



# Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region Newsletter



SUMMER 2020

## Lockdown Times

### I CAN'T BE BOTHERED

by [Lesley Berry](#)

(Translation available!)

1) It came from out o' nowhere  
Well .... From Wuhan to be exact.  
I think that's middle o' China  
But don't quote me for a fact.

2) And now it's here I'd like to think  
That I'm ready for the fight.  
To be the perfect role model  
To face t'virus wi' all mi might.

3) Truth is ..... I can't be bothered  
To compete wi' all around.  
When challenges are sent my way  
The more I go to ground.

4) I'm not painting or doing handstands  
Or learning to speak Hindu.  
My biggest challenge so far  
..... getting a refund from Jet2.

5) I can't be bothered cooking  
From haute cuisine I will refrain.  
Why try to impress 'im indoors  
When his palate is so plain.

6) Some meat and boiled potatoes  
Keeps him more than satisfied.  
Why risk a monkfish bouillabaisse?  
Just to have it vilified.

7) I can't be bothered sewing  
At school, t'were never a passion.  
By t'time I'd sewn a dirndl skirt –  
The bugger had gone out o'fashion!

8) If left to me this PPE  
Would falter at first fence so  
I'll just let the proper sewers  
Do their job – it makes more sense.

9) I can't be bothered running,  
Walking, yoga and the like.  
I can't do twenty press-ups  
Or ten miles on mi bike.

10) I'd rather sit on t'sofa  
And get my daily fix  
Of thrusting hips and biceps  
Wi' that the'er young Joe Wicks.

11) Can't even be bothered clapping  
On Thursdays wi' them next door.  
At first we clapped and rattled pots  
Now mi chin's dropped to the floor!

12) For kids come out wi' violins  
And Dad with his euphonium.  
But Mum's display o' fire-eating  
Well .... 'twere pandemonium!

13) I do my clapping quietly  
Then raise a glass or two  
To all those frontline workers  
Who look after me and you.

14) No I can't compete so I just sit  
Wi' a glass o' Pinot Noir  
And dream about mi 'oliday plans  
From Marrakech to Bogotá.

15) I dream about my family  
And hugging them so tight  
And telling them I love them  
Knowing it's going to be alright x

### Lockdown Lingo:

Words and phrases now in everyday use:

- Furlough
- Lockdown
- Self Isolating
- Social Distancing
- Stay Safe
- Pandemic
- PPE
- Unprecedented
- Zoom

### Inside this issue:

President Rita	2
SIYAMS	2
Covid caring	3-5
Clubs News	6-7
Diary Dates	8
Obituaries	8

## President Rita's Regional Programme Action

### SI Yorkshire

On Monday, March 16th, a lighthearted 'Glen Cottage Isolation Unit' Day 1' posting was made on the Soroptimists - Yorkshire Facebook site. It was also posted on Soroptimist International GBI. It was not intended to be a daily posting, but that's what it has become and at the time of publishing the newsletter, will be up to Day 96. The postings cover a variety of topics, serious, personal and humorous. They have highlighted Mental Health Awareness Week, National Volunteers Week and Carers Week. The postings have been

shared widely by individual club members, SIGBI Board members and Regional Presidents. There have also been daily Tweets using the @SiScarborough and @SUYorkshire handles. These have also been retweeted by Board members, clubs and individual members. One day the postings will stop, but they have been something that President Rita feels she could do in the limited circumstances, using the Programme Action '3 As'. Action, Awareness and Advocacy.

### Message from President Rita

I would like to thank Liz Hayes of SI Dewsbury for continuing to assemble the quarterly newsletter for SI Yorkshire.

The 2019/20 themes of 'Every Club, Every Member' and 'Not a Write Off' have never been so important.

Soroptimists are, by nature, resourceful women. We will come through these challenging times and use our experiences to carry on being a positive force in the world.

In friendship  
President Rita

## Askham Bryan Update



We are all truly saddened that the June Regional Council Meeting has been cancelled due to the restrictions set by the Government. This is a great disappointment, not only for the Region, but also for the women and staff at Askham Grange Prison who thoroughly enjoy our visits.

At the beginning of May we received an email from Dawn Hudson at Askham Grange to say that the conference centre is temporarily closed until at least July. She reported that it is a difficult time for the ladies but they are allowing them to face time with their families. Furthermore, they are providing extra support and activities to keep them busy especially during the weekends.

