

SI Kenilworth & District

Our Club was formed in 1969 following discussions with SI Coventry. It was their 40th anniversary and what better way to celebrate than to have a daughter at that age! One of our oldest members, Betty Mash, was a member of Coventry then and part of the group that helped get us chartered.

The Charter dinner held on the 19th April 1969 was at Warwick University, the price of the ticket was 27/6d (£1.37) The Club badge of office was worn for the first time on a blue ribbon and cost £27.10.0d (£27.50) It's worth quite a bit more now!



Founder members:

C Barton, E Henstead, R Comins, S Wright, W Bentley, B Mulligan, L Whiteman, P Haddon, F Adcock, A Ravenhall, A Langworthy, J Shepherd, H Sparkes, J Fancott (President), D Greenway, B Smith, C Moore

Our first President, Joan Fancott ran the bakery and restaurant on High Street and Fancott Drive off Fieldgate Lane is named after the family. Encouraged by our mother Club Coventry, we grew rapidly, and for many years now Kenilworth has had around 40 members.

Projects supported over the years have included service and fundraising at Helen Ley House which earlier offered respite care to MS patients; service at Newlands Home; Abbeyfield House; Guide Dogs; British Red Cross holidays for disabled youngsters; support for township children in South Africa; Motor Neuron Disease Association; VSO; Domestic medical alert system; Earthquake victims in Nepal; Look Good Feel Better; Guides and Guiders; HOOP a charity supporting women and children in a remote area of Peru; Water Aid and Meru Garden Project in Kenya to encourage self-sufficiency. Donations for refreshments at local flu clinics have helped the new maternity unit at Warwick hospital.

Funds raised for Friends of Sick Children in Blantyre; Malawi have trained three



paediatric specialist nurses. This venture was a finalist for the SIGBI Quadrennial project with two members presenting at the National Conference in Glasgow in 2015. We continue to support this charity to provide specialist equipment for disabled children there.

In recent years we have collected signatures to lobby Parliament about trafficking; raised awareness of the signs of people being trafficked and joined in the UN 16 Days of Action for the elimination of violence against women.

We look forward to giving service in Kenilworth and District in the coming years.

As with many Clubs, we have strong links to the women's refuge in Warwickshire.

- Introduction to the Refuge via the Club President in 2007
- Under Local Council administration and in need of support
- Began to raise funds via a Treasure Hunt around Kenilworth
- When the local Refuge and others in Warwickshire were taken under the umbrella of Refuge the charity, we asked the local representative to give us a talk and continued fund raising.
- We supplied them with funds and items to support their revamping of the back garden area.
- We continued to include them as our local charity giving funds and items from their list of necessities and a specific collection of cleaning items was introduced each year.
- During the 2017/18 Presidency the current President and Club initiated the Wellbeing Fund to specifically target the local Refuge as the principal charity for our Club and with their input instigated a Workshop to inform interested members of how to manage incidents of Domestic Abuse which might be disclosed to them in their everyday life
- An update on statistics and progress in general was given by the current Refuge Representative.
- Voluntary coffee and tea making sessions at the local Flu clinics engaged



the public support.

The Club has worked in tandem with the Kenilworth Lions to procure furniture to update their premises and pass on a generous donation from them.

During Lockdown, the Club made collections of knitted hats and scarves as requested and a substantial financial donation from members.

Plans are afoot to provide Art classes for women and children initially for our nearest Refuge but hopefully later to others in our County, with financial input from the Leamington Spa Arts Society.



Kenilworth Festival – Soroptimist’s Involvement 2008 to 2014

The Kenilworth Festival was run over a whole week initially in May and then in later years in September. A club member joined the committee on behalf of SI Kenilworth in 2008 and JL took over in 2009. Other representatives on the committee were from Rotary, Lions, Talisman Theatre, and other groups / service organisations in Kenilworth.

Club was involved in running the Children’s Sports at Party in the Park in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Party in the Park was held on Abbey Fields on the last day of the Festival and included a wide variety of family entertainment.

In 2009 Club took over the running of the 3-day Kenilworth Festival Art Show from Rotary. The Art Show took place at the Holiday Inn and enabled local artists to exhibit on average over 300 pieces of work. There was also a competition for local schools and several schools participated either with individual students or joint work. We ran the Art Show until 2014 and on average had over £1000 visitors attend. No entry fee was charged but we did ask for donations and a substantial amount was made each year for our own charities and the Festival.

Kenilworth Soroptimists also ran our own fund-raising events as part of the Festival. In 2010 this was ‘Elizabeth I at the Castle’ an enactment by actress and historian Lesley Smith. She also brought along Robert Dudley! Lesley came back for our Festival event in 2011 as Nell Gwynn for an enactment at the Talisman Theatre.

Our involvement in the Festival was hard work but we had a lot of fun, and it raised our profile in the town. (JL)

Friendship Links

We enjoy links with the following Clubs and have shared many international weekends over the years especially when celebrate our significant birthdays!

Mulhouse (France)
Arnhem Oost (Holland)
Leicester (UK)
Cardiff (UK)
Lower Hutt (New Zealand)
Remscheid (Germany)
Blantyre (Malawi)
Portadown (NI)



List Of Presidents

Joan Fancott	1968/70	Carole Nicholson	1996/97
Dora Greenway	1970/71	Jane Woods-Scawen	1998/99
Hilda Sparkes	1971/72	Joan Rook	1999/00
Nancy Sheppard	1972/73	Linda Dayman	2000/01
Betina Smith	1973/74	Valerie Powell	2001/02
Lucy Whiteman	1974/75	Ann Pitt	2002/03
Nancy Price	1975/76	Carole Wright	2003/04
Margaret Fisher	1976/78	Carole Jevons	2004/05
Florence Adcock	1978/79	Christina Clifford	2005/06
Yvonne Rich	1979/80	Linda Hayes	2006/07
Gillian Bausor	1980/81	Jane Beckett	2007/08
Eve Fleming	1981/82	Trish Bennett	2008/09
Ivy Phillips	1982/83	Diane Nash	2009/10
Erica White	1983/84	Rebecca Probert	2010/11
Shirley Clutton	1984/85	Andrea Kingston	2011/12
Beryl Turner	1985/86	Ann Barton	2012/13
Eileen Rogers	1986/87	Georgie Larsen-Archer	2013/14
Dorothy Hall	1987/88	Bronwen O'Brien	2014/15
Patricia Weeple	1988/89	Elaine Clarke	2015/16
Jane Powell	1989/90	Tricia Weinbren	2016/17
Dora Harris	1990/92	Sharon Maxted	2017/18
Yvonne Rich	1992/93	Anita Hornbrook	2018/19
Eileen Rodger	1993/94	Sandra Young	2019/20
Joan Rook	1994/95	Gill Schofield	2020/21
Dorothy Hall	1995/96	Julie Pemberton	2021/22
Daphne Harrison	1997/98		