

President Grace's message

Our planet, our future – let's get cracking!



THIS LAST MONTH has seen highs and lows on my Soroptimist calendar. To have been able to celebrate Canterbury Club's Woman of the Year and 60th anniversary at the Guild Hall at President Carol's invitation was a wonderful treat.

Just a week later I was celebrating the life of Penny Veness, Croydon Club stalwart, and chatting to Soroptimists from all over our Region as if restrictions had never happened – what a joy.

Two members from my own Club passed away in the following few days – Dorothy Buck and Pauline Everett – both of whom I am pleased to have called friends, but a gap has been left in my life.

Swinging back up from this sadness, the Region Executive have worked hard to find a suitable venue to celebrate the Centenary of Soroptimist International, so that is definitely something to look forward to. The colour theme is purple and gold, linked to the official colours, so I hope that you will enjoy joining in with this.

Thank you to everyone for contributing to the Diamond Education Grant – the Region charity in 2020-21. Fundraising has taken a different route this past year and I have been very impressed by the variety of ways that so many of you have found to support this – hopefully the collection boxes will be useful for other projects as each member now has one. Please send all remaining donations by bank transfer by September 20, in time to announce a final total at the AGM.

Posts available for Incoming President Yvonne's year are Membership Officer, Minutes Secretary and Vice President.

I have greatly appreciated having the support of a strong and knowledgeable Executive Team and would encourage anyone to join this team.

It has been wonderful to meet so many of you this year (even though it had to be via computer), to be a part of your club meetings and to hear so many interesting speakers – thank you all for making me feel so welcome.

The centenary lunch and AGM will be a great opportunity to celebrate long service awards and to meet Soroptimist friends in person again. The recently updated Region Handbook will also be available – a very useful source of information for new members and general interest.

See you all there!

Alternatives to plastics a lovely morning with Thanet Soroptimists



IT IS ALWAYS a great pleasure to meet Soroptimists in person, and especially at this time after so many of our meetings have been on Zoom. So it was a delight to visit Ramsgate recently and enjoy coffee and cake with Denise and Debbie from Thanet club.

Thanet Club members are working hard with local projects from beach cleans and boot fairs to food bank support, all in true Soroptimist fashion.

There is great enthusiasm in the group for new projects and I have no doubt that we will be seeing and hearing more from them in the future. Best of luck Thanet!

REGION PRESIDENT GRACE

**SIGBI advice for members
wishing to support Afghan people
see page 09**

**60**

BREAK OUT SHINDIG!
Everyone welcome
on 9 October 2021
beginning at 7.00pm
at Howfield Manor Hotel
Howfield Lane, Chartham Hatch, Canterbury, CT4 7HQ
Ploughman's Supper at 8pm and disco dancing from 9pm

Tickets: Only **£17.50** from creedsicanterbury2019@gmail.com
Payable to Soroptimist International Canterbury or by bacs to:
23-05-80 35259333

Carol Reed BEM
President 2021 SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL Canterbury
www.sigbi.org
www.sigbi.org/canterbury
<https://www.facebook.com/CanterburySoroptimists>


Women inspiring action,
transforming lives

See page 02 for more information.



From left: Woman of the Year Zoe Bell, President Carol Reed, Sheriff Anne Dekker, and Natalie Mbunga

CANTERBURY MEMBERS INVITED the city's Sheriff, Anne Dekker, to join the team judging their Inspirational Woman of the Year, together with SISEE President Grace and Dawn Ryder, Canterbury club membership officer. Anne was previously a Soroptimist in Bebington, Wirral and Canterbury.

Sheriff Anne kindly invited the winner, Zoe from East Kent

Rape Crisis Centre, other finalists and club members, to a reception at the Guildhall and Mayor's Parlour.

Certificates were presented to Zoe and to Natalie, who volunteers for several organisations to help her local community.

Anne praised all the finalists for their work in the community.

JANE WEBB, SI CANTERBURY

BREAK OUT SHINDIG!

