



Soroptimist  
Weston-super-Mare

# Newsletter

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## Report of Programme Action Committee 2011/12 (Extract)

### AWARENESS

**Contact the elderly** – on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2011 Helen Ker came to talk to

the club about this charity which organises tea parties for older guests. Then on March 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 several of us attended their Open Evening in Bristol & discovered how many enthusiastic young people were volunteers.

**Human trafficking** – at Regional meeting in February 2012 several of us heard David Dale speak – he is a policeman on the Devon & Cornwall Police Serious & Organised Crime Team who has a special interest in Human Trafficking.

**Bottled water** – a small committee of dedicated Waterbabes have been advancing their knowledge of issues round water – tap & bottled - with a view to starting a campaign to encourage people to drink tap water rather than bottled – at £1/litre for bottled versus 0.01p for tap it's a no-brainer, as they say. An ongoing project – more Action next year.

**Ovarian cancer** – a SIGBI PA topic – our awareness campaign is just starting.

### ADVOCACY

**Human trafficking** - keeping abreast of the Purple Teardrop campaign & formulating letters to John Penrose

**Birthing in the Pacific** Dec 10<sup>th</sup> President's Appeal – some of us sent off letters to MPs about the issue of maternal support in childbirth. This was an attempt to mob MPs as opposed to doing a live Flashmob. We also raised over £100 towards the President's Appeal itself – probably because we were collecting at the Christmas party at Emily's when everyone was feeling bucolic – mellow?

**Join me on the Bridge** – March 8<sup>th</sup> – International Women's Day - gathering on the Winscombe bridge on the old railway line in support of Women for Women International

### ACTION

**Skirting Science** – it was a great year for Skirting Science... our 3<sup>rd</sup> Skirting Science event was held on May 13<sup>th</sup> and went well.

At an unforgettable – to those of us who were there Ruth, Liz & Melanie - International Convention in Montreal in July S.S. won a Best Practice Award & then was declared to be the Best project in the world. What an exciting time!

At the SIGBI conference in Brighton we (in the form of Ruth & Anne G.) were finally presented with the International Best Practice certificate

Finally, on March Solihull SI club held their own S.S. event, closely following our template and making me and Ruth very proud to be there.

**International Literacy day** – 8<sup>th</sup> September – Anne W dressed up as the Queen of Hearts and read to children outside the Early Learning Centre.

**Macmillan Coffee morning** – 30<sup>th</sup> September at MD's house. Coffee, cakes, recipe books, quilling.

**Domestic Abuse** – led by Amanda, we are doing our bit to support the local Women's refuge by supplying items for the Gempacs. Amanda is also heading a committee planning to distribute the "Love me, Love me not" posters in schools. Amanda has held several events over the year which increase awareness of domestic abuse issues and raise money for the refuge – an Awareness day was held on Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> in recognition of International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women and another at the end of February this year.

**Wine into Water** – a campaign to support Water Aid by having events with a vinous connection to raise money for the charity before March 22<sup>nd</sup> – World Water Day. We had an evening at Ronnie's involving drinking wine & getting into her pool – raised £32. Also a pledge to give 50p or £1 per glass of wine drunk between March 15<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Contact the Elderly** – March 25<sup>th</sup> – Melanie David hosted a tea for this charity. 4 women & 4 men older guests plus drivers. Carole, Anne W, Ronnie, Joan & Mike, Shelagh all helped by providing food &/or being there.

### Ongoing club Action –

Hospital shop, Lifeboat shop, Windwhistle school, Talking news, Cancer research UK committee, recycling (Sylvia).

### The Soroptimist Winge.

I am a Soroptimist, so don't say "chiroprapist"  
They deal with corns and blisters while we are best of sisters!  
Perhaps now they're podiatrists, we don't need psychiatrists to help us all to cope,  
when yet another dope confuses chiroprapist with soroptimist.

My other little grumble concerns a frequent bumble, a sorry tale to tell, our name  
they will misspell !

It's not an "o", it's "i", this is the reason why;  
First there's "Sor" for sisters (Have you got that Mister?)  
Then comes "optima", the best, we're not like all the rest !  
So please when next you write our name in black & white  
Recall this poem that I recite and then maybe you 'll get it right !

## Fund Raising



Christmas Fair at the Winter gardens – November 2011



Christmas Fair at the Museum  
December 2012



Soroptimist International of Weston-super-Mare held a very successful fund-raising event at The Winter gardens in the town, "An Evening with Ann Widdecombe". Over 200 guests sat down to listen to the former politician deliver a highly entertaining account of her life in politics, her career as a novelist and her involvement in "Strictly Come Dancing". Following the talk Ann answered questions from the audience on a variety of subjects for almost an hour. Nothing was taboo and Ann answered every question honestly and in her trademark forthright manner. This was then followed by a book signing session and a buffet. The event raised over £800:00 for the Women's Refuge thanks to Miss Widdecombe's generosity.

The fashion show took place on the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012 and has become our annual most successful event.





## Work in the community

### Soroptimists working in the Garden of Fragrance in Grove Park, Weston-super-Mare



Our club has a strong link with the blind and the Garden of Fragrance. A beautiful garden gate was donated by the club some

years ago. Money is presently very tight and the club was asked if we were willing to do some gardening.

## JOIN ME ON THE BRIDGE



March 8<sup>th</sup> 2012 was International Women's Day and to mark this day Soroptimists from Weston-super-Mare met on the old railway bridge in Winscombe which is now part of the Strawberry Line Walk. We were supporting Women for Women International, an organisation which provides women survivors of war, civil strife and other conflicts with the tools and resources to move from crisis and poverty to stability and self-sufficiency. Their "Join me on the Bridge" campaign

started in 2010 when women from The Congo and Ruanda met on the bridge between their two war-torn countries to start to build bridges of peace. Now women all round the world, including many Soroptimists, meet on bridges in the cause of peace.

Weston Soroptimists gathered on the Winscombe bridge and offered walkers and other passers-by refreshment in the form of tea, coffee and home-made cake. At the same time we informed them about Women for Women, International Women's Day and Soroptimist International. Fourteen members of our club took part and we were joined by 3 members from Bridgwater.





A two full pages in Somerset Life was dedicated to Soroptimist International. Photo taken in Knightstone, Weston-super-Mare



Celebrating the Queen's Jubilee at Moira's with a visitor from Canada (behind Margaret).



Annual Lunch with Mayor of Weston.  
By his side, Anne and Ronnie.  
And Regional President



Ronnie presenting a bouquet to our new President Anne for 2012/2013.