Although the coffee shop next to their Garden Centre is closed, Dawn is working with a couple of the ladies in the

training kitchen cooking and baking to provide takeaways from the internal coffee shop.

Staff at the Prison thanked us for keeping in touch and promised to keep us updated with any developments there.

They all send their best wishes to Soroptimists across the Region. *Chris Clark*



## SIYAMS

Since the beginning of the lockdown due to Covid19, it has been distressing to hear of a 49% rise in calls to domestic abuse helplines, and more shockingly, that 14 women and 2 children were killed in domestic violence in the first three weeks of lockdown.

On the 28th April, the Domestic Abuse Bill had its second reading in Parliament. Our Programme Action team asked clubs to write to their MPs to ask for support to an amendment proposed by the Prison Reform Trust, for legal protection for women who offend as a result of abuse and coercion.

On 12th May, SIYAMS had its first zoom meeting and discussed Make Yourself Heard; a way to alert the operator on a 999 call that someone is in danger by pressing 55. Please help by sharing the image below on social media. You can find it on the Soroptimist Yorkshire Facebook page.

*Pat Kilbane, Chair, SIYAMS*

## Make yourself Heard

In danger, need the police, but can't speak?

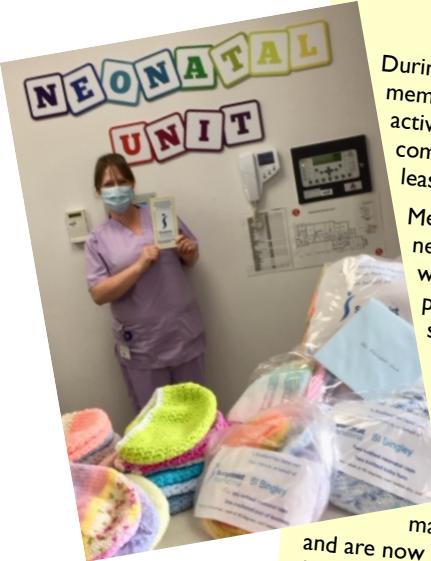


**OPC** Independent Office for Police Conduct

Supported by  
**women's aid**  
until women & children are safe

**NPCC** National Police Chiefs' Council

## Covid Care in the Community



### Si Bingley's Response During The Coronavirus Pandemic

During the extended lockdown SI Bingley members are busy with a variety of activities which are supporting their local community, their local hospital, and, not least, each other.

Members are baking and shopping for neighbours, cooking for frontline workers and regularly telephoning people living alone. They have made sets of scrub bags for NHS workers at Bradford Royal Infirmary and members and their families have knitted over 3 dozen baby 'beanie' hats, several blankets, bootees and teddies for the local hospital Neonatal unit. They have also made masks for family and friends and are now making the new style 'bonnet' which Bradford Royal Infirmary staff are wearing as part of their PPE.

The Bingley Community Kitchen, a project initiated by a Bingley member and supported by SI Bingley is cooking and distributing meals for local vulnerable families during the pandemic.

Members have joined the NHS Responder scheme and, through the Samaritans are supporting vulnerable individuals. Members are also involved in befriending the elderly.

Members have also sent cards to all Care and Nursing homes in the area and Primary and Secondary schools expressing their thanks for the efforts made by all staff in these settings to keep residents and pupils safe.

A telephone tree, Zoom meetings and Zoom coffee mornings and active WhatsApp and Facebook groups ensure that members are in regular contact with each other during this challenging time, making a difference and keeping alive the mission and ethos of Soroptimism.



### COVID 19: Bingley Community Kitchen feeds hungry families and vulnerable adults

Bingley Community Kitchen (BCK) is a local organisation located within Trinity All Saints C of E Primary School. During the current corona virus pandemic, volunteers are cooking nutritious take away meals for families in need and disadvantaged adults living within the Bingley area.



The aims for the community kitchen are twofold: firstly, to provide free meals for needy

families during school holidays in partnership with all local schools, churches within the Bingley area and local community groups, and secondly to provide meals and activities for disadvantaged members of the community throughout the year.

However, with school closures there was an immediate need to provide free meals for needy families throughout the week as children were unable to receive their usual free school meals. Several parents had been made redundant rather than being furloughed and so this put additional pressure on the families.

