

President Yvonne's message

Healthy People, Healthy Planet



AS I APPROACH the end of my year as your Regional President, I have been reflecting on the visits I have made to our Region clubs and the warm welcome I have received on every occasion. The visits have enabled me to meet new members and catch up with members I already knew. I have enjoyed the opportunity to get to know you all better.

On August 23, I visited Eastbourne [see page 02] and, again, was able to meet with friends I had made when I visited a few years ago as Programme Action Officer. This is one of the joys of being a Soroptimist – making new and lasting friendships.

I have also been reflecting on my theme for the year 'Healthy People – Healthy Planet' to determine whether I have been able to address the issues we face in each case.

My year began with a talk by Dr Libby Webb from AGE UK on COVID19 urging us all to have our vaccinations. She also spoke about rising energy prices and the importance of keeping warm during the colder months when we lose muscle mass and get colder, which is now more relevant than ever.

Next we heard from the Chairman of the Canterbury Climate Action Partnership, Dr Carl Wright. Judging by the number of projects and programme focus forms covering work on Climate Action, submitted since last December, I believe that Carl did indeed inspire our members to continue to address the issues surrounding Climate Change, which will impact not just our generation but also generations to come.

Susan Booth, Executive Director, Development for Target Ovarian Cancer, spoke to us about the symptoms of this cancer and the developments in terms of research with additional funding available to help women affected.

When the conflict in Ukraine began in February, members in our Region were quick to respond by knitting trauma bears for the children who are victims of the crisis, raising funds to send aid to Ukraine, and opening their homes to refugees coming to the UK. Following the talk by Mike Pitney from Kent Fire and Rescue Service at our June Regional Meeting and his request for crutches and wheelchairs to help the injured in Ukraine, we have collected 24 pairs of crutches and one wheelchair with hopefully more to come.

I am confident that, with your help, we have addressed my theme for the year with regards to helping people to stay healthy and addressing Climate Change, whilst at the same time responding to the needs of those suffering from the impact of the crisis in Ukraine. We now face another crisis following the severe flooding in Pakistan, a country in our own Federation, and I am sure that our members will once again respond in a positive way.

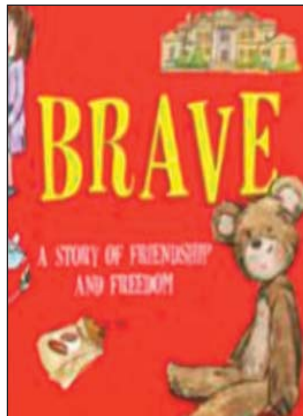
I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Annual General Meeting on September 24, when our guest speaker will be Cathy Cottridge, SIGBI Federation President.

PRESIDENT YVONNE FREEMAN

What's in this month's newsletter?



2018 saw the start of Sevenoaks Club's gardening service to the community. Now the town is in the final of the RHS Britain in Bloom competition, page 02.



A Brave the Woolly Bear,
page 03.



Tunbridge Wells and
Sevenoaks attend
showcase event, page 04.



Launch of a Memory,
page 05.



#CleanUpMaidstone
Project, page 06.

Eastbourne Club welcome President Yvonne to their meeting



ON MONDAY, AUGUST 23, Region President Yvonne Freeman visited Eastbourne Club at the Hydro Hotel, the club's new meeting venue.

President Yvonne gave a summary of the work at Region and also talked about the Climate Action Group in Canterbury.

Eastbourne members had some interesting questions as they had recently completed the Big Plastic Count [report in June SEE News].

Other discussion covered marine pollution, and new buildings and their impact on the environment.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE

Sevenoaks Town in the final of RHS Britain in Bloom Competition 2022!



THE STORY UNFOLDS! Four years ago seven SI Sevenoaks members offered their gardening services to the town restoring the sensory garden on the Vine creating an area of peace and tranquillity. During the pandemic the feedback from visiting public was one of thank you for helping us get through these difficult times.