Everyone welcome

on 9 October 2021

beginning at 7.00pm

at Howfield Manor Hotel



It's time everyone!

You are all invited, with your friends and family,
to our Break Out Shindig.

The profits will be shared between Save the Children
and Soroptimist charities.

The Ploughman's Supper is vegetarian, but if there are
any other dietary needs please email Carol Reed at
creedsicanterbury2019@gmail.com

All Covid restrictions at the time will be adhered to.
There will be a raffle.

All drinks can be purchased at the bar.

Wedding bliss for the over 65s

"All my wives have been Soroptimists"

A RECENT REPORT in The Guardian stated that the number of people over the age of 65 getting married has increased over the past decade.

The Guardian spoke to three couples, including Stuart 81 and his wife Ruth 72.

Stuart, whose wives had been Soroptimists, said that his first wife of 48 years died suddenly in 2012. He married for the second time aged 75 in 2015 but sadly, eight months later, his wife died suddenly from cancer.

Stuart later went on to marry Ruth, a friend of his second wife.

Goodbye Dorothy, a long-serving, passionate and dedicated Soroptimist

DOROTHY BUCK JOINED SI Croydon and District in 1972, and was therefore our Club's longest-serving member, becoming Club President for the first time in 1976 and again in 1982-83.

She was married to Roy, and for a time they lived and worked overseas. They had two children, Hilary and James. Widowed at a fairly young age Dorothy then devoted herself to her career as a teacher/librarian at Elmwood School, Croydon.

She loved working with children, managing to keep control with silence and a stern look, and never needed to raise her voice. Good manners and politeness were essential. If she did not receive a "thank you" when she handed a book to a child she would gently but firmly hold onto it until they said those words, or otherwise gently remind them "and what do we say?" before letting go of it.

Dorothy was passionate about being a Soroptimist, so due to her dedication and long service we awarded her Honorary Membership of the Club in 2015. She was always a team player, keen to assist with sales tables, selling raffle tickets and helping at events. For many years she helped Jane Barnes at Region meetings. An encouraging and caring friend to all, she would make sure she spoke to any guests or new members at meetings to make them feel welcome.

One of her hobbies was knitting blankets for hospitals, so she was always very grateful to receive spare odds and ends of wool.

She was a very private person, fiercely independent, but quiet, gentle and unassuming. Probably every phone call she made would have been prefaced with "I'm very sorry to bother you my dear, but..."

Dorothy continued to work one day a week on a voluntary basis in her school after "retiring" until she was well into her 90s. She loved helping the children with their reading because she realised the value and importance of literacy, especially for children whose first language is not English.

If one of her pupils asked "How old are you, Miss?" her response would be: "I'm the same age as my tongue, and just a little bit older than my teeth!"

So I will not divulge her age, but had she lived another year she would have achieved an amazing 50 years of Soroptimist membership, and had she survived a further year she might well have received a telegram from the Queen...

HEATHER BAILEY, SI CROYDON AND DISTRICT



SI Bromley eating their way to the 1950s



SI BROMLEY MEMBER Alison Driscoll and her husband Rene held a 1951 lunch at their home to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Club, since the official celebration had to be postponed.

When we learned that the courses were of food from the fifties, we were fearful of spam fritters, but Alison served us a lovely meal of old-time favourites, ending with sherry trifle and treacle tart.

It was wonderful to get together again and lovely that Win Mitchell, our senior member, now aged 98, was able to come along.

The afternoon raised over £200 for club funds and to help with the anniversary lunch to be held next year.

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY



A morning walk around Arlington Reservoir

EARLY IN AUGUST, members from Eastbourne club spent a happy morning walking around the Arlington Reservoir.

President Claire, with five Soroptimists, two Soroptimisters and a grandchild in a buggy headed off in warm sunny weather, coping with the 'soft going' in places following the recent heavy rain in the area.

Walking across the reservoir wall they were greeted by a large flock of noisy Canada Geese.