As two of our club's Soroptimists are the chair and secretary of Bingley Community Kitchen we were quickly able to identify two volunteers who were furloughed to plan and cook the meals. Over the last 12 weeks they have planned, shopped, and cooked well

balanced meals for an ever changing number of families. Soroptimists have also donated food and made generous monetary donations towards the cost of the takeaway meals.

Families have received nearly 1000 nutritious meals over the period of the lock down. The BCK has certainly addressed a need within the local community but as children go back to school, the need may be reduced gradually as the children will once again be receiving free school meals. The next step is ascertain the need for the usual Summer Hunger Project. It is likely to look very different this year as parents and children usually cook a meal together. This will not be possible if social distancing is still in place. Even if this does not take place, there will still be a need to provide free nutritious meals and there may even be a greater need as the impact of the recession is felt.

A quote from one mum, "We usually receive help from my family by visiting grandparents a couple of times every week and eating there and it hasn't been allowed so that is why I needed help. I would need to use the food bank if the kitchen was not operating but I prefer to use the kitchen."

A Just Giving page has been set up to help subsidise the project especially as large equipment had to be purchased for mass catering. Two primary school youngsters decided they wanted to do something to raise money for the Community Kitchen by scaling Mount Everest. They hope to achieve this by climbing up and down their stairs 639 times a day over a 7 day period and are seeking sponsorship from their family and friends. Do take a look at the page to see their progress!

[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/communitykitchen-bingley?utm\\_term=Qwg7KdyXD](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/communitykitchen-bingley?utm_term=Qwg7KdyXD)

**SI Garforth Get Busy**

For the past three years, SI Garforth Elmet has supported the Joanna Project in Leeds. It is based at Joanna House, and supports women with multiple disadvantages, many of whom have addictions, so often end up in prostitution.

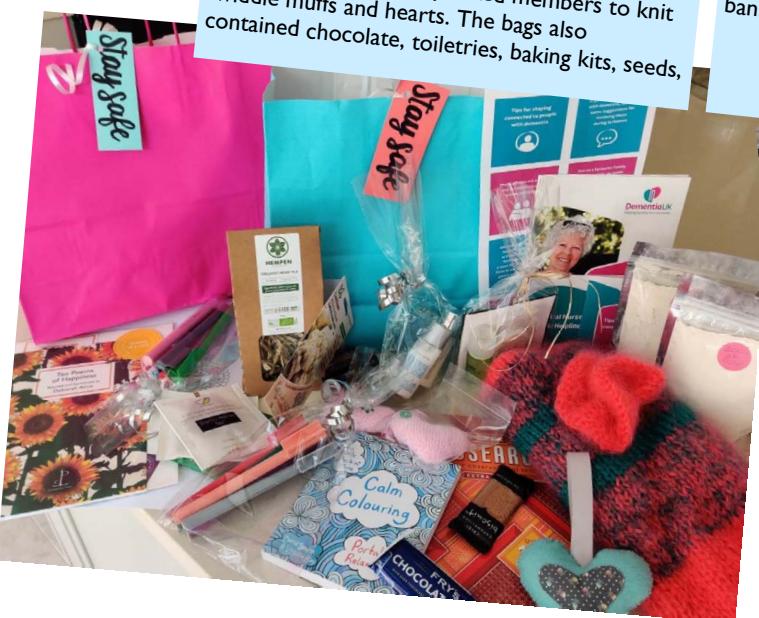
During the Covid19 crisis, Joanna House has been closed but the outreach team are out every day to help the women in this difficult time. SI Garforth Elmet have taken supplies of toiletries, food and mindfulness books for the project. These were gratefully received by their Director, Jackie Hird.

**SI Dewsbury's Crafty Efforts**

After months of knitting by members pre and during lockdown, cot blankets of all colours and sizes were delivered to The Forget Me Not Trust.

Sewing skills were put to good use too, Sue G made some scrub bags, Chris C made some facial coverings and Catherine made loads of masks and distributed to care homes

Two of the members are Admiral Nurse Ambassadors and were approached to help with comfort bags for the Admiral Nurses in Kirklees to give out to carers, dementia sufferers and recently bereaved. They asked members to knit twiddle muffs and hearts. The bags also contained chocolate, toiletries, baking kits, seeds,



puzzle books, tea, pens and biscuits. Over 100 were distributed.

President Kathleen was asked if they could knit pairs of hearts for Halifax & Huddersfield Royal Infirmarys. One would stay with the family member and the other would be given to the patient in hospital. Nurse Catherine, a neighbour of President Kathleen, was delighted to receive them.

The Big Lunch is an annual event, a thanksgiving weekend for neighbours and communities. President Kathleen suggested that instead of members lunching, they donated to the five food banks in the area.





If you'd asked SI Harrogate at the beginning of March what the word Zoom meant most would have said to 'go quickly'. But then the world changed. Like many clubs, we now very familiar with Zoom. We have a Zoom coffee morning every week, we held a Zoom AGM and change of office, our Exec meets monthly and so does the Club and we are starting having speakers using Zoom. It doesn't replace the real thing but it has proved excellent way of staying in touch along with our buddying system, Fun newsletter and fortnightly President Sandra's Bulletin. The Club's Programme Action activities have continued apace with Scrub sets and pamper bags for NHS Staff. Knitted hearts for patients

**SI Richmond & Dales** have supported the Richmond Food Bank for some time, through their Period Poverty programme - supplying sanitary products for women and girls in need. But with the onset of the Coronavirus, and the increased demand on the Food Bank, it was thought that support in a more varied way was needed. Soroptimist member Chris Bowran put a request out to members to donate food and other household items - and to leave them on the bench by her front door.

The club was overwhelmed by the amazing support of members, and Presidents Faye Doorbar & Jane Priestley loaded the car to deliver a huge offering to the Food Bank, which was gratefully received.

Members of SI Richmond & Dales were dismayed to receive worrying news from their sister members in Zimbabwe.

Richmond & Dales have been helping the Soroptimist Group in Harare for many years, both with donations of dollars, and also with practical items for the many projects the Harare club are undertaking to help others in their area, who are much worse off.

We all knew the situation was not good, but hearing from a person directly affected by the

dreadful regime made it more real to us.

But a five week lockdown, to stem the spread of Coronavirus, has had a disastrous impact, and dealt a final blow to any precarious livelihood.

'No one can remember the last time a tap worked' - people are having to buy water, and very often queue for 12 hours at a bore hole - something we in the UK cannot begin to imagine.

Coronavirus has hit the country, which for years has

been crippled by corruption, droughts and disastrous land grabs under the previous government, and its successor. But as we hear 'when you are starving and the stomachs of your children are grumbling so loudly, who can worry about having a face mask or keeping at a social distance?'

'How can you wash your hands, when there isn't even enough water to drink'

Half the population of 15 million lack food and water, and inflation is almost 700 per

and carers with COVID. Bedding sets for our local Refuge and pillow cases converted into laundry bags for the care sector workers. Many of our members have increased their use of technology to stay in touch with friends and family

Change often takes many years to happen but the pandemic has made many of us change what we do and how we do it very quickly. We don't know when we will all meet face to face again but right now technology is enabling us to feel we are seeing each other face to face and carrying on with our great club work.



cent. The Health System, once Africa's finest is now wrecked.

There have been 34 reported cases of Coronavirus and 4 deaths - but with woeful rates of testing, the virus's true impact is a mystery.

Soroptimist Richmond & Dales have been delighted to send £500 by Western Union, and as always, donated as US dollars (the only currency acceptable). They will endeavour raise more funds, and send further dollars in the near future.

## Meeting Challenges

### SI Selby

SI Selby held its Annual General Meeting online this year, as members were unable to meet with the current social restrictions arising from the coronavirus.

Secretary Hilary Putman explained that all the reports were sent to members by email. This included a lovely collage of SI Selby members and different activities undertaken during 2019-2020, put together by Lindsay Green, a member of SI Selby and Vice President of SI Yorkshire. Members also voted by email on the distribution of the funds raised during the year for charity. SI Selby gave a donation to the International President's Charity, "The Road to Equality". Payments are also made to other Soroptimist charities through members' subscriptions. But the main beneficiaries this year were local charities, in particular Sleepsafe Selby, flood relief and Carers Count.

A speaker from the Foodbank in Selby came and spoke to the Club - before the lockdown - and members generously gave food, household items and toiletries required by the Foodbank. They continue to give now, using the donation baskets located in the supermarkets.

2019-2020 was described in the Review of the Club Year as "unique and challenging", and it was thought that 2020-2021 might be the same. Honorary Member Judith Cooke referred to this in her Vote of Thanks but said that the Club had come through the year very well and she thanked all the members for their commitment, service and friendship. She was confident that SI Selby would continue to do the same in 2020-2021.

A toast to SI Selby was proposed for 8 pm that evening and many members raised their glasses - in their own homes, of course.

---

The week, Monday 1 June until Sunday 7 June, is National Volunteers Week. The members of SI Selby would like to thank and pay tribute to all volunteers, locally, nationally and internationally, who give their time, energy, expertise and



experience, free of charge, to help others and make things better worldwide.

Selby currently has 23 members and all give service - both now and before the lockdown. Four members were involved in the Monday Luncheon Club, run by Dementia Forward, for people with dementia and their carers. Another four members helped individual children with their reading in local primary schools. Other members were readers, editors and copiers for Selby District Talking News. Everyone contributed to the fund raising events, which resulted in donations to Sleepsafe Selby, Carers Count and local flood relief.

Judith Cooke said "in addition to giving service locally, we support regional, national and international projects. We wrote to our local MP recently about the Domestic Abuse Bill. Internationally, the links with our Friendship Clubs in Australia, Germany and Ukraine are getting stronger as we exchange emails, newsletters and updates to support each other in these difficult times.

All the members are volunteers and give freely of their services how and best they can. We therefore appreciate the efforts of all volunteers everywhere. Members are making face coverings and scrub bags. Others are working with local Volunteer Support Networks - telephoning isolated and vulnerable people - and one member offered her services to the National Volunteer Scheme. Members are making donations to their local

### Foodbanks..

Member Hilary Putman walked the same stretch of the canal in Selby, between Brayton and Burn bridges, every day for 26 days, to raise money for Sleepsafe Selby. Hilary said "with the London Marathon being postponed this year, many people are undertaking challenges involving 26.. I enjoy walking and thought I would set myself a personal challenge of walking the same stretch of the canal every day for 26 days. It's a nice walk, with different birds on the water and quite a number of people walking, running and cycling along these days. I then thought it would be good to raise some money doing this for a local charity. I consulted with the other members of SI Selby. We had a vote and decided that any money raised would be given to Sleepsafe Selby - a local charity, which works with and for homeless people across the Selby district".

A JustGiving page has been set up - <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/hilary-putman> if you would like to support Hilary and give to Sleepsafe Selby.

The photograph shows Hilary on Day 1 of her Walk on VE Day, Friday 8 May.



## SI Leeds Literary Prize 2020: update

### Latest News

With all the restrictions of COVID 19, I am delighted to report that the 2020 SI Leeds Literary Prize can still go rolling on. Writing and reading are, by their very nature, largely solitary pursuits, unaffected by a global pandemic.

### Entries for the Prize

Entries closed on 30 April, and there were some concerns that busy women with young children would not be able to complete their entries on time, with the unexpected additional demands of home schooling etc. But women rise to the occasion, and we have received 41 entries, a total very much in line with previous years. These have been sifted by professional readers, and the standard is reported to be exceptionally high. The judges now have the entries that have made the first cut, and their longlist of twelve will be announced in July. The shortlist of six will be decided towards the end of August.

### Readers' Choice – it's not too late to sign up

I set out in some detail in the previous Newsletter how to sign up to be one of the readers of the six shortlisted entries. We have had a very good response to the call this year, but if you would like to join us, there is still time to sign up. Just email us at: [literaryprizereaderschoice@gmail.com](mailto:literaryprizereaderschoice@gmail.com) and we will be in touch.

### Awarding this year's prize

Those of you who have been readers before will know that we hold an award event as part of the Ilkley Literature Festival in October, to which the readers have in past years been invited. I am sure you will not be surprised to hear that ILF's ability to run live events in the autumn is looking uncertain at this stage. But there will be an award celebration; how it will be managed has yet to be decided. Watch this space, and meanwhile happy reading!

*Val Saunders*

Chair, SI Leeds Literary Prize Advisory Panel

## SI Leeds

## Uplifting Efforts

It has been a strange and unprecedented few months since our last RCM in March. As in many clubs SI Scarborough are keeping in touch in various ways – Zoom Executive and Club meetings, a WhatsApp group, regular telephone contact with members and now, hopefully, the start of meetings together in small numbers. We have also individually been involved in making masks and gowns, supporting neighbours and friends with shopping, supporting others in our community by providing a friendly ear, contributing to Food Banks etc..

We have also participated in the British Red Cross Virtual Balloon Race, an environmentally safe fund-raiser, which began on 2nd June from Westminster Abbey and finished on 9th June. Each balloon cost £3.00. Our club raised £192 for the British Red Cross Hardship Fund which is used to support families affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. We are waiting for the final results early next week to see whose balloon travelled the farthest around the world!

We have been reminded of the SIGBI memorial at the National Arboretum by the appeal

launched in last Friday's SIGBI News Briefing for a new statue to be installed. One of our members, Susan Chapman, was at the unveiling in 2003 of the first SIGBI plaque there in memory of Barbara Ford, a president of SI Scarborough in 2002/2003 who sadly died during her term of office.

Best wishes to everyone from all members of SI Scarborough.

*Angela Edwards*



## SI Scarborough

## Remembering the Forgotten Women

During 2018/19 S I Wakefield supported a local project 'Forgotten Women of Wakefield' and raised £500 for a blue plaque in memory of Wakefield-born suffragist Florence Beaumont.

Another 'Forgotten Woman' was Louisa Fennell (1847-1930) best known as a painter of landscapes and townscapes of the towns and cities of the West Riding of Yorkshire. She was buried in St John's graveyard, Wakefield, and S I Wakefield agreed to clean the grave, plant it, and continue to maintain it. Once lockdown has ended we will be able to revisit and replant.

Recently one of our Members, Pauline, was looking through a local history site and found an article about Louisa saying she had won a prize of £1 (equivalent to £120 today) in a national competition in 1870 for Lady Students in Schools of Art in designs for fans. Twenty-seven Schools of Art submitted ninety one fans.



## SI Wakefield

## Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region

### A Word from the Editor

What a change in everything since the last newsletter. Events and plans changed overnight for all.

However in adversity Soroptimists always come to the fore and shine, as demonstrated in all the reports this time: Baking, knitting, sewing, shopping, donating to foodbanks, keeping in touch and anything else needed to help others where necessary.

Hopefully the new normal will be in place by the next time, so:

Keep Safe and Carry On

Liz Hayes

## Obituaries

### Carol Taylor

#### SI Skipton in Craven

Carol Taylor of SI Skipton in Craven died suddenly on February 1<sup>st</sup>. Carol had only been a member for a few years but in that short time she contributed greatly to the club. Among other things she knitted lots of scarves and gloves for the Christmas Boxes we send to the International Aid Trust, and used to set up of the Clubroom for our monthly lunches. She had a keen sense of humour often delivering witty jokes and observations. Carol loved animals and spent a lot of time dog- and cat-sitting while people went on holiday. The members of Si Skipton in Craven will miss her greatly.

### Pat Hems

#### SI Ilkley



It is with sadness that the Ilkley Club report the death of Pat Hems on April 8<sup>th</sup> at aged 85.

Pat joined SI Ilkley as a Spirella corsetiere in 1966 but it was as the landlady of the Midland Hotel that she will be remembered.

She served the club in many posts and twice as President. Pat was often asked to go forward for Region office but she always declined, happy to put all her energies and enthusiasm into furthering

Soroptimism in Ilkley.

Pat was an enthusiastic, outward looking, international Soroptimist, a popular delegate at Region gatherings, Federation Conferences and International Conventions, attending her first International Convention in Sheffield in 1975.

Pat had a big, generous heart. Her indomitable spirit and sense of fun brought joy to everybody. The many wonderful memories of her that we now share and cherish will ease the ache in our hearts at her passing.

### Newsletter Submission

#### Guidelines

News Reports: maximum of 400 words in a Word document or email

Obituaries: maximum 150 words

Photos: Unmanipulated original images of high resolution sent as an attachment not embedded in a text document. No collage/montages.

email: ehayes1@sky.com

<u>Diary Dates - 2020</u>		
<b>JUNE</b>		
Saturday 29	Yorkshire Conference – Elvington Air Museum	
<b>JULY</b>		
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup>	Regional Officers Meeting - morning meeting 9.30pm	
Saturday 7	UKPAC Safety Day in Ruislip	
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>		
Saturday 26	RCMHS Annual St Francis Xavier School, Richmond	
<b>OCTOBER</b>		
Saturday 5	Regional Officers Meeting - morning meeting 9.30	
Thurs 24 - Sat 26	SIGBI conference Bournemouth	

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - September 15th 2020**

*ALL EVENTS UNDER REVIEW UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE*