

President Yvonne's message Healthy People, Healthy Planet



AS WE APPROACH June, it is hard to believe that I am almost two-thirds of the way through my year as your President! I have enjoyed visiting clubs and the quality time spent with members. I look forward to meeting those at clubs not yet visited.

In May, I joined Thanet Club when their guest speaker was Heather Weitzel, representative from Thanet Foodlink. Thanet Foodlink currently has two distribution centres, one at St Peter's Church in Broadstairs, and the other at St Paul's Church in Cliftonville, which Heather represents. She explained that the number of families they support has grown considerably in the last few months and it is anticipated that this will increase even further with the expected fuel price increases this winter.

On July 15, Graham and I joined SI Bromley for their 70th Anniversary Platinum Jubilee lunch [see page 05]. It was a lovely occasion with a super meal and, once again, I was able to spend time getting to know club members. As Region Officers President Elect Lynne Chiswick (left), and Vice President Alison Driscoll (a member of SI Bromley) were also present, we took the opportunity for a photo!



Not wishing my year to be over too quickly, but looking ahead to our AGM on September 24, the following Regional Officer roles will need to be filled and so I would be grateful if clubs could consider possible candidates: Vice President, Communications Officer and Representative of the SIGBI Benevolent Fund. This latter role became vacant following Jeanetter Lee's resignation from Soroptimists. I have been in contact with Jenny Vince, Chairman of the SIGBI Benevolent Fund, and offered to cover the role until September to ensure continuity for those members we support in our Region, and Jenny has agreed to this.

Finally, a reminder about the Regional Meeting on June 25, when I look forward to meeting you all in person again. Carol Reed secured our booking at the Holiday Inn at Wrotham at the rate originally agreed. We have added 50p as a contribution towards the Region, making a total cost of £29. I hope as many of you as possible will be able to join us for an opportunity to hear at first hand an update on the situation in Ukraine and to meet up with Soroptimist friends old and new.

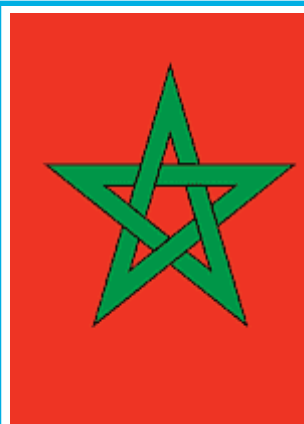
What's in this month's newsletter?



Farewell to Winn, page 02.



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Supporting women and girls in Morocco, page 03.



Trauma Bears spread their wings, page 04.



A right royal celebration in Bromley, page 05.



Planting roses with Dame Judi Dench, Page 07.

Eastbourne Club supporting Care for the Carers



MEMBERS OF EASTBOURNE Club helped to serve teas at the Bluebell Walk near Arlington. The walk is open in April and May and various charities raise money by selling tea and cakes.

A few years ago we supported Care for the Carers as the President's charity and so we offered to support the charity again and serve teas on Monday, May 16.

Unfortunately the weather was not quite so sunny but actually this proved to be a good thing as there was a steady flow of people, and not a massive rush, as members served teas and enticed people to have a delicious piece of home made cake.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Croydon Club celebrate 95 years of service



FIVE SI CROYDON Club members and two "SoroptiMisters" enjoyed a celebratory lunch at the Miller and Carter Steakhouse in Pickhurst Lane, Bromley on Monday, May 23.

We heard about Pat Dale's recent visit to India, reminisced about past Club members and events, talked about various donations for refugees, discussed ways of attracting new members, fundraising in the future, *and* planning celebrations for our 100th Birthday in five years' time!

HEATHER BAILEY, SI CROYDON

Farewell to Winn 25 January 1923 – 16 May 2022



SI BROMLEY is sad to report the loss of Winn Mitchell at the age of 99. Winn was a Soroptimist for many years and transferred from Bexley to Beckenham.

