Sue 'gets her hands dirty' – along with her husband (who is a marathon runner!) she decided to raise funds for charity by attempting to climb Mt. Kilimanjaro. To do this she had to train for 14-months to raise her stamina and fitness levels. 80% of those who start out on the climb succumb to altitude sickness and cannot complete the journey. Sue described with the aid of numerous slides the ascent of Kilimanjaro, the basics of life on the mountain and the surreal nature of the whole experience. Having reached Gilman's Peak at sun-up Sue told us of the rigours of the next 1.5-h walk to the top in less than 50% oxygen. Having reached the top within 15-minutes you are forced to walk the 3-h back to Base Camp before having 1-h break followed by another 3-h walk to the lower camp where at last you could sleep. An experience which few achieve – but having met Sue few would have not bet upon her to reach the summit.

## International Women's Day

SI Stourbridge set out in style to mark this event. President Ann Middleton held a number of functions from Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> March – Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March and sent out an 'open invitation' to other Clubs, Friendship Links and women's organisations to join us as "Women as Builders of Bridges".

Women's World Day of Prayer was held at the Church of the Ascension in Wall Heath on the 2<sup>nd</sup> March at 7.30pm.

On the 6<sup>th</sup> we met for a light lunch at the Crystal Tea Rooms, Red House Cone where we were joined by Rebecca Timmins and a colleague who gave us vital information about their roles in the local Team supporting organ donation. Forms to volunteer to become an organ donor were made available.



President Ann Middleton and Erica Perkins

At our Dinner meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> we were joined by Snr. Sister Erica Perkins who held us enthralled as she recounted her time working in Camp Bastion. She returned to our area to take on the role of caring for those troops injured in Afghanistan, who are 'patched up' at Camp Bastion, and then flown to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital within 24-48-h of injury.

The pièce de résistance followed on the 8<sup>th</sup> March International Women's Day. Following lunch at a local hostelry we walked the few hundred yards to Himley Hall. Together with fellow Soroptimists from our region and other invited guests, from a variety of women's organisations, for a 'Kodak moment' on the bridge – much to the consternation of other visitors to the park and gardens that afternoon!



The first guest speakers in our '65'ers' year of office were Di and Mike Seeney who came to talk to us about their work with **Smile International** in Kosovo. Smile International was founded in 1999 following the war in Kosovo by Clive Doubleday and his wife; their work has now expanded into Africa and Asia. SI Stourbridge's particular interest was in working with Di & Mike on a project which delivers on a number of the central themes of '**educate to lead**' in that they deliver to children not just emergency aid but the tools by which these children, many of whom are girls, can be **enabled** to attend school get an **education** and thus **aspire** and **achieve** employment to help their 'broken' country back to prosperity. Programme Action Officer Patricia Martin listened intently as Di & Mike described the types of educational items needed and has since delivered to them 15 'School bags' containing: paper, pens and pencils, mathematical sets, a pencil case with an eraser and a pencil sharpener, scissors, a ruler and much more. Additional inclusions to aid basic hygiene were also added such as soap, toothpaste and a toothbrush - everything topped off with a small packet of sweets. Donations from family and friends secured the first 13 of these School Bags and donations from Club members are needed to continue this excellent PA project. **ACTION – All.**

One of the 65'ers Charities for their year is the Acorn Hospice and we were delighted to welcome Ann Smallman to our Dinner meeting in May to learn more about her work into the palliative care of children which costs £8 million per year to run. Club are donating clothes in August to be sold in Acorn's shops to raise much needed funds.

**Time for Fun** – as we ‘make a difference’ to the lives of women and girls

### **Saturday of Service**

Women inspiring action – transforming lives  
Setting up our ‘stall’ outside Waitrose in Stourbridge at 8.30 am on a dull Saturday morning was soon rewarded by the generosity of shoppers visiting the Ryemarket in Stourbridge. In under 3-h we had amassed 139Kg of foodstuffs and nearly 6Kg of toiletries etc. We spoke to a number of locals who wanted to know about Soroptimists and enjoyed a number of Black Country tales from the characters who stopped for a chat.



From left: Patricia Martin, President Ann Middleton, Jane Flint-Bridgewater

### **Diamond Jubilee Event**

Alas we suffered in a similar manner to Queen Elizabeth 11 with the weather and the ill-health of her consort – but this did not diminish the enjoyment or hilarity at Himley Hall anymore than it did in London! Our (very young) Queen Elizabeth (played by 17-y old Rebecca Blewitt) was quite racy in an ‘off-the-shoulder’ red gown but comported herself with suitable decorum throughout the proceedings. Ladies – turned up in an amazing array of ‘posh’ frocks and matching hats and the red, white and blue was really uplifting. Before the ‘Afternoon Tea’ we were entertained by Patricia Boyd who gave a presentation on the similarities and differences of our present Queen, Elizabeth 11 and those of her great grandmother Queen Victoria. Although one might initially think the two monarchs are not at all similar – you would be mistaken. The similarities far outweighed any differences and included: both were Queens Regnant; they met and fell for their ‘Prince Charming’ at an



The Queen’s subjects complete in ‘posh hats’!



early age; they shared a love of dogs and horse riding; they suffered heartaches over their children; they were attacked by would be ‘assassins’ and had intruders whilst in residence at Buckingham Palace.

