

President Yvonne's message

Healthy People, Healthy Planet



As 2021 DRAWS to a close and I start to reflect on the many events which have taken place in our Region over the past year, I realise just how busy all our members have been despite the ongoing restrictions we have been experiencing due to COVID-19.

By December 31, 218 Programme Focus Reports had been submitted showing that a total of £16,211 had been raised since the beginning of the year.

Four clubs have celebrated milestones – Bromley 50 years, Canterbury 60 years, Tunbridge Wells 75 years and Medway and Maidstone also 75 years.

Penny Robbins, PA Chair, and Isobel Groves, Sevenoaks PAO, attended the unveiling of the Soroptimist Statue at the National Arboretum in Staffordshire in September.

In October, IPP Grace Onions and President Elect Lynne Chiswick, joined other Soroptimists from our Federation for a Soroptimist International (SI) Centenary Lunch Reception at the House of Lords, and members from our region also joined the online SI Centenary Celebrations.

We now look forward to supporting our new SI President, Maureen Maguire from Portadown in Northern Ireland, as she takes up her role in January 2022. Congratulations to Carol Infanti, APD Prosperity, on her appointment as the SIGBI Representative for the new SI President's Appeal 2021-2023 "Opening Doors to a Bright Future"

IPP Grace, completed her year as Regional President at the end of October having successfully managed to visit all clubs in the region, either virtually, online or in person, or both. It was good that we were able to meet together for our Annual General Meeting, albeit for only a few hours.

I am hoping to visit all clubs during 2022 and have written to club presidents/secretaries asking when they would like me to join them either for a meeting or an event in person wherever possible. I will also be monitoring the situation very carefully with the Executive Committee with regards to possible face-to-face Regional Meetings, but we will always ensure the health and safety of our member is paramount.

Our next Regional Meeting will be on March 19, and in line with my theme for the year 'Healthy People, Healthy Planet', our speakers will be Susan Booth, Executive Director, Development with Target Ovarian Cancer, who has over 20 years' experience leading fundraising in a range of well-known national charities, and hopefully, a representative from the World Wildlife Foundation, who will talk to us about the work they are doing to protect endangered species.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year and I look forward to meeting and working with you during the coming months.



OUR LAST BATCH OF TRAUMA TEDDIES [OR SO WE THOUGHT!]

DC JAMES HOOKWAY, the police member of the East Sussex MASH [Multi Agency Working and Information Sharing Project] safe-guarding team, collected from Sevenoaks on December 08 what should have been our last batch of 70 Trauma Teddies (pictured below). He was greeted by Sevenoaks Club members Isobel Groves and Shirley Brigham, and Club friend Maureen Clarke, who kindly joined in the Knitting Teddies Project with gusto.

James covers Hastings, Eastbourne and Brighton. Through his work he is able to distribute the Teddies to Social Workers working in Children's Services in those towns. In his words:

"We can't have too many Teddies, please make more!!"

Shirley and Maureen, together with Linda Larter another club member, have knitted 190 bears and now, at the request of the police, there will be more to come.

The bears went on their way in their bags with the following message from SI Sevenoaks members:

"These Teddies are sent with love to traumatised children who need comforting and out of the greatest respect for the work of the police and children's services in this area. They are made by members of SI Sevenoaks and their friends."

ISOBEL GROVES SI SEVENOAKS PROGRAMME ACTION OFFICER



Medway and Maidstone Supporting Women's Refuge at Christmas



Medway and Maidstone Soroptimists kindly donated luxury Christmas items for the women and children at the Women's Refuge. This included items such as chocolate biscuits, cheese biscuits, mince pies, Christmas pudding, soft drinks, Christmas crackers and toiletries, along with personalised gifts for each of the children currently being housed at the Refuge.

On the evening of December 14, Angela Howe hosted us at her home to sort through the vast number of donated items. These were all packed into eight large hampers that meant two cars were needed to transport them to the Refuge the next day.

Angela with Jane Barnes and her sister Stella (a potential new member) delivered the hampers and wrapped presents to the Refuge in plenty of time for Christmas. The support worker who greeted us at the Refuge was very appreciative of the donations and thanked our members for their generosity.