After about an hour's exercise the group enjoyed a picnic... luckily the cafe in the car park has now reopened.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Learning how to be a racial equality ally

Another in the occasional series of articles by Tessa Woodward, SI Canterbury

A new concept, 'Micro-aggression'

IN THE LAST article of this series, I started unpicking some of the new definitions and concepts I have come across in my ally learning. I started with the word 'racism' and my new understanding that it is not just about discrete acts committed by repugnant individuals but is, rather, a complex interconnected system in which I am located. And in which, I may unwittingly think, say and do racially problematic things. And, I understand that if I do nothing and say nothing when others are racially problematic, then I am complicit. Understanding racism this way means that when somebody lets me know that something I have said or done is racially problematic, I can respond with gratitude and relief rather than anger and denial. If I accept that it will be impossible for me to completely escape my socialization, then these painful moments, when I am given information about my racially problematic words or actions, can be my chance to learn something valuable and then change my behaviour.

Here enters the term 'micro aggression'! A micro-aggression is a brief, commonplace, verbal, behavioural or mental event. Some examples? Well, let's imagine that I meet a woman of colour and say, 'That T-shirt looks great on you! I could never wear that colour!' or, after hearing her speak at a meeting, I say, 'Well done! You were so articulate/eloquent!' or 'By the way, where are you actually from?' or 'Your name is so hard to pronounce' or 'Your hair is terrific! Is it real? Can I touch it?'

We could argue that some of these remarks are, on the surface, well-meaning and intended as compliments. But it is not the intention that is important. It is the unconscious meta-message, the fact that they communicate derogatory or hostile racial messages to the receiver that is important. It is not the intention but the effect that is important.

'Oh, come on!' we may say... 'It was just a little remark. What's the big deal?'

But then we remember that if we are pinched once, it just hurts a bit. But if we are pinched again and again over days, weeks, years, on the same spot, we become sore and then wounded. A person of colour, out and about in the UK on pub-

lic transport, at work and in their free time, may encounter many micro-aggressions in a day. They may be completely sick of them, tired of wondering where the next one is coming from. And if a person in this situation murmurs in dissent, they may well be accused of being touchy or having no sense of humour. If the person has the energy, they may try to explain why the unconscious message is hurtful. But they may have tried to explain in the past and got nowhere. They may be too exhausted that day to try to educate white people or those from a different heritage from themselves.

So, a first step for a person wishing to become a racial equality ally can be to unpick the conscious or unconscious offensiveness in our own potential conversational gambits. Below are some examples.

'Your name is so hard to pronounce.' (I find you a problem. I can't be bothered to get your name right)

'Can I touch your hair?' (Can I trespass into your personal space?)

'She's so articulate!' (I am surprised. It is unexpected)

'I'm colour blind. I don't see race' (I deny your identity and experience. And I have never had to think about my own colour or race.)

'Where are you actually from?' (You don't belong. You are 'other'.)

'I'm not racist. I have a black neighbour/friend/colleague.' (I am immune to racism by virtue of proximity.)

'I could never wear that colour!' (I am really noticing your skin colour and how different it is to mine.)

'As a woman. I know what you go through as a person of colour.' (Your experience of racial oppression is the same as mine of gender oppression. Therefore, I am immune to any charge of racism.)

So, my learning here is..... to make the invisible visible so that I become aware of being offensive. I have to move from the possible intention of what I say and do to its effect on the person I am with. In the next in this series I will explore a way to counter micro-aggressions with micro-interventions.

A crafty afternoon in Eastbourne



EASTBOURNE SOROPTIMISTS MEET once a month for craft activities. This started when the local hospital expressed the need for smaller blankets to cover the knees of the elderly patients in the Frailty Ward.

Members made 6" squares and sewed them together make the knee blankets. This is now a continual activity due to the fact that many of the patients have been so attached to their blankets that they have taken them home with them when they leave hospital!

Twiddle muffs are also made by the Craft group for DGH patients in the Frailty ward. These are for patients suffering with Alzheimers and who like to fiddle with them in their hands.