Winn was a WREN during World War II, serving in Campbelltown, provisioning ships. After having her family she entered the school meals service, becoming a supervisor. Winn's culinary skills were superb, her jams and marmalades being a major attraction at the stall we ran at a bank holiday fete, and they were a big money-spinner. And her baking! Some favoured her lemon meringue pie, whilst others chose bakewell tart as number one.

Winn liked to be active and she was leading walks for the Ramblers until about ten year ago, and always made an effort to attend our fund-raising events. Winn was a keen gardener and loved jigsaws and table games, frequently winning games of Mahjong.

A well-loved member of the club, always cheerful and good company, Winn's passing will be a great loss.

The photo above shows Winn in her garden.

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY

Closing Date

for the next edition of SEE News
is Wednesday, June 23, 2022

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

PLEASE NOTE

If you have events coming up after the closing date, which you would like to appear in SEE News, please advise Patricia who is happy to accept late articles with prior notice.

Bromley Club supporting women and girls in Morocco

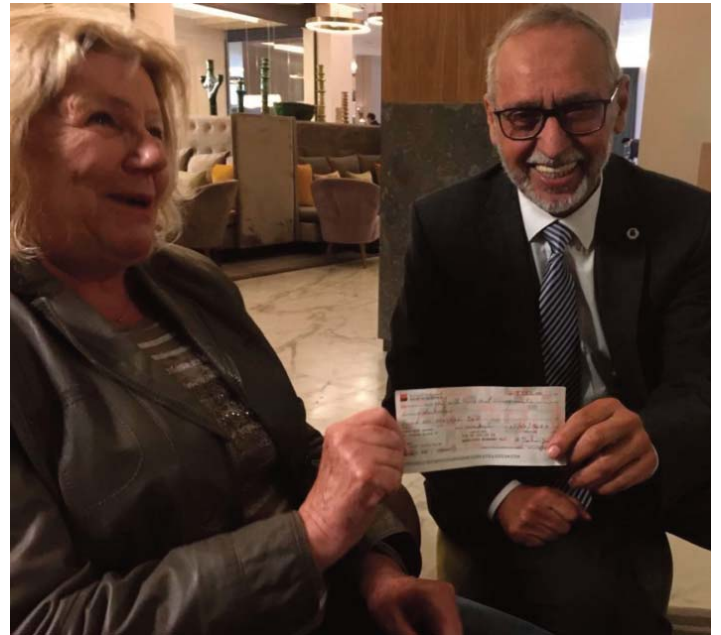


BROMLEY CLUB CONTINUES their support for the Henna Cafe which operates in the markets area in Marrakech.

The Cafe provides meals for people who are unable to work because of the pandemic, and also provides English lessons for those who may look for employment in hospitality.

This year, we sent them £100 and the picture above shows Jane Bahaijoubat at the Cafe and (below) handing over the cheque to young women who work there.

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY



BROMLEY CLUB IS continuing its commitment to help girls in Morocco with the cost of transport to get to school.

There are so many girls who are unable to attend secondary school as it is too distant, or where it would be dangerous to walk home in the dark. (The bus driver can be seen in the photo below.)

This year we sent £750 and Jane Bahaijoub delivered the cheque to Nr Nate, the transport organiser (photo above).

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY



The Trauma Bears are spreading their wings...



NELLIE ADJAYE FROM SI Medway and Maidstone made a special request for a trauma bear to be knitted in Ghana's national colours. This was to be presented by Nellie to our Friendship Link club, SI Accra for their 37th anniversary. Jane Barnes decided to knit three trauma bears in the national colours for Nellie to take to Ghana when she visited in April.

One of the projects SI Accra are currently involved with is supporting the Paediatric Oncology Unit at Accra Hospital. The Accra Soroptimists liked the idea of the trauma bears; however, they are not knitters and so are looking into the possibility of making some trauma bears/dolls out of material and to use them in a similar way to benefit traumatised children.

The knitted trauma bears will be donated for the children undergoing treatment at the hospital.