JANE BARNES, COMMUNICATIONS, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Knitting Christmas Stars for residents in Sevenoaks Care Homes

KNITTING OR MAKING Christmas Stars of Hope for every resident in two care homes in Sevenoaks is the initiative of a Church of England Vicar who is now able to visit two care homes, Emily Jackson and Rockdale. Due to the pandemic and lockdowns it had not been possible to see residents on a regular basis. The resumption of this service encourages hope. Giving the residents a Christmas star is a symbol and a reminder of it. Club member Shirley Brigham has knitted 12 stars to add to the star collection and the Soroptimist contribution has been greatly appreciated.

President Pat Downing adds that "this initiative is close to the hearts of Sevenoaks Soroptimists as we hold our monthly club meetings at Rockdale, which was started by a Sevenoaks Soroptimist Beatrice Wilson. It is pleasing to know that our club can still be part of service given to the residents."

ISOBEL GROVES, PROGRAMME ACTION OFFICER, SI SEVENOAKS



Return to the Women's Refuge during 16 Days of Activism



MEMBERS OF SI CANTERBURY, in common with all Soroptimists, have been finding ways to support women who are survivors of domestic abuse throughout the Covid 19 restrictions. Although the women's refuge in Canterbury had closed its doors to visitors, club members were busy fundraising and donating money to the local domestic abuse charity to enable frontline staff to support as many women and families as possible.

However, at the end of October the staff at the refuge were happy to welcome Soroptimists back into their building and club members were delighted to offer activities for the residents to enjoy. So on a very cold November morning Maggie Edgar and Jan Tebbett put on their gardening shoes, gathered their tools and headed into the back garden at the refuge to tidy a plot and plant spring bulbs. We hope that the daffodils and tulips will lift the spirits of the families when the flowers bloom in the spring.

Then the staff invited us to lead a session at the refuge as part of the 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Gender Based Violence. We suggested that the residents and staff join us in a craft session to make a display in orange and white which would



then form part of a montage of images on the SI Canterbury social media sites. The women contributed a whole range of orange items for the display and then we made paper flowers to add to the photographs. The images were added to the Club Facebook pages throughout the 16 Days of Activism.

The Club has donated Christmas presents to the 12 women living in the refuge, and it is looking forward to contributing to the wellbeing and support of all the women and their children in 2022.

JAN TEBBETT, PROGRAMME ACTION OFFICER, SI CANTERBURY

News of East Grinstead's busy December from Rosemary Stone

Crawley Open House and Reigate Women's Refuge



ON DECEMBER 11, President Sue Edgar transformed her garage into a Christmas Grotto, a collection point for gifts for Crawley Open House and Reigate Women's Refuge, as well as providing an opportunity for members to sell their home made crafts raising money for Club charities.

As in the past two years, the Club once again collected new underwear, socks, hats, gloves and scarves for residents of, and visitors to, Crawley Open House. Some other goodies including dog food for residents' pets were also provided. When one of our members arrived at the building with a car full of these gifts, one of the potential recipients, waiting outside the gate, jumped at the opportunity to help unload the packages, clearly eager to show his gratitude for our support.

In November the Fundraising and Relationships Manager of Open House updated us on their current situation and their expansion plans for 2022. At the time of his update, Open House was accommodating 15 men, nine women and two dogs with a further 33 people looking after themselves in six move-on houses. The drop-in day centre is open 365 days per year, although unfortunately during the height of Covid only those in critical need have been allowed in. There is no official Food Bank in Crawley and a considerable number of people are living in non-permanent accommodation or on the streets. Open House works with other local agencies to provide food, shelter, training and employment opportunities for its clients; a most worthwhile and sadly ongoing cause requiring whatever support we can give.

This Christmas, for the first time, we have collected gifts for the women and children living in Reigate Women's Refuge. The Refuge sent us 'wish lists' for the families currently in their care and members generously donated an overwhelming number of new items for the residents. Christmas gift bags for adults and children, together with children's wrapping paper, were also provided so that the mothers can select appropriate presents for their children and wrap them themselves. The Refuge staff will choose suitable gifts for each of the women and pack



them into the individual bags. As it happens one of the staff lives in East Grinstead and was able to collect the presents otherwise a neutral meeting place would have been necessary for the handover. This gave our President the opportunity to ask the lady if she would speak to the Club about the Refuge's vital work. This invitation was gladly accepted – another very satisfying and valuable project.

An excellent speaker for our final meeting of 2021



AS OUR DECEMBER speaker, we were privileged to welcome Tania Cubison, a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Miss Cubison is a plastic surgeon specialising in burns, scarring, lower limb trauma reconstruction and microsurgery and is currently posted to the Queen Victoria Hospital in East Grinstead. She is involved in teaching burn care and is the national chair of the Emergency Management of Severe

Burns Senate, part of the British Burn Association.

As consultant plastic surgeon Miss Cubison trains the next generation of plastic surgeons as well as working with the Training Interface Group in Major Trauma training a multi-disciplinary group of consultants who will lead trauma care into the future.

When the pandemic struck, Miss Cubison was a leading force in preparing The Queen Victoria Hospital to meet the major challenges it faced. Without radical intervention it could well have been necessary to close the hospital to its patients who require very specific specialist care. The fear was that once closed, the hospital may never open again. Miss Cubison illustrated her fascinating talk with slides and statistics comparing the strategy employed at the hospital to that of a war setting. It soon became quite clear that her strategic thinking and innovative approach had enabled the hospital to survive the unprecedented challenges of 2020 to 2021. A wonderful, exhilarating and uplifting evening!

Foster Carers' Christmas Party



ONCE AGAIN, THE Eastbourne and Lewes Soroptimist members collected gifts for the foster children to give to their parents for Christmas. The gifts are all displayed and the children choose the presents.

It was slightly different this year as the children sat at socially distanced tables and made labels while the Soroptimists wrapped the presents to allow slightly less contact.

Once again it was a real act of service. There were fewer families this year and most had several siblings. There were less children being fostered on their own.

Denise Staplehurst, SI Eastbourne

Christmas Fayre at new hall

This was a new venture for Eastbourne Club. We now meet in the upstairs room of a new community hall. Each year they hold a Christmas Fayre and it was thought as new users of the hall we would have a stand. Above you can see one of our members with our banners and selling Denise's famous jams and chutneys. The stall was visited by the local MP and a local councillor; both knew about our organisation and were keen to learn about our current projects.



DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



KORI DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



SI MEDWAY AND Maidstone made another collection for the Kori Project which works to educate, empower and improve the health of women and girls in Taiama, in the KORI district of Sierra Leone. We have been supporting this project for a number of years.

Last month we had a call to say that they would be arranging the last shipping container to go out early in the new year. Containers are now very expensive and difficult to get, so in future they will have to find other ways of helping.

Club members donated old gardening tools, pots and pans, kitchen tools, a suitcase, linen and lots of clothes.

It's good to know that they will be put to good use (reuse and recycle) and not landfill.

CAROL INFANTI, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Proceeds from all contributions to International President's Appeal

Offers to bring homemade soup, fresh bread and desserts are welcome



Fundraising for International President's Appeal

AS PART OF our Christmas programme, Medway and Maidstone member Carol McKeough hosted a Soup Kitchen fundraising event at her home.

Seventeen Soroptimists and friends attended the lunchtime gathering on December 11. We were able to choose from a variety of delicious homemade soups with fresh cooked bread, followed by some naughty desserts.

Everyone bought a gift for the Secret Santa which were distributed at the end.

It was an enjoyable time for us all being able to chat face to face with both old and new Soroptimist friends. Members kindly donated monies for the new International President's Appeal – 'Opening Doors to a Bright Future' and we raised £140 in total.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Eastbourne link with SI Nara, Japan



IN THE PAST, SI Eastbourne and SI Nara have supported joint projects but this year, due to Covid and problems with money leaving Japan, the club has put its donation to one of Nara's projects. Here is a message about the project we have supported from SI Nara member Keiko:

"Our club transferred ¥ 20,000 to the account of Mrs. Mitsuko Oda, the representative of Kodomo-Shokudo Ikaruga, today. She sent me an e-mail to tell your club a special thank you. Just to let you know Y20,000 is £131.85.



