



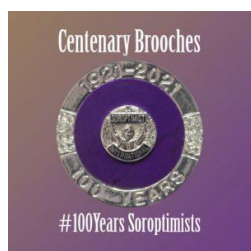
#WhoIsShe

As part of the #WhoIsShe? (Centenary) Campaign, more than 100 Soroptimists have been selected to be commemorated.

Twelve outstanding Soroptimists will be showcased each month. Visit sigbi.org to view these inspirational ladies' profiles as well as other ways in which Soroptimists are joining together to celebrate a Bright Past and a Brilliant Future.



Planning a tree planting project for Centenary Year? SIGBI will share your stories on the website and add you to the interactive tree planting map. See the website for details.



Another way to celebrate our Centenary is with a unique piece of jewellery. Brooches cost £25 plus p&p and can be ordered using the form on SIGBI's website.

SI Manchester – From Zoom to Spoon

Ali Hanbury, one of our Linked Members, suggested and offered to present a 'Cook Along' using Zoom. The recipe for **Coconut and Cardamom Dahl** was circulated with an invitation to participate or observe the event in return for a suitable donation to our Charities and Elaine offered to send out Spice packs for those not used to cooking Indian food.



Ali kept the cooks virtually on track and observers' mouths watered until the cooking was done and the meal ready to serve.

Ali's verdict...."it was lots of fun to cook together, to chat and to hear people's recipe tips and tales of travelling. I really enjoyed meeting some new folk too. Thank you to everyone for joining in and to those who came simply to chat."

and from the cooks & observers: It was good listening to clear instructions instead of getting curry stains on the cook book!" (Jeff). I did what I usually do when Jeff is cooking, drink G&T and watch! (Sue). "If life hands you lemons, make lemonade, If life hands you lentils, make delicious coconut dhal with good friends on zoom!" (Elaine). "A fun evening cooking, thanks Ali I really enjoyed it." (President Rose)," I really enjoyed the evening. Thank you so much (Carina). Nice to do something different. Ali was an excellent tutor & host" (Rosemary).



Fun, food, friendship and fund raising, what's not to like? When is the next one, please? Actually, it's planned for 24th March!

contributed by Sue Underwood

Club News from around the Region

SI LIVERPOOL – Freedom of the City



The Freedom Bus came to Liverpool in December to raise awareness of Human Trafficking in the city. The bus, which has the Modern Slavery Helpline number on each side, was organised by club member Annette Maud who works for Liverpool Stop the Traffik, in partnership with The Merseyside Police Crime Commissioner. The initiative is also Club President Anne's chosen charity for this year.

The bus drove around the city, stopping outside places such as car washes and massage parlours and visited the Anglican Cathedral, International Slavery Museum, the Town Hall and Liverpool John Lennon Airport. Police and Mersey fire officers were on the bus to assist with any reports received.

The journey was filmed by BBC news and was featured on North West Tonight that very evening. A very successful partnership and event for the city.



Our International Event included a collection of readings and a talk about the role of women in the writing of the Human Rights Act. Candles were lit for all Soroptimists in the Region.

It was an extremely enjoyable and informative event which was preceded by a Christmas poem, Christmas quizzes and even a Christmas sing a long!

Contributed by Annette Maud & Anne Grimes



SI BOOTLE & DISTRICT – SWACA January Challenge



Club member Gillian is a volunteer at SWACA (Sefton Women and Children's Aid) and has accepted a fund-raising challenge to support the charity:- to write a letter every day for a month, to lonely or self-isolating people, especially those living on their own - or to any vulnerable person she is aware of.

Reaching out to others also helps the writer and is something we can all do. It's amazing what a few friendly words can do to uplift a person's spirit.

16 Days of Action

S. I. Bootle and District are fortunate enough to have amongst their members, three who work with, and supply support to, victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual assault. They deliver training, and lecturing in all aspects of abuse including FGM.

A member working with vulnerable women organised a number of meetings and training sessions using zoom via RASA. They were drop-in sessions, aimed at both service users and professionals, and were both educational and informative.

Bootle Baby Bank

This organisation helps young mothers who are finding it difficult, especially during these challenging times and responds to requests from social workers for baby items.