The picture here is of some of the craft girls sewing on Soroptimist labels, crocheting a knee blanket and sewing knitted squares together.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Another of Canterbury's 60th Birthday Challenges

INSPIRATION FOR A Canterbury Club 60th Birthday Challenge came from a SI Preston's Facebook post back in March of this year, that they were collecting empty tablet blister packs and taking them to Superdrug. Superdrug pass the packs on to TerraCycle, who recycle them and so prevent them going into landfill.

Superdrug also give a donation to Marie Curie as part of the 'Little Packs, Big Impact' scheme.

Having checked our local Canterbury Superdrug was operating the scheme, several members committed to collecting 60 blister packs each – only to find that our individual targets have already been far exceeded!

The photo shows an old sweetie jar being commissioned into use by one member to collect them.

A variation on the usual 'How many sweeties in the jar?' revealed 130 packs!



Designer & vintage fashion pop-up shop for charity

A collection of pre-loved clothing, accessories and shoes.
Featuring brands including, Vivienne Westwood, Marc Jacobs, Gucci and many more.
Prices that will suit all budgets.

3-5th September 10am-7pm

**Dray Walk Gallery,
The Old Truman Brewery,
Brick Lane,
London E1 6QL**

@MariaMantonArchive

Card payments only. Sold as seen and no returns.

Visit our website for free tickets & information. Snap the QR.

www.mariamantonarchive.co.uk

IN AID OF

centre point give homeless young people a future

Pancreatic Cancer UK

THANET CLUB MEMBER Denise has arranged a sale of vintage clothes, accessories and shoes in memory of her sister Maria. It was Maria's passion to collect these items, and it was that collection which gave her a huge amount of pleasure.

Funds raised will support Centre Point (giving young homeless people a future) and Pancreatic Cancer UK. Please do publicise and/or support this event if you can.

**South East England Region
62nd Annual General Meeting
Saturday, September 25, 10:30
at Mercure Great Danes Hotel**

**Followed by a lunch
to celebrate the
Soroptimist International
Centenary**

**(AGM Papers, together with
details of the lunch,
have been distributed to members.)**

Medway and Maidstone £750 for 75th



THREE MEMBERS OF SI Medway and Maidstone attended a virtual presentation held by SI Surrey Hills in June about Lend with Care (Microfinance from CARE International UK).

It was interesting to hear how lending anything from £15 upwards could be used to help businesses grow, they repay, and you lend again. This can be done as individuals or as a group. We heard about a Rotary Group who had lent £5000 and over time it was the equivalent to £240,000 and as a result had created many jobs.

A proposal was agreed by all our members as part of our '75' celebrations to lend £750 through LendwithCare primarily for women entrepreneurs who are creating employment opportunities.

A task force led by Barbara Fisher was set up to oversee and monitor how the money is spent and report back on the outcomes. An account has been set up by the Club and the £750 has been deposited on the LendwithCare website. The task force has met twice and reviewed the website and considered prospective entrepreneurs and made decisions about who to support. The donations made so far amounting to £690:

- Monda 1001 Group, Zambia – Restaurant/Café £83.46.
- Carmen Mercedes, Ecuador – Bakery £150.
- Lan, Vietnam – Home Improvements £75.
- Kasiya 0703 Group, Zambia – Animal and Poultry Raising £45.40.
- Tigwilizane 0507, Zambia – Retail – clothing £167.51.
- Tionerepo Group, Malawi – Retail -clothing £150.

This leaves just over £60 to invest and the task force will continue to monitor the LendwithCare site and make decisions on who to support in the future with this, and those monies loaned that are repaid and will be reinvested.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Croydon Club mourn the loss of member Pauline Everett

CROYDON MEMBER, PAULINE Everett, sadly passed away this month. A member since 1985, she served as president in 1990.

Pauline fully supported the club's projects and fundraising efforts, and was particularly supportive of the long-standing young carers project and actively attended their events to promote Soroptimism.



A former head teacher, and a well connected and respected member of the Croydon community, she facilitated many events and speakers for the Club. Her passion was music and art.

Pauline lived a private life and supported others.