"They plan to deliver lunch boxes and some kinds of food to mothers and children as a Christmas event on December 15. In addition using your donation, along with the lunch boxes, they will include Christmas presents for children, their mothers and staff who help them as volunteers.



"Mrs. Mitsuko and staff feel excited because they can give presents with happiness and excited for mothers and children.

"Kodomo-Shokudo Ikaruga has helped mothers and children for about seven years. She hopes that it will be a comfortable place for them to feel relaxed.

"She asked us to tell your club great thanks."

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Kodomo shokudō means 'children's cafeteria'. Set up to help disadvantaged children, it became a national grassroots movement to address the growth of poverty in Japan. In 2016 there were 300 locations nationwide, which grew to 2200 by 2018.



Gifts for Eastbourne homeless



ONCE AGAIN, EASTBOURNE Club members collected items for the homeless. In previous years these have been in shoe boxes but this year they just wanted the items so they could be distributed as required. These included gloves, hats and scarves to keep them warm, toiletries, puzzle books and sweets.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Club Newsletter with Christmas Messages in aid of International President's Appeal



EVERY YEAR MEDWAY and Maidstone members choose not to exchange Christmas cards but include a personal message in our Christmas Newsletter and make a financial pledge to the International President's Appeal in lieu of the cost of the cards.

This year, as we celebrate our 75th anniversary, it was a time to capture in the Newsletter activities with a '75' theme that we have done during 2021 as part of club programme action, plus successfully recruiting seven new members as Centenary Soroptimists and having Zoom meetings with our Friendship Link clubs.

The financial pledges made totalled £217.50 for the International President's Appeal 2021-2023 'Opening Doors to a Bright Future'.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

2022 Diary Dates

- UKPAC Meeting January 29
 - SISEE Region Meeting March 19
 - UKPAC Meeting March 26
 - SISEE Region Meeting June 25
 - SI AGM July 11
 - UKPAC Meeting September 03
 - SISEE Region Meeting September 24
 - CSW66 (2022) Commission on the Status of Women March 14 to 25 (Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world are invited to attend the session.)
 - Belfast Conference October 27-29
- which it is hoped will be in person at the Belfast Waterfront.



Wishing you all a Happy 2022

Closing Date for the January SEE News

Tuesday, January 25, 2022
Email your text and photographs to Patricia at
pat.painting@btinternet.com



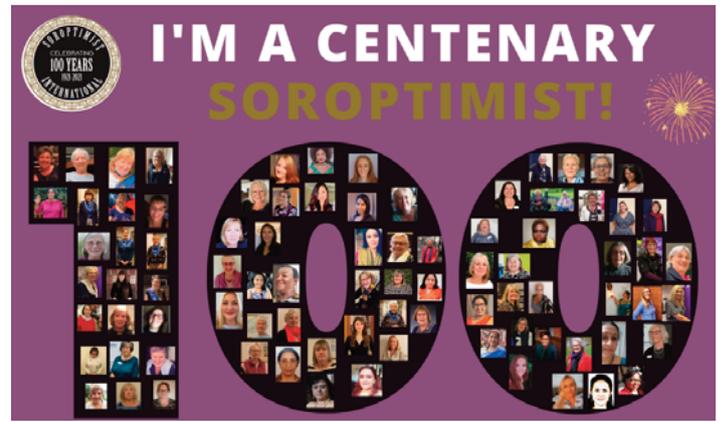
Eastbourne Club plant a tree to celebrate the SI Centenary



MEMBERS OF EASTBOURNE and District Soroptimist Club have been involved in a local tree planting project with the Council.

