Soroptimist International St Albans & District



www.sigbi.org/st-albans

Newsletter
December 2019



Letter from the Editor

With apologies for taking longer this time but have had a few hiccups on the way

I do hope you enjoy this edition. The "since the last newsletter" section shows the many things we have done lately. There have been two "Friendship Link" events. I always enjoy doing this section as it is a reminder to me of how much we do. If I sometimes think we don't do much, I then realise we do more than we think. Apart from all the Club evenings we have. A few Members plus husbands visited our friends in Muenster Germany and had a fabulous weekend with lots of fun, friendship, and food. Then we had a visit from three friends from Warsaw in Poland. They were taken out and about in St Albans and Bletchley Park, had supper at mine one evening and Sarah the other evening, and ate out the other. To see more about any of these items do please look at Club News on our website (see top right hand corner this page) where Jane Slatter does an excellent job recording all of our events.

I am in the process of launching a small fund raiser, **Recycle4charity".** All those of us who use a computer and printer can easily take part. I can give you an envelope (or two) and all you have to do is when you put a new ink cartridge into your printer put the old one into this envelope, seal it, and put it into a letter box – easy??? Recylce4Charity will add £1 for every cartridge they receive to our account and each quarter send that money to our bank account for us to give to charity. Some of you have said to me "oh but I don't use many cartridges" It doesn't matter. We are nearly thirty Members and if on average each one of us donates one or two each year that sum of money will soon mount up.



I am not expecting major fund raising here but all these sums add up, and after all we do advocate recycling. Do look at the Recycle4Charity web site to see more. I now get their newsletter which I am happy to forward on to anybody who wants to see it.

We do have some newsy items this time which I hope you will read. I can't stress enough the value of looking at the website where you can find much more information on any item that interests you. Jane Slatter does an excellent job keeping it up-to-date and interesting. Also a good place to check on what is going on in our Programme.

Meanwhile I wish you a very happy Christmastime and look forward to meeting up again in January.

Jean

Groan from Jean....

An airplane carrying 60 Mexican lawyers to a convention in Rio crashed and landed directly on the border between Columbia, Venezuela and Brazil. Under International Law where should the survivors be buried?
Answer at the end.

Denise Powell, our new London Chilterns Region President from our Club has kindly agreed to a Q&A piece for our newsletter.

1

You joined in 2011. How did you get know about our organisation and why did you decide to join?

My sister has been a Member of SI Southport for nearly 40 years, and was constantly talking about it. When I was starting to plan my retirement I was with her and we were chatting about Soroptimists and there and then she looked up the local Club to me and I made contact. I went along for a couple to taster sessions, and really liked the warmth and enthusiasm of the ladies I met. So when I was invited to join, I accepted without hesitation.

2

Has the Club met your aspirations? If so how?

I am a great believer that you only get out what you put in. This was apparently obvious to certain Members of the Club, as I hadn't been a Member for very long at all before someone who shall be nameless put my hand (gently) up my back and asked if I would be President the following year. I declined but did agree to be Secretary for a year before becoming President. So in terms of aspirations to get involved in something, I would say those have been well and truly met! The innovation of the 'Team' approach in the Club has really helped more folks to be involved in the real heart of what we are about – Programme Action.

3

What do you particularly like about the organisation? Or not like?

My big regrets about Soroptimists are firstly that there are still so many people who say 'Soroptimists, what are they? are they something to do with feet or eyesight'. Secondly, and this may simply be the same thing in a different guise, our inability to recruit and retain younger Members, I really do feel that the National and International organisations need to apply some serious consideration to this.

4

I you were to make changes to the Club, what would they be?

I would love more of the Club Members to become involved (even in small ways). In the running of the Club. I know that Exec meetings etc are not for everyone, but I really would encourage every Member to think about what THEY can do, what little role they can take on. I think this would bring everyone even closer together.

5

Why have you decided to become the Regional President and what do you most look forward to in your year?

I am really not very good at saying no, and after a number of approaches I found myself agreeing to be Regional President this year, following a 'Rainbow Year' where different Members of Regional Exec led each meeting. I firmly believe that any organisation needs leadership, even if only a figure-head, in order to maintain cohesion. That isn't to say that Regional Exec did anything other than a great job, but I do believe that Rainbow years should not be the norm either at Club or Regional level.