The only notable difference between the two great ladies was in relation to the disposition of their respective husbands. Prince Albert was not known to have a sense of humour at all – whilst many of those present at the event were well able to recollect the many faux pas of the Duke of Edinburgh!

Patricia Boyd delighted us with a rendition from the diary of Victoria following her Diamond Jubilee celebrations – using an imperious voice (which cannot be disclaimed since there is no verifiable recording of Queen Victoria’s voice) - - which again resembled that which Queen Elizabeth 11 gave on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> June to thank the nation for supporting her over the 4-days of the many events in London to mark her 60-y on the throne.



Patricia Boyd – our Storyteller at the Diamond Jubilee event Himley Hall 6<sup>th</sup> June 2012

On sale at the event were a variety of new, nearly and vintage bags – all donated – to be sold to raise funds for Acorn’s Childrens Hospice. Members were also invited to guess the number of stitches in a collection of knitted figures, suitably attired, which formed the Royal Party at £2 a time. Finally, a local artist Rob Perry RBSA had again kindly donated to SI Stourbridge a second water colour of a local scene at dusk. Sealed bids are being collected and a winner with the highest bid will be announced during the coming months.

### Cambodia Child’s Dream Organisation (CCDO)

**Women inspiring action – transforming lives**

Following the successful completion of the fund raising for SI MAR Project ‘Fresh Start’ it was agreed that members would continue to donate unwanted jewellery, mobile phones and bras and the monies raised would be used to support CCDO.

To date SI MAR have raised sufficient funds to provide a freshwater well for a school in Cambodia – WELL DONE everyone.

SI Stourbridge also raised funds during International Women’s Day events to fund and build the first of two wells. This Club well – No. 383 - was placed in a remote village 25Km North East of Siem Reap and benefits five families. The picture below shows Keng Barang (29-y) and a farmer together with his wife Chorm Em (27-y) and some of their immediate family.



**ACTION:** Please keep donating your old bras and unwanted mobile phones and any jewellery – we can make a difference here by providing safe clean water.

### A ‘BIG WELCOME’ to our newest Members

The paramount task of our First 65’ver President Maggie Bayliss was to induct one new Club member – Gill Smith - and to welcome the transfer of four well established Soroptimists – Sarah Bookey, Buddhi Chetiyawardana, Nimmi Joshi and Dr Ratna Sen - from our sister Club SI Birmingham West which closed in April 2012.



## SI MAR Change of Insignia

Fellow Soroptimists and their guests from across SI Midland Arden Region assembled promptly from 6pm on the evening of 19<sup>th</sup> May at The Granary, which from the reception glass of Pimms until the final words from SI MAR President Ruth Longville went by in the 'blink of an eye'.

As usual the evening commenced with the Ceremony and speeches associated with the Changing of Insignia as we thanked each Club's Out-going President and welcomed the In-coming President for 2012/2013. All but one of the 12 Clubs in SI MAR was represented at the Ceremony.



From the left: Out-going President Ann Middleton, Immediate Past President SI MAR Gail Teague, Su Roxburgh\*, SI MAR President Ruth Longville, Sue Solly\*, Maggie Bayliss\*, Patti Burgess\* and SI MAR President Elect Margaret Phillips. [\*= member of 65'vers Group]

The Evening was a 'family affair' which holds particular resonance for SI MAR President Ruth Longville who was surrounded by her close family members – each of whom had a 'task' to perform during the evening!

Ruth's eldest daughter Emily started the evening off by saying Grace and then followed a lovely three course meal with excellent service from the staff at the Granary. With a very brief interlude we went straight into a round of 'Toasts'. The first the 'Loyal Toast' (by President Ruth) followed by a Toast to Soroptimist International from Peter Longville (President Ruth's father-in-law) and a Toast to Our Guests by SI MAR President Elect Margaret Phillips. This was responded to by Sandra Bayliss (President Ruth's sister-in-law) prior to the introduction of our Guest Speaker for the evening, Ian Jelf.

and for the next hour we were regaled with a myriad of hilarious anecdotes concerning the "English traveller". The stories were factual but the names were changed to protect the 'innocent'!

The history of how Ian came to be a 'certified' (in every sense of the word!) Blue Badge Tour Guide was itself entertaining even before we started to hear of specific incidences which had occurred over the many years of his service. Light-hearted and comical if anyone requires an after dinner Speaker then here is a name to consider.

Carriages arrived a little after 11pm and everyone had experienced a thoroughly entertaining evening with good food, fun and a little frivolity as we go forward in earnest to our new Soroptimist year and our new challenges as **Women Inspiring Action and Transforming Lives**.

### The Value of One Member

**Ten** little Soroptimists standing in a line  
One disliked the President, then there were **nine**.

**Nine** ambitious members on a project worked late  
One forgot her commitment, then there were **eight**.

**Eight** creative members had ideas as good as heaven,  
One lost enthusiasm, then there were **seven**.

**Seven** loyal Soroptimists got into a fix  
They quarrelled over projects, then there were **six**.

**Six** members remained with spirit and with drive  
One moved away and then there were **five**.

**Five** steadfast members wished there were more  
One became indifferent, and then there were **four**.

**Four** cheerful members who would never disagree  
Till one complained about the food and venue  
And then there were **three**.

**Three** eager members! What did they do?  
One got discouraged and then there were **two**.

**Two** lonely members, my rhyme is nearly done  
One joined a sports team, then there was only **one**.

**One** faithful member, feeling rather blue  
Met with a neighbour, then there were **two**.

**Two** earnest Soroptimist members, each enrolled one  
more  
Doubling their members and then there were **four**.

**Four** determined members, just wouldn't wait  
Till each one reached another, then there were **eight**,

**Eight** excited members signed up eight more  
Give men another six verses  
And it will be **A Thousand and Twenty-four!!!!**

## Calendar of Events

### S I BROMSGROVE & REDDITCH

**Special Event** – Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> July

**SUNDAY LUNCH – in aid of The Worcester Breast cancer Unit**

**Venue:** The Hilton Hotel, Bromsgrove

Menu: Melon or Pate, Carvery (or vegetarian option)  
Selection of desserts, Tea/coffee + mints

**Cost:** £25.00

**Time:** 12 for 12.30pm

Contact: [susanoddy@waitrose.com](mailto:susanoddy@waitrose.com).

### S I RUGBY

**Special Event** – Friday 13th July  
**CHARTER SUMMER BALL**

**Venue:** Catthorpe Manor, Lilbourne Road,  
Catthorpe, LE17 6DG

Dress Code: Black & White formal wear

**Cost:** £35.00

**Time:** 7 for 7.30pm

Contact: [margaret@phillipsrugby.co.uk](mailto:margaret@phillipsrugby.co.uk) for menu details

### S I STOURBRIDGE – 65<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY WEEK-END CELEBRATIONS

**Special Event** – (a) Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June

(b) Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July

(a) **LETS GO DUCK RACING with Friends, Food & Fun**

(b) **65<sup>th</sup> CELEBRATION LUNCH**

(a)**Venue:** The Mill House, Kingham Oxfordshire, OX7 6UH at 12 noon

(b)**Venue:** Hagley Golf & Country Club, Wassell Grove 12.30 for 1pm. Cost £23 pp  
Menu: Sirloin of beef or pan-fried Sea Bass;  
Vegetarian option Mushroom, wilted spinach and roast vegetable crumble. Whisky/orange baked sponge or fresh strawberries/cream; coffee + mints.

Contact Patti Burgess at [pattiburgess@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pattiburgess@hotmail.co.uk)

### S I KENILWORTH & DISTRICT

**Special Event** – Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> July

**Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee**

**Venue:** The new Parochial hall, 28 High Strret Kenilworth CV8 1LZ

**Cost:** £25 to include welcome drink + Loyal Toast + 3-course feast

**Time:** 7pm for 7.30

**Contact:** Eileen John (14/7/12 deadline)  
[Ei.t@btinternet.com](mailto:Ei.t@btinternet.com); Tel:01926 511649

## Dates for your Diary

### UK PAC meetings

**2012/2013:** 16 – 17 November  
1 and 2 February 2013\*  
21 – 22 June  
6 – 7 September

\*May also involve the Sunday

**2014: STUDY DAY 29<sup>TH</sup> JUNE**

### Midland Arden Region meetings

Venue: Spadesbourne Hall, District Council Offices in Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove B60 1AA  
**July 7<sup>th</sup> and September 23<sup>rd</sup>.**



**Don't forget September 29<sup>th</sup> National Arboretum – Grand Bulb Planting Event from 10.30 - 3pm of daffodil and crocus bulbs (yellow and blue for Soroptimist International) in the War Widows Wood. Bring a picnic, friends & family and have Fun!**