The next venture was creating a new herb garden through planting sustainable and edible herbs helping the town win three consecutive gold medals in the SSE England in Bloom Competition. Automatic entry followed into RHS Britain in Bloom competition.

Sevenoaks was chosen to be one of seven towns in the UK to be a finalist in this prestigious competition. Our club has representation on the Town Council 'In Bloom group' which plans and delivers our town's displays.

Volunteers were badly needed at the train station. Two of our members offered to restore a neglected flower bed together with the Open Spaces Manager and the Darent Valley Community Rail Partnership. This has led to amazing results as South-eastern Railways responded by having the station completely repainted, also ensuring that there were flower planters along the platforms.

Station staff were assiduous in watering everything in difficult circumstances, working closely with our members. Another SI member even ran in and out of shops with an official letter from the town council asking them to join in! Too many UN sustainability development goals were ticked in this project to list in this article but one to take away is Partnership.

Finally, I want to say a huge thank you to all our gardening volunteers who spent hours on their hands and knees in weeding maintenance. Not a weed in sight on the judging day! An aside, the sum total of our ages is 536 years but, fellow ooptimists, age is just a number after all!

Date for our diary is RHS Awards Ceremony in London on Monday, October 10.

ISOBEL GROVES, PROGRAMME ACTION OFFICER SI SEVENOAKS



The Station

East Grinstead enjoy al fresco cocktails and nibbles



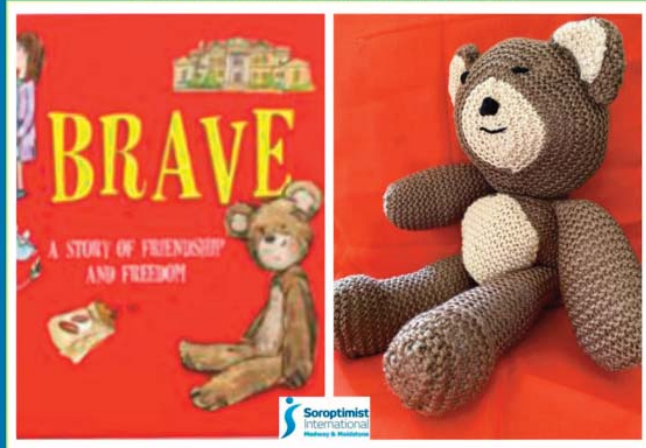
ONCE AGAIN THIS year, on a humid August evening, we were able to enjoy cocktails (some alcoholic, some non-alcoholic) and tasty nibbles in Past President Sue Edgar's garden. There was standing room only by the time over 30 members and guests had joined the celebration. This was a great opportunity to meet together informally with plenty of time to mix and chat as well as introducing and encouraging some potential members. Each visitor was given a raffle ticket on arrival and three 'special' prizes

were handed out at the end of the evening. The event raised funds for local charities supported by the Club including Crawley Open House, Being Neighbourly, and a Women's Refuge.

As the revellers departed and feet were put up by a great team of helpers, the garden became a quiet space again until the dramatic thunderstorms that came later that evening. Strangely the garden decorations remained mainly intact to be put away ready for next year!

ROSEMARY STONE/SUE EDGAR

Knitted Brave the Bear



SI Medway and Maidstone

IN THE JULY edition of SEE News you read about Brave the Bear and the knitting pattern that can be bought at a cost of £3.80 from www.ecdesigns.co.uk, with proceeds going to the Brave Bear Trust/Invisible Traffic. During the summer, Medway and Maidstone member, Jane Barnes, has been busy knitting the sitting version of Brave. Above is the culmination of her first effort of knitting Brave the Bear. The next step will be to try knitting the standing version.

These Brave bears will then be donated to accompany the Brave the Bear books already donated to Byron School by the club. The story of Brave the Bear is to raise awareness and keep children safe from exploitation.