The photo shows Nellie, at her home in Accra, presenting the three trauma bears to SI Accra President Karen Korsah, who was accompanied by IPP Kakra Taylor Hayford.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

For more Trauma Bear stories, go to page 06

Supporting the Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance



MEMBERS OF EASTBOURNE Club support the Eastbourne Dementia Action Alliance, a local charity which signposts people towards dementia inclusive services and initiatives, and also raises awareness about how dementia affects a person. Their aim is to improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and/or their families, friends and carers.

Club President Pat Hearn is shown in the photo helping give information on EDAA's stand in The Beacon shopping mall.

LYNNE CHISWICK, SI EASTBOURNE



IN APRIL, Jo HARFLEET from Kent Fire and Rescue, sent a request to Sally at SIGBI Office for trauma bears. She said "You may have seen on the media that the UK Fire and Rescue Service has been sending decommissioned fire engines and equipment out to Ukraine via Poland. A second convoy left on April 21 from Ashford fire station in Kent. A third convoy is due to leave at the beginning of May. We would love to be able to include some trauma bears and wondered if this is something your members might be able to help with?" Carol Reed circulated this request to all the clubs across the Region.

Isobel Groves from SI Sevenoaks has been taking the lead on the Trauma Bear Centenary Challenge for the Region. They have donated all their bears to the police who are stationed at Dover and involved in greeting the Ukrainian refugees. They are handing the bears to children when appropriate at this point in their journey.

Both Medway and Maidstone and Folkestone Clubs therefore took up this latest challenge to provide knitted bears to go to Ukraine. A concerted effort was needed with the knitting needles to make a reasonable number of bears within the week. Friends of SI Folkestone grabbed their knitting needles to support this endeavour and made 11 Trauma bears and two lambs (see photo above) which were safely delivered to Kent Fire and Rescue.

On April 29 Jane Barnes met with Jo Harfleet in Maidstone (below) and handed over 33 trauma bears as Medway and Maidstone's contribution. These went out with the third convoy that left Ashford on May 05. It is hoped that at our Region meeting on June 25, we will get to hear more about the work of Fire and Rescue Services across the UK to support Ukraine.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



SI Bromley celebrate 70 years of service



SI BROMLEY CELEBRATED its Platinum Jubilee with a lunch at a local venue. There were visitors from across the Region, from our friendship club Walcheren in the Netherlands, and from the school club at Newstead Woods. Pat Dale, from our mother club, Croydon, very kindly brought along a 70th birthday cake in Soroptimist colours.

Yvonne Freeman, Regional President proposed the toast to SI and Alison Driscoll was presented with her chain of office as Region Vice-President by Region President Elect Lynne Chadwick.

There was a raffle, with some very attractive prizes, and a display of photos of our activities

over the decades, from ladies wearing hats, long dresses and little gloves, to jeans and T-shirts.

We heard some very amusing poems read by a local poet Christine Pope from her book "Smelling the Sea from Bromley."

Apologies to those who were disappointed in the way the food was served as there were some glitches in the catering department. But nothing prevented the afternoon being a huge success as a celebration of friendship and working together over the years.

It was a great achievement by our social group to bring it all together after two years.

CHRISTINE THOMAS, SI BROMLEY



Eastbourne Club donate Trauma Bears to local refuge



MEMBERS OF SI Eastbourne and District have been adding to Region's knitted Trauma Bears total. Ours were sent recently to children at our local Refuge along with Easter Eggs.

LYNNE CHISWICK SI EASTBOURNE

Medway and Maidstone donate 23 Trauma Bears to Charity



ONE IN FOUR (www.oneinfour.org.uk) is a charity providing specialist support across Kent for survivors of sexual abuse, domestic abuse, or violence – in childhood or as adults. In October 2021, Nellie Adjaye and Annette Davies attended One in Four's First

Year Anniversary Open Day Event. They were both impressed with what they heard and saw at the Open Day and suggested we invite Angela as a future speaker.

SI Medway and Maidstone welcomed Angela Christie from One in Four (Maidstone) to talk to us about their work. They offer a range of services such as specialist counselling including long-term recovery through two-year counselling programmes and post-counselling groups and workshops, advocacy support, emotional health and wellbeing programmes in schools, and a wide range of resources to professionals, survivors, and children.

They also deliver professional training for counsellors, teachers and support staff, social workers, and other mental health professionals, to advance the knowledge, education, and training of those working with survivors.

It is a fact that one in four people will have been affected by abuse at some time in their life. They have counsellors who volunteer for the charity. They are currently working with 30 survivors of abuse aged between four years and 72 years.

Jane Barnes thanked Angela for her interesting talk and presented her with 23 trauma bears to use with the children they support. Angela has recently moved into the area and expressed an interest in finding out more about Soroptimists and could become a future member.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

The French come to Eastbourne



ON MONDAY MAY 02, four of the Eastbourne Soroptimists met up at the Hydro Hotel on the sea-front for coffee with Delphine, a member of our Link Club in Versailles.

I'd been practising some of my basic greetings, such as 'Je m'appelle Diana', but they weren't necessary as Delphine spoke almost flawless English, being married to an Englishman whose own family lives in Eastbourne.

It was a delightful meeting, with lots to share, and we were able to compare our Club's activities and concerns.

Delphine visits the UK fairly frequently so we are hoping to meet up with her de nouveau.

DIANE GUTHRIE, SI EASTBOURNE

2022 Diary Dates

SSISEE Region Meeting June 25

SI AGM July 11

UKPAC Meeting September 03

SISEE Region AGM September 24

Belfast Conference October 27-29

which it is hoped will be in person at the Belfast Waterfront.

Eastbourne Club welcomes their new President



IT WAS THE first time in two years that we were able to have a face to face AGM. This year we decided to go to the Hydro Hotel in Eastbourne for a meal and make it a special occasion. The club has also changed its meeting venue and in future we will meet in the Meads Room at the Hydro on the second and fourth Monday of the month.

Pictured here are Past President Claire with Incoming Presidents Pat and Lucy. Below, Lucy is handing over the President Elect chain to Lotte who will become president for 2023-24 club year.

It is very exciting that in February 2024 the club will celebrate 70 years of service. Celebrations will be held over the weekend of Friday May 31, to Sunday June 02, with a celebratory lunch at the Hydro on Saturday June 01. Details will follow in the future.

Eastbourne Club is very active with their link clubs and we have Soroptimist friends in France, Germany, Denmark, Austria, Australia, Canada, Japan and Turkey, so we hope some of them will join us for our celebrations.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



A Day to Remember



THE SUN SHONE and the holes had been dug (thanks to Mr Brian Griffiths) in readiness for the planting of six rose bushes to celebrate East Grinstead Club's 60th anniversary.

"A rose by any other name would smell as sweet" says Juliet in Shakespeare's play, Romeo and Juliet. We were extremely fortunate to have Dame Judi Dench to plant the eponymous roses in the Nature Reserve at Lingfield on May 09. Therefore, on this occasion, a name proved to be of great significance and did matter!

Dame Judi was charming and planted the roses with gusto and good humour. She was accompanied by Mr David Mills MBE, the owner of the British Wildlife Centre. Mr Mills also planted some of the roses.

We had received permission, from Soroptimist Mrs Ann Richards to plant the bushes in the Butterfly Garden, a space which was most suitable and where bees, butterflies and visitors can appreciate their scent and beauty.

As a Club we are hoping to help in maintaining and nurturing this particular area of the Nature Reserve.

The idea of planting roses was conceived and orchestrated by Vice President Elect Jane Griffiths. President Sue Darney and the Soroptimists, who attended the event, very much appreciated the hard work that had been put in to organise the day. Jane had even provided a delicious picnic which we enjoyed under the dappled shade of a Cherry Laurel tree.

All in all it was a very joyous and ecologically friendly occasion and one that will be remembered for years to come in the annals of SI East Grinstead.

SUE DARNEY, PRESIDENT SI EAST GRINSTEAD



May is Membership Month



SEE Region Membership Officers
Jane Barnes and Lorna Blackmore

I'M A SOROPTIMIST



"Having moved to a new area, I have enjoyed the fun and friendship with lots of activities to improve lives of women and girls."