Members make donations of nappies, baby wipes, baby milk formula and children's clothing.

These items need constant replacement and some are now appearing to be in short supply, so every donation is extremely welcomed.



International Presidents Appeal - "The Road to Equality"

The club held their International Night via zoom and hosted members, past and present along with Friendship link club members from SI Morecambe and SI Heysham. Drinks, nibbles etc were BYO! A candle lighting ceremony preceded a reading of the Declaration of Human Rights.

There was music, carols, quizzes and prizes (posted in time for Christmas), sharing of poems, readings, anecdotes and plenty of time for chatting and sharing ideas. Feedback from guest clubs was extremely generous, and showed what can be done under trying circumstances.

A Call to Arms



Club member Lorraine Wood answered the recent call for volunteers to assist in the NHS "Covid 19 Vaccination Roll Out". Following a successful interview she is currently undergoing training to become a vaccinator and will soon be appointed to one of the local vaccination centres. Well done Lorraine, S.I. Bootle and District are very proud of you.

Contributed by Caroline Holmes

SI STOCKPORT & DISTRICT – Hats off to President Sue

Sue Stringer, President of Stockport and District is pictured wearing the hat she created when her Club got together with their friendship link club, Buxton in December.

President Sue's millinery masterpiece won her a prize in the Club's fun competition.

Photo courtesy of Sue Stringer



SI BOLTON – Answers on a Postcard Please!



Lockdown can make it difficult to arrange fundraising events with often only the use of Zoom, so SI Bolton decided to have a game of Call my Bluff.

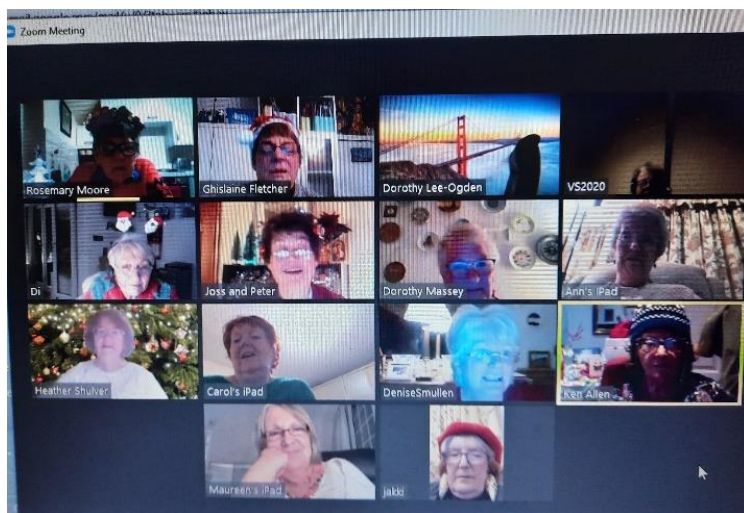
This proved to be an interesting evening grappling with a list of odd, unknown words. Three willing volunteers each read out one of a choice of three definitions, all sounding extremely plausible.

Head scratching and brain power was involved until finally pure guesswork took over! Much laughter and a glass of wine saw us through. A thoroughly entertaining evening finished by a donation to our charities.

Contributed by Carol Swarbrick

SI SOUTHPORT – Silly Hats, Mince Pies and a Well Earned Pamper

We could not have our usual Christmas celebrations for obvious reasons, so instead, President Rosemary organised a 'Mince Pie and Tipple' Zoom party.



We had a lovely evening, discussing everyone's plans for the festive season....and then the revised plans after the Government's pre-Christmas rule changes!

Joss Glanvill devised a seasonal quiz with eclectic questions to suit everyone.

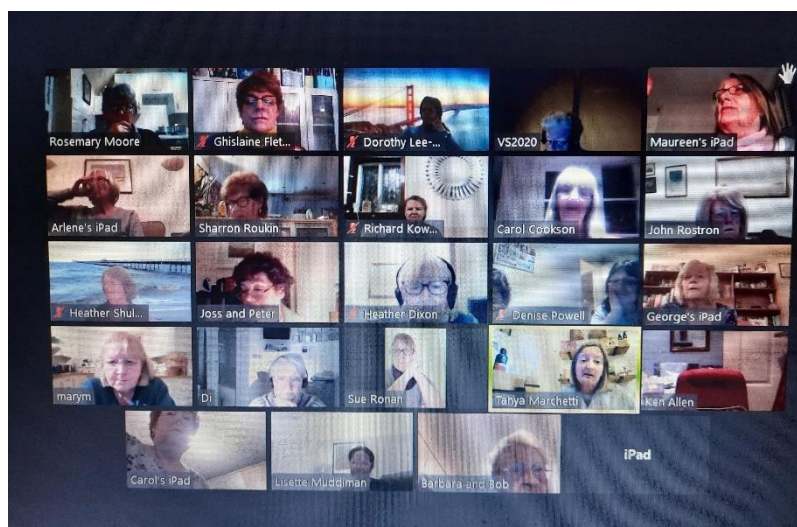
It was a great evening to share conversation and friendship, with a lot of fun and laughter – and a few silly hats and headgear!

For our first meeting of 2021, we treated ourselves to some self-indulgence with a 'Virtual Wellbeing Session', run by Tanya Marchetti, a consultant with Neals Yard Remedies Organics, which focussed on hand care.

We distributed sample packs from the company to 24 members and guests and Tanya began the session with a creative activity; preparing home-made hand-scrubs from store cupboard staples.

She then moved on to the NYR Organics samples, which included some lovely aromatic hand products and hand wash crystals - all organic and containing essential oils.

It was a relaxed, fun evening – just what the doctor ordered!



We're all hoping that 2021 will bring us renewed opportunities to meet with other members, encourage and build new friendships and provide some much-needed service. But in the short term, we have to be content with the power of technology to keep us all together.

Contributed by Ghislaine Fletcher

SI LEIGH & DISTRICT – Auction Extraordinaire



A fundraising event planned by the Charity Committee appealed to Club Members to provide items for a virtual Auction. Thirty plus items were listed and participants were encouraged to place bids pre-auction evening.

A problem was the inability to physically view the goods but this was solved by the Auctioneer, Dorothy Bowker, who gave excellent descriptions of each item.

Bidding was brisk but members had to rebuke the Auctioneer for not alerting us to 'Fair Warning' as the gavel went down! Adding to the excitement was the telephone bidding which raised the stakes and added to the tension of the occasion.



£267 was raised, including donations from members unable to access the Auction.

This was a fun & friendship event which was thoroughly enjoyed by members and a measure of imaginative fundraising in these very difficult Covid 19 times.

Our virtual Christmas Party was great fun and raised a total £410 for Wigan & Leigh Hospice. Club President Lynda thanked members who took part or contributed and The Bridge for their contribution.





Instead of the usual Christmas Friendship gifts sent to Quincy, California and Mons Borinage, Belgium the Club decided to send a donation to Mary's Meals with an explanation to each Club about the charity.

A Virtual Charter Tea Party

SI Leigh & District members invited their friendship clubs' Mons Borinage Belgium & Haverfordwest in Wales to join their 74th Charter Anniversary Celebrations.

Club members enjoyed an afternoon tea of sandwiches, cakes, scones with clotted cream delivered just before the 'Teams' event.

President Lynda Lilley welcomed our Friendship clubs, with 39 participants present.



Following the Loyal Toast, the history of the English Afternoon tea tradition was explained followed by a musical interlude of Songs from the Musicals.

(An advantage of mute is that singalongs allow inhibitions to disappear!)



Mons Borinage member Michelle Scutnaire spoke of the strong links between the Leigh and Mons clubs. One of the projects they have recently undertaken is to provide cupcakes to their local hospital staff, baked by a local woman who was financially struggling with her business in lockdown.

Club president Lynda ended our memorable evening with the wish that we can meet in person soon and in particular planned visits to our friendship clubs, having been cancelled due to the Pandemic, can take place.

Domestic Violence Project

Following concerns amongst club members about the rising rates of Domestic Violence incidents during the Pandemic, local Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's), based at Wigan Infirmary, agreed to speak to members and members of several other clubs in the Region about their advocacy work. Club President Lynda Lilley was keen to work in partnership with the IDVA's as they asked if we could purchase a discrete personal product for both men & women which victims could carry. These items were purchased by the club which have the DV helpline details written on them for immediate assistance. More details about these confidential products can be obtained from the Club President.

Operation Caring Hands

Just before Christmas, in partnership with 'The Bridge at Leigh', the club's Programme Action Team gift wrapped hand lotion for the 1,180 staff at the 16 Residential Care Homes and Wigan & Leigh Hospice, complete with the club's publicity leaflet. All the resources were provided by The Bridge and a gift tag was attached with the following message: -



*Your hands have helped pave the way,
They've given love & care each day,
No matter the tasks that they do
They're tender, loving & caring like you.
They've healed & lifted, encouraged and
touched
And in return you're thanked so much'.*

The staff were thrilled by the gesture and thanked us via Facebook. Leigh club have also made a donation of £200 to The Bridge for their Christmas Appeal.

All Photos & stories contributed by Margaret Molyneux

SI WIDNES - KINGS CROSS CHRISTMAS PROJECT

This is an Annual Christmas event which involves local churches and schools. Referrals of families in need are sent by Social workers, and this year there was a total of 140 families, and some young 'Care leavers'. Work started early on 23rd Nov, at Farnworth Methodist Church Hall, with the packing of household cleaning products.

The response from the people of Widnes was amazing - toys for all ages, toiletries and special items for Christmas came pouring in. Packing into Christmas gift bags started in early December. Each gift hamper is specially packed according to family details (only number, age, sex of the children is given).



Thanks to the generosity of local Supermarkets, further hampers were packed with Christmas food items and Social workers collected 3 hampers for each family, to be distributed in time for Christmas.

Contributed by Hazel Landon



A Pamper Session on Zoom

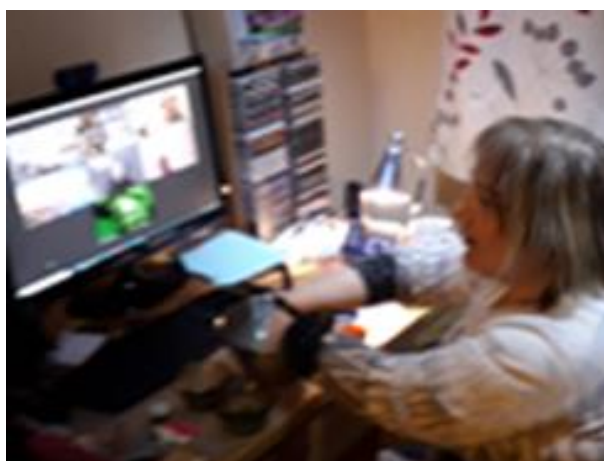
On Monday 11th January, members of SI Widnes had the opportunity to have a lovely pamper session on Zoom, organised by member Patricia Qarton.

With hairdressers, beauty salons closed due to lockdown, this felt like a real luxury. Tanya, our host from 'Bee Lovely', with products from NYR Organic, showed us how to pamper our hard-working hands.

All we needed was a bowl of warm water, a homemade hand scrub consisting of a tsp each of olive oil and sugar or salt, two food bags and Sellotape - plus a drink of course! Tanya even sent us a relaxing tea bag as part of the home hand pamper kit, along with an envelope of samples.

We followed Tanya's instructions, until we all had beautiful hands. The 'Bee Lovely' hand cream and other samples were lovely. A great social event was had by all, from the comfort of our own homes. Tanya was at home down south. Thanks to Patricia for organising it.

Contributed by Denise Parker



SI Widnes - #OrangetheWorld'

For 16 Days of Activism starting 25th November to 10th December, Soroptimists everywhere were asked to #OrangetheWorld. Each day is a call for action and provides a focus for our projects. Commemorating these days are opportunities to create public awareness about what needs to change, to prevent it from happening in the first place at local, national, regional and international levels.



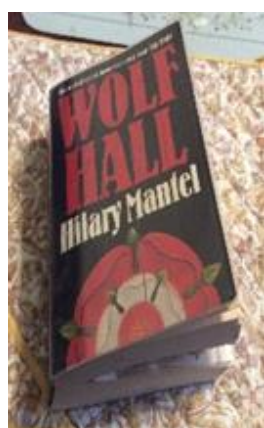
Lockdown severely hampered our efforts to Orange the World. However, Soroptimists of SI Widnes rose to the challenge and came up with some novel ways to Orange our own particular piece of the world, which were shared daily on Facebook throughout the 16-day period to raise awareness of the campaign.



This included persuading Mersey Flow to light up the bridge in orange on the first night, tying orange ribbons on posts, baking and stitching. Even Rollo, Yvonne's dog, joined in!



Contributed by Yvonne Gibbon



Widnes members have started a reading group. We choose a book to read via the library and meet online to review it. Our present book is 'Anatomy of a Scandal' - author Sarah Vaughan, our previous book 'Wolf Hall' by Hilary Mantel and our next book will be The Marble Collector by Cecilia Aherne.

We are aiming at one book a month.

courtesy of Linda Redhead

SI CROSBY

In recent Covid-19 months, Crosby Soroptimists have worked creatively to serve the local community, and beyond – and even to care for ourselves.



Waterloo Primary School – A ‘chance encounter’ and a subsequent Zoom meeting with the headteacher revealed the school’s educational and social challenges during the pandemic. Members immediately resolved to fund a number of laptops to support children’s home learning.

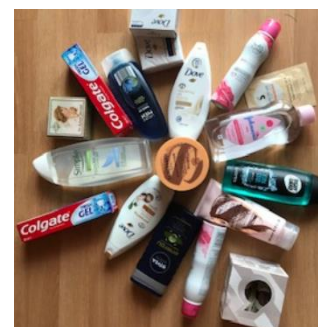
Knit for Peace – Members are knitting and crocheting squares, sewing them together, and adding a neat border. It’s a team effort! The first two blankets are now completed.

Age Concern – Five members are now phone ‘buddies’ for lonely clients of the charity. Members packed 70 seasonal hampers with Age Concern’s goodies and included a gift card on behalf of Crosby’s Soroptimists.



Whitechapel Centre, Liverpool – We donated toiletries for homeless people; also proceeds of our Christmas raffle; three baskets of luxury goodies, the contents of which were purchased by members of our Exec Team.

South Sefton Foodbank – One member has been able to continue as a volunteer during the pandemic. Members are therefore able to pass food donations via her. A special Christmas effort included toiletries and household items for the clients.



Walking Back to Happiness – This is a personal challenge for each club member throughout 2021, addressing our physical and mental wellbeing in these difficult times. So, while we exercise, we also savour the delights of our area – and snap the occasional photo. As you can see, not even an orthopaedic boot can stop a determined Soroptimist!



Members of Crosby Executive Team donated luxury items which were then raffled during our Virtual Christmas party. Membership Chair, Claire Baxter co-ordinated and created these lovely hampers and proceeds were added to funds for distribution to nominated charities.

English is the Queerest Language - contributed by Caroline Holmes (SI Bootle & District)

We'll begin with a box, and the plural is boxes,
But the plural of Ox should be oxen, not oxes,
Then one fowl is goose, but two are called geese,
Yet the plural of mouse, should never be meese,
You may find a lone mouse or a whole nest of mice,
But the plural of house is houses, not hice.

If the plural of man is always called men,
Why shouldn't the plural of pan be called pen?
The cow in the plural may be cows or kine,
But a bow if repeated is never called bine,
And the plural of vow is vows, never vine.

If I speak of a foot and you show me your feet,
And I give you a boot would a pair be called beet?
If one is a tooth, and a whole set are teeth,
Why shouldn't the plural of booth be called beeth?

If the singular's this and the plural is these,
Should the plural of kiss ever be nicknamed keese?
Then one may be that, and three would be those,
Yet hat in the plural would never be hose,
And the plural of cat is cats, not cose.

We speak of a brother, and also of brethren.
But when we say mother, we never say methren,
Then the masculine pronouns are he, his and him,
But imagine the feminine she, shis and shim.

So, the English, I think, you will all agree,
Is the queerest language you ever did see.