July 30 was World Day Against Trafficking in Persons. This year's theme focused on the role of technology as a tool that can both enable and impede human trafficking.

With the global expansion in the use of technology – intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift of our everyday life to online platforms – the crime of human trafficking has conquered cyber space. The internet and digital platforms offer traffickers numerous tools to recruit, exploit, and control victims; organize their transport and accommodation; advertise victims and reach out to potential clients; communicate among perpetrators.

However, in the use of technology also lies great opportunity. Future success in eradicating human trafficking will depend on how the police, criminal justice systems and others can leverage technology in their responses.

Prevention and awareness-raising activities on the safe use of the internet and social media could help mitigate the risk of people falling victim to trafficking online.

#EndHumanTrafficking #humantrafficking

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Closing Date

for the next edition of SEE News
Sunday, September 25, 2022...

...allowing time for post AGM articles

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.

WHAT MADE ME DECIDE TO JOIN SOROPTIMISTS?

SUN 21ST AUG @ 11AM GMT



IG LIVE @SICANTERBURY

SIGBI.ORG/CANTERBURY

SICANTERBURY

SICANTERBURY

CANTERBURYSOROPTIMIST



"If you discount the voices of women, you only have half the opportunity to hear the funny/intelligent/creative/life enriching ideas you would otherwise have access to." – Deb Pugh

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL is a global team of women from all over the world, from different walks of life. We are real women who eventually decided to join this movement. At times, we seldom hear about the life experiences and stories of our volunteers. So today, I asked Jo to join me in this conversation. Jo is one of the new members of SI Canterbury and the upcoming membership officer.

Why join Soroptimist International? There are several good reasons, listed below:

- You can have positive female role models – to motivate, inspire, guide, and think positively about who we are in society.
- There are other women out there cheering for you.
- You can celebrate being a woman and quit apologising.
- You become your authentic self, and that includes all good and not so good elements – we are human after all.
- Finally, you also feel part of a community – it can be hard to get through tough times or situations, it's always good to talk to someone about it. When it comes to women, it is often logical to have this conversation with another woman. You learn to listen to one another. Everybody's got a voice and we can practice listening to each other.

To sum it up "We are the best of women coming together and giving voice to women and girls." To watch the full interview, follow SI Canterbury instagram page (SI Canterbury) and click on the video:

<https://www.instagram.com/tv/ChhHS2OsV9B/?igshid=Ym-MyMTA2M2Y=>

KEJI MOSES, SI CANTERBURY

2022 Diary Dates

UKPAC Meeting September 03

SISSEE Region AGM September 24

Belfast Conference October 27-29

Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks Clubs attend showcase event



ON A BRILLIANT sunny afternoon in early August, Soroptimists from Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks Clubs attended the Arts Without Boundaries (AwB) annual showcase event at Hammerwood House, East Grinstead. For the last two years Tunbridge Wells Club has supported this charity which runs inclusive mainstream community music and arts activities for disabled and non-disabled people, and those facing mental health challenges.

The concert took place on the south facing performance area at the back of the house. The sounds of the music mingled with the laughter, singing and clapping of the guests to echo off the trees that offer majestic views from this side of the house. The fun was interspersed by a short break to enjoy strawberries and cream and, for interested guests, a tour of the house.

Angela McPherson had taken part in the poetry workshops, along with Pauline Payne from SI Sevenoaks, the results of which were used to perform a recitation for the guests. The workshop theme had been 'Life below the Oceans.' One poem, titled 'Slubblebubble', consisted of words made up in an attempt to mimic sounds in the depth of the ocean. The poem was performed in a round. That not only made it fun to recite but also conveyed how the workshop participants imagined the sea might sound to the creatures who inhabit it.

It was also delightful to meet up with Penelope Robbins from SI Sevenoaks who had taken part in the AwB photography workshops. President Caroline Auckland and Vice-President Cat Mennell were there, and at the end of the afternoon, we were pleased to be able to hand over to Sue Marlowe, the CEO of AwB, a cheque for £100. We understand this will be used to fund the next round of poetry workshops in which Angela and Cat are planning to take part.