Members planted trees earlier in the year and recently had a second tree planting session this autumn. They also planted one large tree to celebrate 100 years of the organisation Soroptimist International.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



Meet the Centenary Soroptimists

AS SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL celebrates its Centenary in 2021, SIGBI sent out a request in the October Briefing for photographs of all those members who have joined our organisation since January 2021. They were looking to include the photographs in a 100 graphic image.

It was good to note that four clubs from across the Region responded, sending in photographs of their new members to SIGBI. They were:

SI Canterbury: three new members Keji, Lori and Mary.

SI East Grinstead: one new member, Ann.

SI Medway and Maidstone: seven new members, Annette, Sandra, Carol, Teresa, Maryjane, Margaret and Farbin.

SI Tunbridge Wells: five new members, Sarah, Jean, Annette, Kathleen, and Lorraine

The graphic includes 87 photographs from across SIGBI and our Region has 16 new members. This is great news and quite an achievement for our Region considering there are 17 Regions in the UK. If there are more of our members included that I have not listed then let us know.

The Centenary Soroptimist graphic is to be used on social media or any publicity material and can be downloaded from the SIGBI Website at <https://tinyurl.com/2t7f3ua>

JANE BARNES, JOINT REGIONAL MEMBERSHIP OFFICER



Boxes for Eastbourne refuge



ONCE AGAIN THIS year the Eastbourne club members produced nine Christmas boxes for the ladies at the local refuge.

The gifts included toiletries, shampoo, flannel, toothpaste etc, a box of chocolates, a cuddly toy with a cracker, and a selection of makeup donated by the local Avon representative.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



mary's meals
a simple solution to world hunger
59 backpacks packed and sent off so far.....



THERE WAS GOOD news from Mary's Meals to say they could now accept completed backpacks again if they could be ready before December 14.

Our member Annette Davies, who is the Kent Ambassador for Mary's Meals, agreed to co-ordinate the arrangements for the collection. Luckily prior to the collection date, there was the Christmas Soup kitchen event being held. So, a request went out to members to bring the backpacks to the Soup kitchen gathering for Annette to take away.

Fifty-nine filled backpacks were packed into 10 of the bags provided by Mary's Meals and collected as planned.

The backpack project is one of the challenges Medway and Maidstone Soroptimists set themselves to complete during the year to mark our 75th anniversary.

It is planned to complete the remainder of the backpacks to achieve our 75 target by June 2022.

In January 2022, we will be collaborating with our partner, Byron Primary School as part of their UNICEF Rights Respecting Award. They are keen to get the pupils involved in collecting items needed for the backpacks that can be reused.

For more information go to <https://tinyurl.com/2p99mjcy>

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Dealing with URLs – a message from the Editor



SOME OF YOU may know that I have had some problems with URLs not working in the PDF version of SEE News.

In the November issue, I tried to link very long URLs to key words (which work ok within a website) but unfortunately these did not work either.

I have decided to use TinyURL to reduce the length of these links and, for example and explanation here, I am using the link for Mary's Meals shown in the article above. The original link is: <https://www.marysmeals.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/the-backpack-project>

After conversion it becomes: <https://tinyurl.com/2p99mjcy>

When you click on the TinyURL link, you will be directed to the screen shown on the left, where you then use the proceed to this site link to take you to the the Mary's Meals website.

I do hope this makes sense and that it works!

PATRICIA PAINTING, EDITOR SEE NEWS

**Croydon Club
donate Christmas
hampers for**



CROYDON SOROPTIMISTS HAVE had a long association with Home-Start in Croydon, and this Christmas we have donated hampers which will be given to three families.

Home-Start Croydon is a voluntary organisation committed to promoting the welfare of families with at least one child under five years of age. They are there for parents when needed the most, because childhood can't wait.

Home-Start offers a unique service to families by recruiting and training volunteers, who are usually parents themselves, to visit families at home, offering them informal, confidential and friendly support. Family life is important for all children but especially in their early years.

GRACE ONIONS, SI CROYDON AND DISTRICT

IN THE NEWS

FOLLOWING RISING INTOLERANCE against Christians, and accusations of "hurting religious sentiments of Hindus", the Indian Government has blocked the Missionaries of Charity from receiving funds from abroad. The charity was started by Mother Teresa in 1950 and runs a network of shelters across India led by nuns to help the poor. The charity rejects these accusations as unfounded.