East Grinstead celebrate being together again



THE CLUB DOES not usually meet in August but, the restrictions having been lifted, we decided to get together just to socialise and catch up on all the news.

The room was set out restaurant style with eye-catching blue and white check table cloths and attractive flower arrangements. Some members had prepared a selection of delicious quiches, salads and desserts, all of which were very much enjoyed.

For safety reasons as well as ease, each member brought her own crockery and cutlery thus enabling us all to spend as much time as possible chatting and enjoying each other's company.

We also had the opportunity to get to know a new member whom many of us had not met before.

All agreed that this was a very happy evening and a blueprint for future celebrations!

ROSEMARY STONE, SI EAST GRINSTEAD



Toilet Twinning in Nigeria

TUNBRIDGE WELLS SOROPTIMISTS have purchased another toilet from the Toilet Twinning Charity (<https://www.toilettwinning.org/>).

Funds were raised from proceeds recovered from collecting and recycling aluminium cans from our litter-picking sessions around the local parks and roads. Our 'cans into cash' campaign is gaining momentum and recent club speaker, Ingrid Pope*, who came to talk to us about creating space in our lives to devote to a cause, requested her speaker gift be a contribution to the project.

Ingrid chose a latrine in Nigeria to twin with her Tunbridge Wells toilet. She can be seen holding the Twinning Certificate.

In terms of programme action this was filed under Planet – Clean Water and Sanitation.



CAROLINE AUCKLAND, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Summer Barbeques

Eastbourne Club



EASTBOURNE SOROPTIMISTS GATHERED once again for a summer BBQ at Lotte's house. Julie and Lotte prepared the venue and the salads, coleslaw and ratatouille, and their husbands Bob and Paul did the cooking.

Twenty-four people attended at socially distanced tables and enjoyed the food. The deserts were prepared by all the Soroptimists and you can see Lotte above just sampling her sweet.

Lotte's house is on the beach at Pevensey Bay and we were so lucky with the weather, you can see the completely blue sky. However no one braved the water on this occasion.

£67 was raised for the hospitality fund and the rest of the money went into the president's fund for Refugee Women in Calais and Wayfinder Women.

It was so nice to meet up after such a long break and to do what Soroptimists do best, eat, drink and chat!

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



Closing Date for the September issue of SEE News

is Thursday September 23, 2021

Email your text and photographs to Patricia at
pat.painting@btinternet.com 020 8668 2681

Medway and Maidstone Club



ON A BEAUTIFUL sunny day in August, Medway and Maidstone member Carol McKeough hosted a BBQ for 22 Soroptimists, friends, and family at her home on the stunning North Downs.

It was an ideal time to meet up safely face to face with old friends and with our latest new member, Margaret Albert.

Margaret runs a children's charity in Nigeria and is planning to start practicing as an energy therapist here in the UK which had to be put on hold during Covid. Our Membership officer, Carol Infanti formally welcomed Margaret and presented her with her name badge at the BBQ.

A selection of homemade salads made by members were enjoyed with our barbequed sausages, beefburgers and chicken followed by lots of naughty desserts.

A great time was had by all, and the good news is that £330 raised from donations and the raffle will be benefiting SATEDA (Swale Action to End Domestic Abuse).

A big thank you to Carol for her hospitality....

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



IN THE JULY edition of SEE News there was a report from Isobel Groves from SI Sevenoaks about their knitting efforts to support the Centenary Trauma Bear Appeal. It was noted some of the Police contacts made were in the Swale area, so Medway and Maidstone took up the knitting challenge to get involved.

Jane Barnes has made a good start and so far has knitted 18 trauma bears, and some are even in the Soroptimist colours. The knitting pattern has also been shared with a U3A knitting group who have agreed to participate. In addition, some community knitters from Herne Bay area have made some of the smaller knitted bears.

An approach has been made to the Safeguarding Coordinator with Swale Vulnerability Investigation Team based at Sittingbourne Police Station. We hope these bears will benefit those vulnerable children in the Medway, Swale, and surrounding areas who the Police become aware of, and children linked with the Women's Refuge.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Council converts derelict houses so the homeless don't return to streets

By Richard Williams

THREE houses left in disrepair have been renovated and turned into accommodation for rough sleepers so they don't have to return to the streets following the pandemic.

The Council-owned properties in Crescent Road, Tunbridge Wells, were empty and 'near derelict' until a government grant and money from a developer provided the funding to convert them into three houses with six one-bedroom self-contained flats for homeless people.

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council [TWBC] received a grant of £205,000 from the government's Next Steps Accommodation Programme aimed at ensuring people sleeping rough

and taken off the streets during the Covid crisis have somewhere to go now that restrictions have lifted.

TWBC also used £310,000 given to them as part of an agreement with a developer that is converting the nearby former Homeopathic Hospital site in Church Road.

Charities

Rough sleepers in the town had been housed by the Council at the Russell Hotel during the various government lockdowns, and it was feared many would return to the streets once restrictions were lifted and funding for temporary accommodation stopped.

The former rough sleepers will now



CONVERSION

The rundown properties can now accommodate six people each



be offered a flat in one of the converted houses for up to two years, as well as help and support.

Two local charities, the Tunbridge Wells Soroptimists and Tunbridge Wells Churches Streets Teams, made donations towards the cost of furnishing the flats, while Nourish Community Food Bank has supplied welcome packs for new tenants.

Cllr Andy Fairweather, the Cabinet member in charge of Communities and Wellbeing, said: "I'm proud that

the Council has been able to deliver these fantastic units to help former rough sleepers.

"Government funding only became available towards the end of last year, so it is a remarkable achievement that the properties have been designed and renovated so quickly and are now ready to be occupied.

"I would like to thank the local charities who have helped to furnish these properties. This has been a great example of the community

coming together."

Cllr Matt Bailey, the Council's head of Sustainability added that the accommodation was also as environmentally friendly as part of the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030.

He said: "They've been thoroughly insulated and are all heated using air-source heat pumps. Going forward we hope to power the flats using electricity generated entirely from renewable sources."

TUNBRIDGE WELLS SOROPTIMISTS were delighted to be able to support local Tunbridge Wells Council with a donation towards the cost of furnishing accommodation for rough sleepers.

The Council has recently converted empty properties to provide accommodation for rough sleepers, and the club's donation went towards supplying household items including crockery, towels, kettles, bedding and hygiene items.

The club, along with two other local charities, was thanked in

the local newspaper by Cllr Andy Fairweather, the Cabinet member in charge of Communities and Wellbeing: 'I would like to thank the local charities who have helped to furnish these properties. This has been a great example of the community coming together.'

In terms of programme action this was filed under People-Healthy Lives and Well-being.

CAROLINE AUCLAND, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Forgotten woman pioneer

DURING THE EDWARDIAN era, women were expected to conform to the limitations imposed upon them.

But there was one woman who was not going to be cowed by these conventions and worked as a press photographer, smoked, wore trousers, rode a bicycle, taught judo and opened a car dealership.

In 1910, she became the first woman to design, build and fly a plane, which she named Mayfly (it may fly or it may not).

Her name was Lilian Bland, but unlike other women pioneers, Lilian lapsed into obscurity. She died in 1971 aged 92, her achievements, barely remembered.

In recent years, however, her story has come to light and she will feature in a new exhibition at The Museum of Innovation, based in Holywood, Northern Ireland.

SOURCE: THE GUARDIAN

Together Talks

All Region members are invited to join the following Zoom speaker meeting. Please register with the Club Secretary.

SI Lewes

Monday, September 20, 2021 at 19:00

Brighton Women's Shelter on how they provide domestic violence support for women and their children

SI Lewes

Monday, October 18, 2021 at 19:00

Ram Rajil co-founder of Bloom Nepal School to give us an update on the school and children.



**Number "63"
500 Club**



If you would like to join the 500 Club or find out more about the scheme, please contact Pat Dale at SI Croydon. Tickets are £12 each and there's no limit on how many you can have.