ANGELA MCPHERSON, PAO, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS & DISTRICT

Folkestone Club focus on the future



SI FOLKESTONE'S FOCUS for August has been around us consolidating as a club. Jan Doyle hosted a simple supper at the beginning of the month to discuss membership following our July meeting with SIGBI President Elect Ruth Healy and Alison from SI Surrey Hills, and the Club's focus moving forward.

We also had an enjoyable social evening attending the Hythe Venetian Fete, supporting other charities in our local region.

JACALYN WOOD, SI FOLKESTONE

Eastbourne's Summer Bar-b-que



AUGUST AGAIN, AND time for Eastbourne Club's annual summer bar-b-que, and what a lovely time everyone had in Jie and Paul Healey-Hill's garden.

The weather couldn't have been any better a real barmy summer afternoon, with lots of delicious food ranging from marinated chicken breasts, local lamb burgers and sausages, and Papousse wrapped salmon for vegetarians.

There was also a wide range of salads, plus lots of chilled drinks to wash down the food, and finally a selection of delicious sweets.

A very successful raffle was held with proceeds going to our president's charities.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



Eastbourne Club's President Pat Hearn is part of the Hampden Park Community Association which helps to raise funds to support the Community Centre.

The last fundraising event was bingo attended by a few Club members and where Soroptimist Val handed over the cheque.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



Launch of a Memory



ON AUGUST 21, my family and I went to Poole in Dorset to visit the RNLI for the Launch of a Memory.

I had put my Dad's name on the new Shannon Class lifeboat which is aptly named after the Duke of Edinburgh. Prince Charles placed the Magpie emblem on the boat in memory of Prince Philip.

Before his commission to transfer to HMS Cumberland to join the Arctic Convoys, for a short while, my Dad served alongside Prince Philip during WW11.

After the sea trials the lifeboat will be stationed at Wells-next-the-sea in Norfolk. It has taken 18 months so far to build it, and the sea trials will take another 4-6 months.

In the photo I am seen pointing to my Dads name.

It was a very memorable day, thankfully the weather was kind to us.

VAL THORNTON, SI EASTBOURNE

Eastbourne Coffee Morning



THE EASTBOURNE CLUB have changed their meeting venue and they are now meeting at the Hydro Hotel. Many of you will know the venue from our friendship days in the past.

On the first Monday of each month we meet for a coffee and past members, prospective members and friends are all welcome.

Here we are sitting at our long table in the sun.

DENISE STAPLEHURST, SI EASTBOURNE



Tunbridge Wells and Imago Dei Afternoon Tea



On the afternoon of August 21, Tunbridge Wells members, Helen, Jean and Ann attended the afternoon tea hosted by Imago Dei Grace House.

After an interesting journey guided by Satnav we immediately identified the venue, the Memorial Pavilion in Forest Row as it was decorated with the bunting that Louise had made for them last summer.

During the afternoon Sally told us a little of the work carried out by Imago Dei and their hopes to open a safe house in the Tonbridge area to accommodate women leaving prison with nowhere to go. Sally emphasised that they are still looking for funding for buying or renting a four-bedroomed house and would love to hear from anyone who hears of any suitable property.

With the Prison Chaplaincy Service, ID supports women both in prison and on their release. They run courses to empower women to live a purposeful life and to make better life choices. It is a sad fact that many leave prison with nowhere safe to live and no support. Grace House will not only offer housing but will provide training in life skills to help the women integrate successfully back into the community. Do these aims strike a chord with our vision and mission?

Over recent years the UKPAC has been concerned with the issue of Women's Imprisonment. In 2014 research was carried out nationally and a report produced in partnership with the Prison Reform Trust. Helen was our club member who worked on this.

Sally was particularly interested to hear about our Tunbridge Wells project on Women's Safety. The safety of Women and Girls in public places is of concern to Imago Dei also.



<https://www.idprisonministry.org.uk/>
<https://www.gracehouseuk.org/>

ANN GREENFIELD, SECRETARY, SI TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Soroptimists get involved in #CleanupMaidstone



MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL (MBC) has introduced the 'Get Involved in #CleanUpMaidstone Project' – a campaign designed to provide community and volunteer groups, local businesses, and residents, with the equipment, resources, and support to help improve an area of land they would like to see cleaned up.

Julia Search contacted MBC to enquire if Medway and Maidstone Soroptimists could adopt the area in Tovil to clean up where we had planted the 420 tree whips earlier this year as part of the Centenary Challenge. MBC approved this, and they provided us with 10 litter pickers and refuse sacks. So we arranged to have a litter pick followed by a picnic on Saturday, August 27.

On arrival, members went looking for the 420 tree whips we had planted. The area is now all overgrown with vegetation and it took a while to locate the whips. The whips have been tested by the extremely hot weather and drought conditions. Hopefully the recent rain and then a rest over winter should result in a bounce back. We have been advised that the whips are very resilient and the competition from other vegetation just holds them back a little for a short time.

Fourteen members took part in the litter pick and through their combined efforts collected enough rubbish to fill six refuse sacks.

Afterwards we all enjoyed a picnic together sitting in the beautiful sunshine. This was such a contrast to the damp and foggy weather back in January at the tree planting event.

MBC has seen changes to the street landscape and neighbourhoods across the borough, particularly following the lifting of the first Covid-19 lockdown when there was an increase of 250% in littering. As a result, the Council has introduced #CleanUpMaidstone and 'Get Involved.'

#CleanUpMaidstone is everyone's responsibility and was launched in March by Cllr Derek Mortimer who is now the Mayor of Maidstone. It is essential that we all get involved and take pride in where we live and work.

We should all do our bit to help clean up Maidstone and, as Medway and Maidstone Soroptimists we are proud to take part in improving our community.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



Bromley Club walk for Humanity & Inclusion



LESLEY DARVILL HAS, for many years led a walk for Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International). Despite the heat of this summer a gallant band of walkers from SI Bromley set off again, around Keston this time.



Three members had spent an afternoon putting together some badges explaining that we were supporting HI's educational programme for children in, and returning to, Ukraine so that they are aware of and are able to avoid the dangers of mines in the street and play areas.

Our walk led us to the Wilberforce Oak and the commemorative seat at Holwood House where Wilberforce and William Pitt the Younger discussed slavery leading ultimately to the abolition of the slave-trade.



We raised £147 and afterwards enjoyed a well-earned light lunch together. A great day for a great cause.

MARY DALMAN, SI BROMLEY

Bromley enjoy a stylish summer afternoon tea!



Wow! What an afternoon feast Bromley members were treated to as a fundraiser for Club's charity funds in the shade of Val's lovely garden.

Beautifully presented finger salmon or egg sandwiches; meringues, scones, jam and cream and a great selection of cakes, accompanied by tea from Susan's samovar or a drink of your choice...

We could not have done better at the Ritz and we certainly would not have raised £110 for club projects!

MARY DALMAN, SI BROMLEY

BBQ raises £257 for Domestic Abuse charity



ON A BEAUTIFUL sunny day in August, Medway and Maidstone member Carol McKeough hosted a BBQ as a fundraiser with 17 Sorooptimists, friends, and family joining her at her home on the stunning North Downs.

Two Sorooptimisters took charge of the BBQ cooking sausages, beefburgers, and chicken. There was also a selection of delicious homemade salads made by members to enjoy. Afterwards we chose from a wide range of naughty homemade desserts. The photo below shows Carol with Lesley Rich, Annette Davies and Angela Howe getting ready to tuck into the desserts on offer.

A fun time was had by all, and the good news is that £257.50 raised from donations and the raffle will be benefiting SATEDA (Swale Action to End Domestic Abuse).

Whilst we were all gathered, Carol presented Sharon Forghani, our club secretary with the Molly Oldham Award for outstanding achievement. This recognised the considerable time and effort she took as the lead organising the tree planting of 420 saplings in Tovil for the centenary challenge, working with the Woodland Trust, Maidstone Borough Council, and the Mayor's Office. This award is normally presented each year at the AGM, following a secret ballot in which all members nominate the individual member they feel is deserving, or most deserving of the award, this being the only criterion.

Congratulations to Sharon and a big thank you to Carol for her hospitality.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE





ON JULY 14, SI Croydon had a speaker meeting featuring the international development charity, Feed the Minds.

The talk was given by Feed the Minds fundraising executive and SI Croydon member, Helen Mangan. She talked about how Feed the Minds works with local partners to empower people living in extreme poverty to gain new skills and resources to improve their lives. Helen explained that as two thirds of the worlds adult population who have no literacy skills are women, Feed the Minds' emphasis is to support women and girls.

Feed the Minds also takes inspiration from the United Nations sustainable development goals. UN SDG4 "to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong opportunities for all" and UN SDG5 "to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls". form part of Feed the Minds' values.

Members were enchanted to hear when Helen attended her job interview to join Feed the Minds in July 2021, that the CEO, Sandra Golding knew what Soroptimist International was. Helen now admits she was impressed that someone on the interview panel knew this and she didn't have to explain why Soroptimist International is the world's best kept secret.

The talk then focused upon three projects Feed the Minds is currently running. In Nigeria, they are working with local partners to end FGM. In Uganda, they are working with another partner to educate women on menstrual hygiene and improve access to affordable sanitary products. Finally, Helen ended the talk by speaking about Feed the Minds work with local partners in South Sudan to enhance food security and increased income for project participants.

CORAL KINIBIRE – COMMUNICATION OFFICER, SI CROYDON

Lunch with Friendship link SI Accra Club President



ON AUGUST 03, members of Medway and Maidstone enjoyed lunch with Karen Korsah, SI Accra Club President, in West Malling. Karen had contacted Julia Search, our Friendship Link Officer, to say she was in the UK for a few weeks visiting family and it would be good to meet up.

A group of 12 members were already meeting that day as part of the club's social events to do a Quiz trail. Julia arranged with



On the Quiz Trail

Karen for her to join us for lunch so she could meet as many members as possible.

Unfortunately, Karen had had a fall since arriving in the UK and sprained her ankle, so could not walk far. She had travelled down from London to Rochester by train, where Jane Barnes and her sister, Stella, met Karen to drive her to West Malling. Jane and Karen had previously met via Zoom Friendship Link meetings but were easily able to recognise one another as both were wearing their Kente sashes.

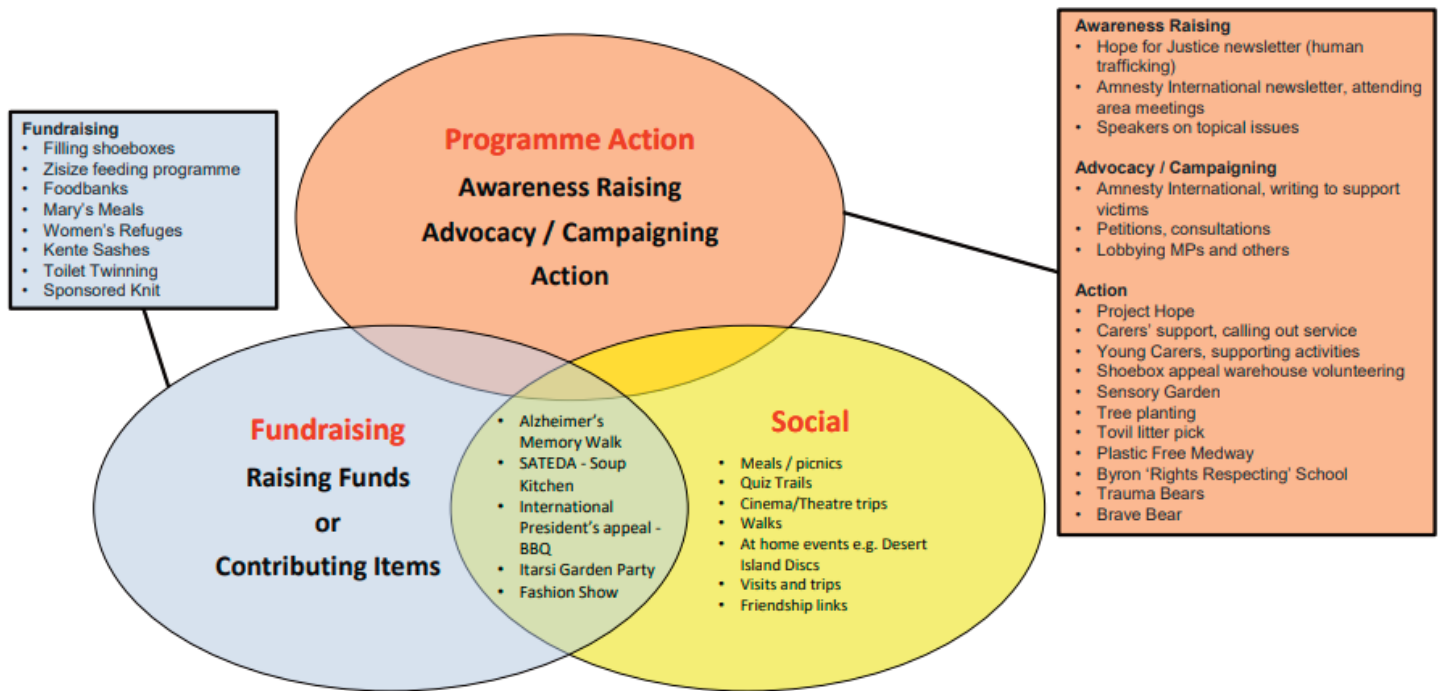
We all enjoyed lunch together where there was lots of chatting, talking about club activities. Julia presented Karen with a donation of £50 from the club for SI Accra's charity supporting a local Paediatric Oncology Unit.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE



Julia, Karen and Stella

Medway and Maidstone review their Programme Action



Medway and Maidstone Soroptimist Activity Summary 2022-2025: Programme Action / Fundraising / Social

FOLLOWING THE DAY of Reflection, SI Medway and Maidstone held in February, several issues and ideas were raised regarding the way we undertake our Programme Action. A review led by Liz Duckworth and Teresa Cambell was undertaken with members to identify the shape of the club's PA for the coming three years in terms of priorities and which projects should be pursued and justification for this.

Should we focus on just three or four key issues which relate to women and girls as opposed to the 17 project areas we had been tackling?

Supporting women and girls is an important Soroptimist objective, indeed it is our unique selling point. We acknowledged that all our projects do support women and girls. Some focus specifically on women (Project Hope), some on women and their children (domestic abuse and refuges), others benefit all members of a community, but women often gain disproportionately greater value (Toilet Twinning, sustainability).

When taking on a new project we should question whether we can specifically support women and/or girls through this project; or it impacts the wider community, but women and girls benefit more.

Do we spread ourselves too thinly with international projects?

We currently pursue a number of international projects: Mary's Meals, Shoebox Appeal, Lalibela Children's Library, Zisize, Itarsi, Kente sashes, Toilet Twinning. But it was felt that these are mostly time-limited fundraising projects requiring relatively little active input from members. We are, after all, an international organisation.

Do we feel obliged to be putting hands in our pockets for many of our projects?

Should we become canner at securing funds through fundraising events or in other ways, so we are expending our time and effort, not our money?

There was general agreement we should draw a distinction between action/campaigning and fundraising with a good balance across the year.

The Venn diagram drawn up by Teresa Cambell captures how we will take forward our club activities and members found it useful to see it in a visual format.

JANE BARNES, SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE

Message from the Editor

IT IS A PLEASURE each month to receive your articles and photos about the amazing work and play activities you undertake. I would, though, like to ask for your help with the following.

It is good that your members are featured in your articles, but could I please ask that you also provide the surnames of anyone mentioned, so that we all know to whom you are referring.

When submitting your articles, could you also include the author's name and Club at the end of the document. There are odd occasions when it isn't clear to me if the author is the person emailing the documents to me.

A new problem has arisen regarding photographs. The latest iPhones/Smart Phones have started to use .heic extensions for

photographs, as this apparently gives an improved image from .jpg. However, at the moment, .heic compatibility is limited (ie, I can open photos on my iPad, but not on my main PC, and cannot convert to .jpg).

In addition, some photos I have received this month have been more like thumbnails and do not enlarge very well, as you will see, so please do check your photos before submission.

Finally, I would appreciate receiving the photographs as separate attachments, rather than being embedded into your WORD documents.

THANK YOU.

PATRICIA PAINTING, EDITOR, SEE NEWS



ON JULY 31, SI Croydon attended and hosted a stall at London Road Carnival, Broad Green, Croydon to promote awareness of Soroptimist International and Croydon and District club. It was a well attended event with a lot of members from the community of Croydon in attendance. SI Croydon would like to thank members Sheila Patel, Lynette Richards-Lorde, Helen Mangan, Coral Kinibire, and Pat Dale, for volunteering their time at the carnival.

Highlights of the Carnival day included some of SI Croydon members meeting the elected Mayor of Croydon, Jason Perry. Communications & Membership Officer Coral Konibire, Club Secretary Pat Dale and Programme Action Officer Helen Mangan were fortunate enough to have their photograph taken with Civic Mayor of Croydon (and Norbury Park Councillor) Ailsa Fleming (pictured above).

Later in the day, Pat Dale was afforded the opportunity to speak on the main carnival stage about Soroptimist International and SI Croydon activities and aims (pictured below).

HELEN MANGAN, PROGRAMME ACTION OFFICER, SI CROYDON



Surprise Guest at Regional Membership Meeting



LORNA BLACKMORE AND Jane Barnes (Regional Membership Officers) held a Zoom meeting for Club Membership Officers on August 20. They had a surprise when Dishi Attwood (SI Kenilworth) joined at the beginning of the meeting. She had been invited to join the meeting by Coral Konibire from SI Croydon.

You will be aware following recent ballots; Dishi has been elected to take on the Director of Membership role effective from November 01, 2022. This Director post is a key role in the Federation at a time when there has been falling membership.

Eight clubs were represented at the meeting which are held bi-monthly, where we discuss membership issues and share ideas and good practice.

Dishi was impressed by the energy and enthusiasm evident in the discussions and developments she heard about relating to membership. This included the recent chartering by SI East Grinstead of a new school club at Kent College, Pembury, and how SI Canterbury continues to work with Simon Langton School with the same aim.

Lorna spoke about the support package she is putting in place with SI Lewes who have been doing some excellent programme work but not been able to attract new members. Jane will be having similar discussions with SI Thanet in the coming weeks.

Across our Region there is a wealth of knowledge and experience for membership officers and clubs to tap into relating to membership resources, induction programmes and use of social media to promote the work we do.

So do get in touch...

The next Regional membership meeting is being held via Zoom at 14:00 on Saturday, October 15, so put the date in your diary.

JANE BARNES, REGION MEMBERSHIP OFFICER
AND MEMBER OF SI MEDWAY AND MAIDSTONE