SOURCE: THE GUARDIAN

IT HAS BEEN announced that Tesco will launch the first fully electric HGVs to be used commercially in Britain. They will serve Tesco's distribution centre in Wales.

HGVs contribute c.16% of all emissions from UK transport, but battery weight and distance requirements have made electrification of HGVs a more difficult proposition than for cars.

SOURCE: THE GUARDIAN



MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE Soroptimists continue to support the Friends of Rochester Churchfields Esplanade (FoRCE) group at their monthly Task and Litter Days to develop the sensory garden.

Angela Howe, Jane Barnes and her sister Stella Barnes joined the other community volunteers on December 11. We focused our efforts on the second of the raised beds clearing away the weeds and old plants not suited to the sensory garden. The photo below shows Angela and Stella clearing away the weeds and unwieldy root systems.

There was a real Christmas spirit in and around the City of Rochester. All the volunteers attending were invited to wear something to reflect Christmas in addition to having mince pies to enjoy. The group photo shows us, all the volunteers and organisers, with many of us in our Christmas gear.

The next Task Day will be in 2022 on 22 January.
<https://esplanadefriends.org.uk/>

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE





Bromley New Year Quiz 2022

English Landscape

1. Leave your car here (4)
2. Accept it from a man or a woman (5)
3. Dodie Smith captured it (6)
4. Art thou the bird whom man loves best? (5)
5. Daffodils were beside it (4)
6. Covers a serious distance (9)
7. One roasting on an open fire (8)
8. Protection against financial fluctuations (5)
9. Sounds precious (4)
10. Lived on Capri (6)
11. The babes were found here (4)
12. Brings cold comfort (4)
13. Perhaps the damned lived here (7)
14. Cunning acting family (3)
15. Got entangled with the Tar Baby (6)
16. Pass me the nearest ream of paper (6)
17. Doctor in the house (7)
18. Mine was green (6)
19. Pick the mallow from it (5)
20. They say they are going to the regatta (4)
21. You can always find it here (5)
22. They may safely graze (5)
23. Inside, Pip was crazy for Estella (6)
24. Ilkley or Rannoch perhaps (4)
25. Structure to bring sighs (6)
26. William or Harry (4)
27. Hope does it eternally (6)
28. One for Essex by Grayson (5)
29. Patrick who painted (5)
30. M25 or M2 (8)
31. They all lead to Rome (5)
32. Charlotte sings (6)
33. Film on golden one (4)
34. One like Alice (4)
35. Flow lonely to the sea (6)
36. Sir Humphrey without the ego. (8)
37. Blithe spirit (7)
38. Dosh without capital (3)
39. Thumb each page to find it (5)
40. Is it babbling? (5)
41. Testudo's fabled partner (4)
42. Sounds like my senior (5)
43. To maintain a grudge (7)
44. He's got a soaking (3)
45. A perfume in the sand (4)
46. Intermediate eye colour (5)
47. Michelmore was one (5)
48. Danced on lake (4)
49. Had existential quandary (W. S.) (6)
50. Type of heather (5)

Classic Motor Cycles

1. Aircraftsman Shaw's demise (6,8)
2. Mcmafia star (6)
3. Jesus wants me for one (7)
4. Evels' bike of choice (6,8)
5. Hearing the evening prayer (5)
6. King's London Borough (5,7)
7. Painted as a teenager (7)
8. Keyboard or guitar (6)
9. Achieve a victory (7)
10. Makes a change from guns (3)

Entry £2 per person

All proceeds are for club charities.

The winning entry
will receive a cash prize of £20

All entries must be received
by **28 February 2022**

Entries to Christine Thomas,
8 Madeira Avenue, Bromley, Kent, BR1 4AS
Or to christine@thomasm69.plus.com

Transfer to Soroptimist Club of Beckenham
a/c no 61714666 Sort code 60 03 36
Ref Quiz

**Everyone at SI Bromley
thanks you for your support.**