Stella Barnes



SI Medway and Maidstone, England

I'M A SOROPTIMIST



Because I have a passion for community leadership and leaving a legacy that will have a positive impact on society.

Keji Moses

SI Canterbury, England



DURING MAY SIGBI has had a social media campaign called 'I'm a Soroptimist.' Every day, posters with photos of members with quotes about what being a Soroptimist means to each of them have appeared on Facebook.

Each Region was asked to submit a photo of a member with a quote and Keji Moses from Canterbury was put forward for us. President Yvonne asked for a back-up due to potential lack of response from other Regions and so Stella Barnes from SI Medway and Maidstone was also submitted. You will see that both have appeared on Facebook along with other Soroptimists with quotes from across the Federation. It is interesting to see the wide range of comments made by all those involved.

We held our second virtual Regional meeting for Membership Officers on May 07 with six of the 11 clubs represented.

We were joined by Devangi Vyas for the first part of the meeting. Devangi shared with us her experiences of a Soroptimist School Club, what is involved, support provided by Pat Dale and next steps for her and the School Club as she prepares for her 'A' Levels and starting medical school.

There are five school clubs in the Federation and information about them can be entered on the SIGBI website by their host club.

It is useful to network and share ideas and issues about recruitment and retention of members. The next virtual Regional Membership meeting has been arranged for Saturday August 20 at 14:00.

It is hoped membership officers from all 11 clubs across the Region will be able to join Lorna and Jane.

Membership talk at Big Local Broad Green Hub



ON MAY 17, SI Croydon gave a membership and awareness talk about Soroptimist International at the Big Local Broad Green Hub located in Keeley Road, Central Croydon.

SI Croydon Secretary Pat Dale MBE presented the talk and was accompanied by Membership Officer Coral Konibire and Programme Action Officer Helen Mangan. It was a very well supported event with approximately 20 attendees, and some members of the audience were very much engaged.

SI Croydon is pleased to report that members of the audience have messaged us for more details of our next meeting with a view to attending and possibly joining.

The Club also has a LinkedIn page to raise awareness of the work of Soroptimists in general and Croydon in particular. It is also hoped that this may attract new members for the club. The link is: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/si-croydon-and-district/>

HELEN MANGAN, PAO, SI CROYDON

Cleaning Eastbourne's Beach 68



A GROUP OF enthusiastic beach cleaners from SI Eastbourne assembled on Sunday May 15 to clean our adopted beach, Beach 68 in Eastbourne.

The event was organised by Plastic Free Eastbourne as part of the Spring Water Festival and we were scanning the skies for the advertised drone camera but we did not spot it.

The rain obligingly held off while we cleaned, and although the day was cloudy, it was very pleasant on the beach.

Our observation is that the beach itself is relatively clean and our haul was not huge but we did find a nasty piece of rusting metal fence, along with pieces of fishing tackle, rope and the inevitable plastic bottle tops and sweet wrappers.

We are very happy to continue our work on our beach as part of the Plastic Free Eastbourne initiative.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Fashion Show raises £404



SI MEDWAY AND Maidstone held a Fashion Show on May 19 with Travelling Trends. Travelling Trends Fundraising Fashion Shows have a vast clothing collection available from the manufacturers for the most popular high street stores, individual boutiques, and designers. The clothing and accessories are all at excellent discounted prices.

Planning and preparation for a Fashion Show had started back in 2020, but unfortunately had to be put on hold due to the pandemic. We were really pleased that eventually we could safely go ahead. More than 50 people attended the Franklin Rooms in Gillingham to support us for an enjoyable and fun evening.

We had to provide 'real' models and Wanda Wright, Stella Barnes and Jess Cade-Parnell offered their services and did a brilliant job. They brought the clothing to life, and it certainly added a fun element to the evening.

All the clothes that are modelled, plus lots of other items in assorted sizes, are available to try on and buy on the evening.