**Region Meetings in 2021-2022
are scheduled to take place on:**
December 04
March 19
June 25
September 24

Programme Action News from APD Yvonne Freeman



AS THIS WILL be my last item for SEE News as Regional Programme Action Chair, I would like to thank all members in our Region for their amazing support for our PA work. Your projects have covered a wide and inspirational range of topics and your responses to crises both at home and overseas have been palpable.

I will also be stepping down as Assistant Programme Director for Partnerships, a role I have also enjoyed, but I am now

really looking forward to being your Regional President, visiting your clubs and working together to educate, empower and enable women and girls worldwide.

I am sure that, like me, your thoughts at the present time are with the people of Afghanistan, particularly the women and girls as they face an uncertain future. I also know that you will be doing all you can to support our efforts to assist those who have been brought to the UK and those left behind. With this in mind, I would like to share two items with you:

1) The link on the SIGBI website which covers not only the statement from our Federation, but also a statement from Soroptimist International (SI). It also includes a submission to

the Human Rights Council (HRC) that was co-signed by several women's organisations including Soroptimist International and a summary of the Human Rights Council meeting that took place on August 24, 2021: <https://sigbi.org/2021/afghanistan/>

2) **Kay Richmond, Programme Director, has offered the following advice for clubs and members wishing to donate or support the Afghan people in some way**, especially women and children. It is best to donate to appeals from organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the UN agencies which are still active in Afghanistan, as this will ensure that funds reach those most in need. The alternative is to support the agencies helping those evacuated to the UK. There are centres accepting donations of clothing and other items and clubs can research these in their own localities.

Trauma Bears

I am pleased to be able to report that several clubs have now taken up the challenge to knit these lovely little bears and they are very well received by the Kent Constabulary and the Shepway Child & Adult Protection Teams. We have set ourselves a challenge of 100 bears for the Centenary and so, hopefully, those clubs who haven't yet taken up their knitting needles, or crochet hooks, will also take up the challenge.



I have sent an e-mail to Cathy Warwick, UKPAC Comms Officer and initiator of the project, and she is delighted and has updated the UKPAC website with our news.

Dates for your diary

Two key events which we are hoping as many members as possible will attend:

1) The SIGBI Centenary Tree Planting Working Group will be hosting our third webinar on Saturday, September 11 between 14:30 and 15:30. Our speaker will be Dr Selvam, who will be talking about the mangroves in the Sundarbans Delta in India and the possibilities for a livelihood option developing fisheries within the mangrove plantation. The link for the webinar is: Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87675822637?pwd=M1J6VEZ4QXB1TVl4L2o4Y1ZhelZxdz09>
Meeting ID: 876 7582 2637 / Passcode: 206108

2) SIGBI FPAC Virtual Meeting which will take place between 13:30 and 17:00 on the Thursday, October 28, prior to Annual Conference. This meeting is open to all members and registration is free. Please contact Selina Murphy at SIGBI Headquarters to register email selina@sigbi.org We have three excellent speakers lined up and there will be break-out rooms to discuss the topics covered. This meeting always provides an excellent opportunity to network with members from other regions and countries, whilst giving inspiration for future projects.

Finally

I would just like to wish my successor, Penny Robbins, all the very best as she takes over the role of Programme Action Chair. We live in such challenging and unprecedented times, and I am sure that Penny will lead and inspire you in our Programme Action work moving forwards.

Living Words

PAT VARTY OF Medway and Maidstone Club responded to a SISEE Facebook message, on behalf of Living Words, a Folkestone based arts organisation, who were looking for volunteers who had been impacted by contracting Covid 19. Of those involved, individuals had experience of Long Covid, hospitalisation, and coma. The volunteers, aged 22-78, had experienced job loss, isolation, disability and relationship changes. The fight continues, as all have taken necessary steps each day, supporting mental and physical health, moving forward in this changed world.

