

## **SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL CLUB OF Downpatrick and District.**

**Membership:** Year 2017/18 Number: 15                      Year 2016/17 Number 21

**Date: 28.02.2018**

### **CLUB REPORT from March 2017 to February 2018**

#### **Economic empowerment and sustainable opportunities for employment of women:**

- April 2017 Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland - Judina Leslie spoke to our club on the process for public appointments within N.I. and encouraged members to consider applying.
- January 2018 meeting with MLA re Homeless/rough sleepers in Downpatrick area.
- Some shoe box gifts for the homeless were issued.
- Toiletries supplied to Flourish NI, an organisation who have contributed to the resettlement of trafficked, and migrant people.

#### **Education – formal and non- formal learning opportunities:**

- April 2017- 1 member attended The Women in the World Conference held in New York.
- June 2017 - 1 member attended the workshop on women in Parliament
- June 2017 -Two members attended the open day of a new facility at Kilief, Co. Down - a seed bank for native seeds. Working with Kew Gardens.
- Sept SINI President Mary McKinney spoke on the essence of Soroptimism and the SWOT Analysis carried out at region.
- November 2017            Youth Award-Public Speaking competition local heat  
4 girls participated. Standard was high.
- November 2017            -Growing our brand training- 3 members attended
- October 2017              4 members attended suicide prevention training
- February 2018              Youth Award-Public Speaking NI Final held at Hillsborough  
2 members attended in support of our local heat winner.

#### **Environmental sustainability:**

- May 2017 Minerstown Beach Clean. In partnership with the Lecale Conservation, Newry and Mourne Council, and Keep NI Beautiful. 5 members participated.
- Fundraiser -Belfast Gospel Choir at St Patrick's Church- £500 raised for MERU Gardens
- February 2018 Debbie Gillies from True Harvest Seeds spoke to the club on her work with collecting native seeds for a seed Bank for Ireland.
- Feb 2018 in progress with the council -Schools Bee Aware art competition.
- Continued support on recycling -Jewelry for Alzheimers, Stamps for RNLI, and mobile phones for Water Aid.

### **Health and food security:**

- May 2017 Coffee morning fundraiser for Peter Mc Kenny memorial- club members helped to run this even. Kathleen, his widow presented £975 for Queen University Belfast Foundation G1 Cancer Research
- May 2017 Fundraiser -Belfast Gospel Choir at St Patricks Church raised:  
£500 for QUB foundation GI Cancer Research  
£500 for PIPS- Public initiative prevent suicide  
£500 for SANDS - Stillbirth and neonatal death
- December 2017 fundraiser- Jingle Ball at the Burrendale Hotel, Newcastle raised  
£1000 for ALPS – All lives are Precious.  
£1000 for the charity -Life changes, changes life. This charity addresses Mental Ill Health and addictions in the Newry, Mourne & Down District council and surrounding areas.  
£362 to Down Midwifery led Unit To purchase a Sonicad
- Parent Pack – a new service project for the club. Working with 2 children wards- packs provided for parents/guardians who need to stay overnight.  
The Parent pack contains a tooth brush, tooth paste, soap and deodorant.  
The hygiene pack is sanitary protection  
The Daddy Pack contains men’s Toiletries -soap, deodorant, razor.

### **Human Rights & Status of Women -eliminate violence against women and ensure participation in conflict resolution:**

- October 2017 Survey on human trafficking carried out in Downpatrick as part of the overall survey GB.
- November 2017 White Ribbon Awareness Raising- 240 white ribbons were handed out to young and old men in Downpatrick. The men were advised of the white ribbon campaign, it’s origin and why we were supporting this initiative.  
MLA Colin Mc Grath gave his support on the night and photo’s were taken during the switch on of the Christmas lights
- We continue to support Women’s aid with toiletries, clothes etc. throughout the year. Especially in December.

### **International Goodwill & Understanding:**

- Supporting the Meru Gardens federation project £500 raised.

**Outstanding Achievements - including of members in your Club:**  
**Recommendations to pass to other Clubs – Speakers/activities:**

Judina Leslie- N.I Public Appointment Commissioner .

Debbie Gillies -True Harvest Seeds.

**Fun and Friendship**

- March 6 members participated at the choral festival in Lisburn.
- May 3 members attended N/S conference
- June club outing Downpatrick Museum – tour and meal.  
3 members attended SI Lurgans 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary afternoon Tea.
- October club night at Howards restaurant Belfast  
Quiz night with SI Lisburn
- November 2 members attended SIGBI Conference Cardiff  
4 members attended SI Belfast 85<sup>TH</sup> Charter lunch
- December Jingle Ball  
4 members attended Human Rights Day Seminar at Oxford Island.  
Club Christmas Lunch at St. Patrick’s Centre Downpatrick.
- February 2 members joined in with” Knitted Knockers” Pancake day.  
3 members attended the launch of LCCL new premises in Downpatrick. Life Change, Changes Lives)

**Other**

- In May our club ran a membership event in Downpatrick Hospital.  
(As part of the coffee morning)
- Some members carry out other services to the community. These range from sitting on school boards, working with cancer patients at centers, driving people unable to transport themselves to hospital ( coordinated through the Down Accessible Community Transport).