

Angela Reynolds

SI Lichfield & District

I was born in Staffordshire. I recall happy days at the local primary school, grandma's inventive wartime cookery, and occasionally the excitement of "blue " airmail letters from my father. My grandmother taught me to knit khaki and blue scarves, which we then packed, with loving letters into comfort parcels for " our brave men at war". Thus was my sense of duty and social conscience born!

I wanted to train as a nurse so immediately after leaving school at eighteen I applied and was accepted into a school of nursing. It was a wonderful four years. I made friends that I still have to this day. We saw happiness, tragedy and comedy!

In the first year, I metamorphosed from an eighteen-year-old schoolgirl who had never seen her father in pyjamas, to a young woman able to confidently carry out intimate and sometimes heartbreaking tasks on strangers of both sexes. I was thrilled to qualify and to be awarded the silver medal for my year.

In the late sixties my husband's work brought us to Lichfield where I was able to work part time as a sister at the local hospital and also commit to some voluntary work. This involved being the nursing officer to the local Red Cross detachment; helping with the local Brownies as a badge assessor and being a volunteer with the Right to Read initiative.

In 1986 I undertook degree studies and teacher training to equip me to work in nurse education. I had had thirty years of clinical practice and this seemed a good time to change course and support younger nurses. I found myself working as a principal lecturer in the university Health Studies faculty.

In 1998 I was the prime mover in establishing a Soroptimist club in Lichfield – from a small meeting in a back garden to a fully - fledged Soroptimist Club which has gone from strength to strength, building on that first year when I was Founder President.

Since then I have taken office as Regional President, Regional Benevolent Fund Officer and am still acting as SI Lichfield & District's Welfare Officer today. This gives me a seat on the club's Executive and brings me into contact with each individual club member.

The club has a very active Programme Action core, which continues to provide me opportunities to meet the needs of my social conscience. My grandmother would approve.

After retirement from the university I worked independently becoming involved in the introduction of care training into nursing homes and also acting, as an adviser/ mediator in disciplinary matters. During my time in clinical practice I was involved in the development of the Care Assistant NVQ programme.

Another of my commitments is to the Talking Newspaper for the blind, where I am a trustee and regular reader. Other volunteer work includes welcoming and doing flowers at our cathedral and chairing a local long established charity, which helps the elderly, sick and needy in Lichfield.

Since retirement I indulge in reading and needlework and am still an enthusiastic Soroptimist.