Pat lives alone, and contracted Covid 19 in March 2020, and after the initial illness, Long Covid set in with continuing fatigue, often sleeping or having to rest 16 hours out of 24 hours. By April 2020 it had also affected her mental and emotional health. During 2020/21, a number of friends had died from Covid. By July 2021, on the road to recovery, the project allowed Pat to take part in group discussions by Zoom, and also one-to-one sessions over a period of five weeks. These one-to-one sessions were recorded, but not edited, and their Living Words became part of a small book entitled 'Living Warriors: Covid 19'. An animated film is in the process of production, with our words or phrases being used as captions.

Pat said "I feel being part of this project confirmed that Covid is different for everybody, but there were common threads of experience for us all. I am well on the way to recovery – it is an experience that will live with me always."



If you want to know more about the work of Living Words, just go to: <http://livingwords.org.uk/covids-sub-plot/>

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

SHIFTING MASCULINE NORMS TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY



Åsa Regnér

Deputy Executive Director, UN Women, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations

Rt. Hon. Baroness

Sharmishta Chakrabarti, CBE

Member of the House of Lords- UK

Justin Baldoni

Co-founder, Wayfarer Studios, Director, Producer, Actor, Social Activist, USA

Gary Barker

President and CEO, Promundo-USA

Bathylle Missika

Head of Division, Networks, Partnerships and Gender, OECD

Ted Bunch

Chief Development Officer, A Call to Men, USA

REGISTER TO ATTEND

ALL WELCOME

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

5.00 PM - 6.30 PM (LONDON TIME)

**GLOBAL PEACE
AND PROSPERITY FORUM**

Shifting Masculine Norms To Achieve Equality

Thursday, September 9, 2021 from 17:00-18.30 (London Time)

Register in advance for this webinar at the link below:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ygTBs0JkRs-GycGe1s_wonw

Participants from around the globe are welcome. The webinar is free to join for all, but registration is required. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

About this Event

Looking at global rates of violence by men against women, violent crime, war and conflict, and violence against children, it would be easy to conclude that humans, and men, in particular, are naturally violent and that violence is inevitable. However, there is a growing body of research that supports the finding that violence is preventable, gender equality is achievable, and that there are social norms, patriarchal ideas and socialization about manhood and power dynamics that drive harmful practices in interaction not only with women but with other men. Both women and men live within patriarchal power structures, are harmed by these structures, and are responsible for transforming them. However, this does not mean that men and women are harmed equally by patriarchy. Women and girls generally start from a position of disempowerment, societal constraint, internalized subordination, and lack of control over key aspects of their lives and bodies. Deepening our understanding of the full spectrum of these power imbalances and their ripple effects enables us to address key factors to pursue and realize standards of social norms that enable gender equity and equality and transformation towards just and peaceful societies. The panel will:

- 1) Highlight the important role conceptions of manhood and masculinity play in driving and maintaining gender inequitable practices in the economic, political and private spheres and its impact on the well-being of men and boys and women and girls.
- 2) Explore ways in which policymakers and practitioners can embed gender transformative approaches to harmonise individual and collective transformation for the advancement of community life, structures and institutions.
- 3) Explore ways in which to mobilise and empower men to challenge and shift inequitable power relationships that results from 'toxic' masculine ideals.
- 4) Explore ways in which to engage with male role models to reinforce positive ways in dealing with emotions and experiences, reflecting on power dynamics and assessing healthy positions in family and society.

Featuring

Ms. Åsa Regnér, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women.

Justin Baldoni Co-founder of Wayfarer Studios and a director, producer, actor, social activist and author of the book "Man Enough: Undefining My Masculinity."

Gary Barker, PhD, CEO of Promundo-US, and co-founder of Instituto Promundo, Brazil.

Bathylle Missika, Head of the Networks, Partnerships and Gender Division at the OECD Development Centre.

Ted Bunch, Chief Development Officer, A Call to Men. Ted is author, educator, activist, and lecturer working to advance gender and racial justice and create a more equitable society.

Moderated by

The Rt Hon. Baroness Sharmishta Chakrabarti, CBE, a member of the House of Lords, UK.