



### Social Media Support from SIGBI



President Isobel Smith's theme for 2019-2020 is **We Stand Up for Women**

Visit the SIGBI website to find logos and social media headings to promote this theme and raise the profile of Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland. There's even an animated version!



### Soroptimist International's Response to Racism

SI have written an open letter in response to the Black Lives Matter campaign. Here is an extract: -

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

From our humble beginning in October 1921 until today, Soroptimist International (SI) was founded on the principles of human rights, social & economic justice, equality, peace, and international goodwill and to transform the lives of girls and women of all ages through our international partnerships and our global network of members. The world is being ravaged by COVID-19, the worst pandemic in 100 years and global deaths continue to rise and unfortunately, the black, brown and indigenous communities have been the hardest hit.

Observing senseless acts of racism as well as blatant violence against peaceful demonstrators and attacks against the Press, we are saddened and disheartened. As an organisation we strongly believe in Freedom of Speech and Peaceful Assembly that are fundamental rights in the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

We stand in solidarity with people of colour and all who are equally outraged by these longstanding injustices. We are determined that there needs to be anti-racist action now and that we can no longer remain silent or try to invalidate or dismiss racism in any form. We must all take responsibility for our own actions. We must speak out and be proactive to end racism, indifference, and hatred and to ensure "we leave no one behind".

In solidarity,  
Sharon Fisher  
Soroptimist International President 2020-2021

## Club News from around the Region

### SI WIDNES – Support continues for Changing Lives & Night Stop



The lockdown hasn't stopped members of SI Widnes. In fact, the club has increased their support for Changing Lives and Night Stop by making extra donations of nappies, wipes, children's clothing and toys as well as toilet rolls, cleaning products and dried foods. The two Night Stop houses, currently a safe haven for homeless people with COVID 19, has benefited from kitchenware, bed linen and curtains.

Members and friends of SI Widnes donated many of the items themselves and purchased others with donations of monthly meal costs from some members. Both Night Stop and Changing Lives are very grateful for the support of SI Widnes.



If anyone has any items they wish to donate to either charity, please contact Hazel Landon for Changing Lives and Yvonne Gibbon for Night Stop.

Source: SI Widnes club newsletter courtesy of Wendy Ross-Barker

### SI STOCKPORT & DISTRICT – Supporting our NHS Heroes

SI Stockport & District have collaborated with the Stockport Scrub Hub in producing scrub suits and

laundry bags for the washing of those scrubs, helping out key NHS and Care workers in these Covid-19 times.

Members Marilyn Westbrook and Joyce Garside, along with retired member Jenny Gordon, stitched and assembled many quality garments over the weeks using fabric purchased by the Club (much of it at cost from Bamber Sewing Machines)

Pathology staff at Stepping Hill Hospital, even in these busy times, found the chance to send the Club a thank you card!

Source: SI Stockport & District courtesy of Ingrid Whiteman



## SI LIVERPOOL – WoW Bags and Buckets Delivered Just in Time & a Little Light Relief

The Healthcare group met in February to begin putting together over fifty 'WoW bags, so named after the 'Women of Whitechapel'. These bags are designed to add a little more luxury into the lives of women, who make up about 30% of clients who rely on the day to day services offered by the Whitechapel Centre for the homeless in Liverpool.

Whilst people generously donate toiletries, it's often the extras that can make you feel better about yourself. So, our bags were more like a make-up bag, with hair accessories, make-up remover pads, eye-shadow, nail varnish and varnish remover, tissues and even false eyelashes! We also included a little inspirational message to help lift the spirits of the women.

Jackie, the Centre Support manager, was delighted to receive the first batch of bags. Little did we realise how timely they were as the lockdown started 10 days later! Also, a timely gift were five buckets with cleaning aids inside for anyone moving into accommodation. As everyone since then has been moved into temporary accommodation for the duration of the lockdown, these would still be a very useful gift indeed!



In response to a request from members to support, in particular, women who are in police custody, Copy Lane Custody Officer Kate Arnold asked club members if we could supply appropriate reading material for those being held in police cells.

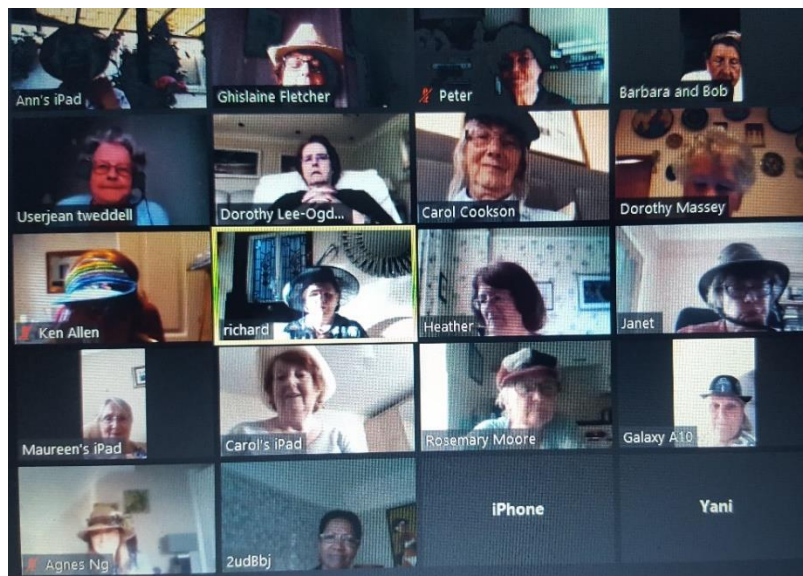
At weekends, sometimes women are brought in because of domestic violence or having been trafficked, but they have to wait until Monday morning for the courts to open. Not only do those in custody get bored but they can distract the police just to pass the time! These magazines and light reading books were very gratefully received. A special thanks to club member Rasa, who with the help of friends, supplied much needed eastern European reading materials. An article was published by Kate on an internal police memo, acknowledging our support for their work. Some magazines also went to Whitechapel for the Polish community there.

Source: SI Liverpool club newsletter 'Sroptipool Times' courtesy of Anne Grimes





## SI SOUTHPORT - Fun with Hats



Since the lockdown, SI Southport members have kept in touch using the wonders of Zoom. In 'real life', our club meets twice monthly so we decided to retain this structure and have one meeting as a Club Meeting, where we discuss SI activities, and the second as a more social event.

President Rosemary Moore suggested the theme of 'Fun with Hats' for the May social meeting. Members were asked to wear a hat that had some significance and to tell the tale of the hat.

As the photo shows, there was a great response.

**Ann Bryan** (top row on the left) – the picture is bit dark as Ann was sitting outside in the sun!) told us about her hat – she bought in La Gomera and has worn it on every holiday abroad for the last 10 years.

**Carol Hill** (4<sup>th</sup> row, second from left) her hat came from Wimbledon. She and husband Anthony attended the tournament on 'Manic Monday' watching Andy Murray and several other players. On the same trip, Carol was run over by a shopping trolley – the 'driver' was a very apologetic Lynda Baron (the actress who played Gladys Emmanuel in 'Open all Hours').

**Dot Massey** (2<sup>nd</sup> row, on the right) wore her steward's trilby from the 75th SIGBI Conference in Harrogate, where she helped the flag bearers manoeuvre their flags into the auditorium. Dot's team leader was Joan Spiby and all stewards wore dark blue suits and a trilby.

**Carol Cookson** (2<sup>nd</sup> row, second from right) donned the hat she bought in Virginia. It proved useful when she was on her way down the Appalachian Trail and was confronted by a bear and 3 cubs. Instead of following advice to climb into the nearest tree, she threw her hat at them and then ran screaming back up the trail!!

**Ghislaine Fletcher** (top row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left) wore a hat from London 2012, when she was a London Ambassador at Victoria Park during the 2012 Olympic Games. She had a visit from her boss – Boris Johnson, Mayor of London at the time. That was the day Boris got caught up on the zip-wire at Victoria Park and the now-famous photo was taken!

**President Rosemary** (4<sup>th</sup> row, third from left) her hat dates back to the early 1960s, when the Beatles were playing at the Odeon in Southport. While she and a friend were waiting at the stage door, the Beatles arrived in a transit van and John Lennon jumped out straight onto Rosemary's foot, leaving a shoe imprint on her white socks. Her friend says to this day she should never have washed those socks!

There were several other fun stories – and we learned not only about the hats, but also quite a lot about our SI friends!

Source: SI Southport's newsletter courtesy of Ghislaine Fletcher

## SI LEIGH & DISTRICT – Recognising Carers Week UK & UN World Environment Day

SI Leigh & District formed a partnership with The Bridge at Leigh to provide 50 gift bags for young carers in the Leigh area.

Representing Wigan & Leigh Young Carers Group, Peter Wild collected the bags for ongoing distribution and spoke of his pleasure and appreciation for this initiative during the lockdown pandemic.



Included with each gift bag was a 'You are Special' thank you card and details of the Soroptimist organisation.



Members also considered what they could do to recognise UN World Environment Day on the 5th June 2020 during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The theme this year had the title 'It's Time for Nature' and so the idea of a social distancing litter pick at Pennington Country Park was decided upon.

Local Ornithologists have concerns that the smaller birds at the country park consume small items of litter which can prove fatal. This gave members the impetus to undertake the task and equipment was provided by Wigan Council Biodiversity Officer, Kieran Sayer, who expressed his thanks for our volunteering role which coincided with National Volunteers' Week.

For more info about the Club: Facebook Leigh Soroptimist /Email: [soropleigh@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:soropleigh@yahoo.co.uk)



Contributed by Margaret Molyneux SI Leigh & District



## SI BOLTON – Reaching Out

Urban Outreach is a charity supporting the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and complex adults and young people in Bolton. At the beginning of lockdown, they sent out a request for food and volunteers and SI Bolton was quick to respond.



Food stuff was collected by individuals and left on their doorsteps at a pre-arranged time. Jane Hemmingway (who was furloughed from work) then regularly visited the houses filling her car boot with masses of tins and packets before taking it all to the Urban Outreach centre.

Once there, Jane volunteered to put together the food parcels prior to distribution to those very needy, extremely grateful individuals and families. *Contributed by Carole Swarbrick SI Bolton*

## SI Crosby – 82nd Birthday Virtual Marathon Fundraising

SI Crosby didn't let the lockdown stop them from celebrating the club's 82<sup>nd</sup> Birthday and marking the occasion by raising much needed funds for Sefton Women's and Children's Aid, a local charity helping women, young people and children survive the impact of Domestic Violence and Abuse.

SI Crosby's fundraising committee chair, Chris Smith, had the idea of a virtual marathon with an activity chosen by each member as an individual challenge. This meant that social distancing could be maintained whilst at the same time ensuring the event was inclusive and accessible for all members wishing to participate – even those locked down outside the UK!



Sponsors were able to donate to a fundraising page for the event through the 'Give as you Live' fundraising platform. A link to the fundraising page was shared using social and other media.

The event engaged members and their supporters, raised £2,284 plus £472 Gift Aid and increased awareness of SWACA at a time when there is significant evidence that domestic abuse affecting women and children is rising as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

SI Crosby members enjoyed the event and their individual challenges across a wide range of activities achieved a total distance of over 202 miles. Activities included cycling, walking, Zumba, Hula-hooping, Tai-chi, a Bakeathon and a Harpathon!



*Contributed by Jill Boggan SI Crosby*



**A Shopaholic** a poem by Dorothy L.Zack-Williams SI Liverpool

*As the saying goes shop until you drop but never stop  
No time for breakfast, lunch or tea  
Starting in the morning until midnight*

*Came home with so many clothes, bags and shoes  
Gave my husband a fright  
Every day I contemplate where to shop  
Buying is a stimulant when I drink soda pop*

*I began to wonder where would I put all of my things  
When all of my wardrobes are busting at the seams  
I guess the way I shop you would probably think I am only sweet sixteen*

*I thought I would ask my husband for some space in his wardrobes  
His quick response was his wardrobes could not contain my load  
I found a place in the loft conversion how wonderful I thought  
Trying my best to hide the items that I bought*

*Surely, I am not the only one who shops all the time  
What about my sister Soroptimists indulging yourselves at Christmas time?  
The Corona Virus has changed my routine  
I can hardly wait to be back on the scene*

*I am a Shopaholic and here to stay  
No matter how much I have to pay  
I think my granddaughter is following in my footsteps  
She loves shopping for shoes, bags and loves dressing up*

*As the saying goes shop until you drop but never stop  
As a Shopaholic I do not think I could ever swap.*