The Region is a bit of an oddity in the organisation, indeed its role has come under some scrutiny over the last couple of years. My feeling is that Clubs can be very insular – it is very positive that Clubs have a great deal of autonomy about how they work and what they do, but with so much wonderful activity happening, it is a shame not to share it. That is why I said at the handover of the Presidency that I would love to see Clubs find ways to work together and to share the great work that they do. I very much see it as my role to facilitate this and I am hopeful that we will have a Regional project that we can all work on. I would love to see greater attendance at Regional meetings, where the focus will be on hearing about how all the Clubs are addressing the Vision and Mission of Soroptimism and on identifying common activities or those that could be copied or shared amongst Clubs. Similarly, I would love there to be a HUGE representation from London Chilterns Region at next year's Conference in Belfast, when I will hand over my chain of office to person/persons currently unknown! I have said innumerable times at Club meetings how valuable, moving and inspiring I have found all the Conferences I have attended (I haven't missed one since I joined the Club) – I simply cannot commend attendance enough for anyone that has never been.

6

What are your main interests/hobbies?

Somehow, I never seem to have time for hobbies as such. In addition to all my Soroptimist stuff, I am a magistrate in both adult criminal and family courts (and a Presiding Justice in family). I also run the Magistrates in the Community programme for the Primary Schools in Central Hertfordshire. I am Treasurer/Trustee for the Herts Domestic Abuse Helpline (another example of an inability to say no) as well as a call-taker. I occasionally teach for Computer Friendly (teaching IT to the elderly and disadvantaged).
I do make time to go to Rock Choir on a Wednesday morning – a great way to unwind and have some fun, I go to a fitness class (over 50s ladies only) once a week and also do Classical Chorus one or two Saturdays a month (I am a latecomer to classical music, and this is both an intellectual and vocal challenge!!)

7

When choosing holidays is there anywhere special you would still like to go?

I am really not an adventurous traveller. I recently went to China and that was a long way outside of my comfort zone, despite being an organised tour. But my Soroptimister loves travelling, so I suspect there will be another adventure or two once he retires.

Thank you Denise – We all hope you have a successful and enjoyable year. Jean

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Easy Fundraising

For Several months now, our Club has been signed up for Easy Fundraising and as a result when those Members who have joined and identified SI St Albans and District as their charity buy a product from certain suppliers on line, a donation is also made by the company to SISTA. To date, we have 4 supporters, and have raised nearly £70, and if you sign up before Christmas, maybe you can help us get to over £100. If you refer a friend an extra £5 will be donated.

It is easy to sign up or get the app on your phone or tablet. So, if you shop online, you too can raise FREE donations for Soroptimist International St Albans and District. Over 4,000 shops and sites will donate to us when you use #easyfundraising to shop with them! Please get involved! Visit:
https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/soropstalbans/?utm_campaign=raise-more

If you are starting some Christmas shopping you can raise money for Soroptimist International St Albans and District at the same time with DOUBLE DONATIONS at #easyfundraising this week! It's such an easy way to support us so please check it out!

Visit: http://efraising.org/JseVt7BzZD

Thanks Barbara

Since the last Newsletter….



August 30th-1st September. Four of our Members plus three Soroptimisters visited our friends in Muenster Germany. I was lucky enough to be one of the visitors and as always had a wonderful time. They make us so welcome and there is a lot of fun and friendship.

The picture to the right shows indoors on our first evening having been enjoying the garden until it got a little cool at the home of Sabine Schiller-Larg. The next day we had a tour ably led by Axel, a splendid Soroptimister and after lunch we had an open topped bus tour. Later that evening a splendid buffet supper was at the home Sylvia and Axel Vornhecke.



Sunday morning, having packed, we were taken to and guided round the Haus Rauschlaus the lovely home of poet Annette von Drost-Huschoff. See left for us all on the steps of the house. Off then to Burg Hulshoff, a beautiful moated castle where we had lunch before heading back to Dortmund airport.

Do have a look at the website for more details of this trip. I would always recommend these trips - Jean

www.sigbi.org/st-albans/2019/muenster2019/

October 14th

Bev Keech was introduced to the Club by Janet Tansley (right) who will be her mentor. Bev teaches Alexander Technique after a career in which she spent time in the theatre and training race horses and polo ponies. She looks really thrilled to join the Club – what a great photo!

Welcome Bev, we hope you will enjoy your Membership.





Irma Mullins (pictured here with Club President Kat Clark) came to tell us about the **New Leaf Wellbeing College** conceived in 2014. It provides free educational courses from centres across Hertfordshire including four in the St Albans area. The concept of a Recovery College has been around for about eight years and is about improving well-being through education, not therapy as such. It is about giving people hope and providing skills to negotiate and manage their continued well-being. Irma offered to run an evening creative arts session for Soroptimist Club Members next year in which she would be the tutor and Kat would assist. This suggestion was warmly welcomed.

