

SUE BLACK – SI ST HELENS – SI SOUTH LANCASHIRE – SIGBI

GRANT OF FRIENDSHIP RECIPIENT – VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA

15 APRIL – 6 MAY 2018

My memories of my visit to Victoria are filled with warmth and friendship for which I will always be glad and remember always. I was fortunate enough to attend two Anzac Day services, both very differently carried out but both very impressive, and I was able to say a special thank you to all the men who went off to fight. I gave all the clubs I visited a Red knitted poppy and the pattern!! The wonderful work done by all the clubs I visited and the list of projects is very impressive and carried out with enthusiasm, energy and in friendship fuelled by innovative ideas.

Training a girl to be a plumber, “Do it for Dairy”, a garage sale, education grants given in so many different ways, both to schools and older students, monthly film nights, women’s refuge work, Red Cross, work with people suffering dementia, the list is endless and varied. What good spirit is shown by all members in Victoria - all spreading the word of Soroptimist work.

Attending SI Melbourne’s 70<sup>th</sup> luncheon was a high spot for me and my friends Adam and Alison Tickle who attended along with me. It was held at MELBOURNE CRICKET GROUND and what a spectacular backdrop it was. We congratulated Melbourne on achieving 70 years, especially as SI St Helens are celebrating 75 years on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

My visits to olive farms, chocolate factories and wineries – all wonderful outings and such nice things to do...My “ Cobba paddle steamer visit” was magical and calming, especially when I saw the Koala and searching for Kangaroo in the cemetery !!!! My fabulous drive to see the 12 Apostles and the Bay of Islands was spectacular and Yacht club lunches - hey ...not bad is it.

The knowledge shown by all my guides for my Museum and Art Gallery visits was impressive and very much appreciated; although at times I did suffer from information overload but feel confident that I will be able to pull some of it back when needed.

My final visit before home was to Conference and proved to be an interesting exercise as I was able to compare work done by both SISWP and SIGBI, much to hearten us all.

I would urge any of our members who feels able to travel to apply for one of these grants. It’s a wonderful opportunity and all the clubs I visited treated with me with utmost respect and made every effort to make my experiences memorable and a visit I will never forget. The lovely lunches and delicious home cooked dinners – all very special.

Sue Whitehead the main organiser and leader of the team adopted me for longer than anticipated but my visit was filled with warm and friendship and friendly people and she was a wonderful host. Her organisational skills were superb with no hitches occurring... and to her two friends Catherine Evans and Sue Newton staying for the duration of the Conference. The Soroptimist work being done in Australia is wonderful and inspiring. A truly memorable visit.

In friendship - Sue Black.