Following the Fashion Show there is an hour for some retail therapy and the opportunity to pick up some real bargains.

With the ticket sales, raffle and % commission from the sales, £404 was raised for our Soroptimist charities.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Litter pickers beware!

A couple collecting rubbish from the River Nidd in Knaresborough, came across what appeared to be an old gas canister. They loaded their haul into their car for sorting and closer inspection at home.

Following a bumpy ride home, they started to clean the 'canister' only to find it was an explosive device.

A call to the bomb squad led to the couple, and 30 other households being evacuated from their homes, and closure of the A59 for two hours.

The device was detonated safely by an army explosive ordnance disposal (EOL) team.

SOURCE: THE GUARDIAN

QUIZ NIGHT

ON MAY 25, Denise Staplehurst ran a quiz for the Eastbourne Club at a local venue that provide their upstairs room free of charge for charity events.

We raised £173 for Ukraine and Riding for the disabled, President Pat's charities this year. The evening involved two table quizzes about sweet wrappers linked to the alphabet and names of local places, and eight rounds of questions on a variety of topics. including food, colours, books geography and history. We also had a raffle and I sold my home made marmalade.

The winning team scored 73 out of a total of 90, pretty good, and all received a bottle of wine. The table quiz winners were given a box of matchmaker sweets.

It was a lovely evening that was enjoyed by all.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

THIS MONTH'S EDITION of the PR & Marketing Facebook Live on May 28 looked at Twitter and LinkedIn, asking how Soroptimist clubs can use these platforms to grow their reach and membership. Facilitated by Rachel Weinhold, her guest was Tracy Heatley who is a CEO of two businesses and a Chartered Marketer.

Both Twitter and LinkedIn were set up as business platforms. There are 830 million on LinkedIn and 300 million on Twitter. It is important to find the platform that you like and suits you best. LinkedIn is good as an educational platform.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

5 Top Tips on using Twitter and LinkedIn for clubs

1. Understand what you are trying to achieve to determine which platform is right for you and your business

What is your strategy? Decide if it is about making Connections or creating an awareness of Soroptimists to grow your audience and identify potential members.

2. Have a good message

Less about what you are doing

But more about engaging people in conversation about the why and so what. Why did you do it?

Algorithms on LinkedIn prefer not to have photographs included in your entry. There are tools on LinkedIn to make connections. If you identify those you want to interact with then comment on their post initially to start building a relationship.

Do not put links to your website on the post initially, only after comments have been made.

All platforms are in competition with one another – ensure you post unique and tailored messages to each.

3. Use multi-media in your posts

Such as video, graphs, graphics, infographics and photos.

It is about mixing up and varying what you post

As a Soroptimist group you could list the top 5 questions asked about your organisation and use this to create a graphic with a carousel slide.

4. Engage people

Ask questions in your posts to encourage a conversation and ensure you reply to people.

Comments are valued more than likes, especially in the first hour.

Consider the time of day to post – some find a Sunday evening is a good time.

5. Review and Improve as you go

Have a look at how you are doing by using the analytics. Be open to change your strategy if necessary to make improvements.

If you can try and rotate responsibility for posting around 2 or 3 club members then it will keep it fresh and varied.

Avoid using standard formats as will think they have seen it before and overlook content.

May Day Bluebell Walk at Bredhurst Woods



On May 01, six Medway and Maidstone members set off on a 5km walk through Bredhurst Woods to see the bluebells in full bloom.

Jenny Jones organised the walk and three of our newer members joined in and we were lucky we had a lovely sunny morning.

However, this walk would not have been possible at one time as in 2005 there was serious abuse and neglect of Bredhurst Woods. The site was covered with commercial fly-tipping, burnt out cars, and public footpaths were impassable due to the illegal use of off-road vehicles. Wildlife in the area was in decline.

Thankfully, as we could see for ourselves, all this has now changed due to the Bredhurst Woodland Action Group (BWAG) set up by six residents. BWAG has grown into a successful and nationally recognised community group with 400 members.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE