

Soroptimist International

Coleshill & District

The club was chartered on May 14th, 1965. Their first recorded meeting was held at Marston Green Maternity Home (MHMH) on Wednesday 14th October 1964, with 21 new members.

Miss Maxwell, the Matron at MGMH, was the first Club President and Miss Hughes (my old headmistress) her Vice. Never a mention of Soroptimism to her students!

In those early days fundraising was mainly achieved by holding jumble sales, cheese and wine evenings and fashion shows. Two of the founder members had ladies' clothes shops in the town, which helped with the fashion shows.

Monies raised went into a charity fund and where it went was decided at the end of the year. Members were often invited to join local committees e.g. The Old People Welfare Committee. Members subsequently started visiting the local elderly housebound.

In 1967 there is mention of a Mrs Wells (I am assuming our school secretary) not being eligible to join the club unless she held a diploma for the work she was doing! I joined the club in 1999. I was asked by my PE teacher if I had ever considered being a Soroptimist? I had to ask her for an explanation!

Just over five years later, (two of those as President), sadly I had to close the club as we only had 15 members. We raised funds for two 'Baby think it over' dolls, introduced 'Data-link' with the help of £500 from Coleshill Lions, donated to the Brittle Bone Society, and made several donations to Mary Ann Evans Hospice. Some of the members still fundraise for the hospice.

We also organised community talks on Breast Cancer and Lymphedema. The club was also responsible for getting dropped curbs installed throughout the town.

Recounted by Di Nash who is now a member of SI Kenilworth & District after SI Coleshill was disbanded.