Oct 7th

We remembered Mental Health Day. Many of us wore green to mark the day and we heard from Herts Rape Crisis about the counselling work that they do for victims

On the right are our "Members in green"





We also heard about Mindfulness from Ruth Ferenga who treated us to 10 minutes of mini meditation before we left for home in a peaceful state of mind. (perhaps we should do this more!!??)

Oct 12th

At the AGM regional meeting our own Denise became President of SI London Chilterns Region.

Here we see her on the left being presented with the chain of office from Rita Beaumont, Secretary of the Region. Five of our Members were there for the occasion and you can read more at

www.sigbi.org/london-chilterns/2019/10/16/agm/

Also find out more about Denise earlier in this newsletter In the Q & A session to which she kindly agreed .



Oct 13th Helen Byrne visits our Freindship Link in Osaka and writes…..

Members who attended our Club's 60th in April 2017 may reMember Keiko Kato and Midori Tanaka (& her daughter) from our Friendship Link Club SI Osaka who joined us for our celebrations .

As my husband , Ian, and I were to be in Japan for 5 weeks for the Rugby World Cup this autumn I was hoping we could return the gesture of friendship and meet up with them and other Members of their Club. Knowing we would have a hectic schedule I wasn't sure until about 1 month before we went that we would actually manage it. I am pleased to report that we succeeded, and what fun we all had, despite some last minute changes due to the impact of Typhoon Hagibis. We are carrying our shoes before entering the Zen Temple. Keiko (SI Osaka's current President) and Suiran U (Chair of International Goodwill and Understanding 2018-19) organised a fabulous day for us.



They, Midori and 6 other Executive Members of SI Osaka were kind enough to travel from Osaka to Kyoto to meet us, taking us on a fascinating tour of the Gion District – a very old part of Kyoto .



Top Row: Yoshie Naka; Keiko Kawanaka; Yoneko Iwamoto; Keiko Kato
From left to right. (President); Suiran U; Mari Takigawa (Vice President); Midori Tanaka; Mayumi Koyama
Botom Row: Helen and Ian Byrne; Taeko Sakamoto

We visited the ancient and beautiful Kennin-ji Temple,(below left) the oldest Zen Temple in Kyoto, founded in 1202.





There are many delights at Kennin-ji including this amazing painting of 2 dragons created early in the life of the temple, on the ceiling of the Dharma Hall
The temple also has a superb Zen garden. It is difficult to describe the calm these raked gardens create the instant you see them but perhaps this image gives a taste .

After the temple visit we were treated to an amazing lunch in a fine old restaurant where we were greeted by cheerful kimono-clad ladies who seated us in a traditional Japanese style room – with sliding paper-covered doors and tatami mats on the floor. Our meal was a feast of tempura - a real and exquisite Japanese speciality – and a gentle introduction to Japanese cuisine for foreigners like me. The Osaka ladies were delighted we were willing to partake in a traditional meal and even more so when they discovered that Ian loves Japanese food with a passion, especially raw fish. They introduce him to a new treat - cold sake : most sake is served hot in the UK.



At the end of the meal we had a brief walk through the fascinating streets Gion. Gion is the Geisha district of Kyoto although it's very rare to spot Geishas out and about. However we did see some young women in traditional dress. After our walk we dropped into a coffee shop before saying our final farewell. The ladies from SI Osaka heading back to the station to take the Shinkansen (the Bullet Train) back to Osaka and Ian and I heading back to our hotel, happy after our very special day.



The ladies from Osaka certainly know how to enjoy themselves and there was a warm buzz throughout the day. I was able to find out from Keiko a little about the structure of SI Osaka and their programme action and about the Soroptimist Conference she had attended the day before. The 50 strong Osaka Club provides different forms of support for vulnerable girls, including helping them with CVs and interviews, amongst other projects. In chatting to other Members I discovered that many of the Club's Members are fulltime business women so it was particularly kind of our hosts to give us so much of their precious time.

SI Osaka have invited our Club to share in the celebration of their 50th Anniversary on 12 May 2020. We will be organising a celebration here in the UK but it would be fantastic if any Members feel able to make the trip to Japan to join SI Osaka in what I am sure will be a memorable visit. If you might be interested in attending or would like to know more about the SI Osaka Club please contact Catherine Moore who is our Friendship Contact with Osaka or me.

Helen Byrne

Oct 18th-21st Three Members of our **Friendship Link in Warsaw,**



Barbara writes…….

Friendship Links – pure joy and mutual understanding
No matter that we originate from different political and cultural backgrounds, Soroptimist friendship links show there is so much more which unites women from around the world than that which divides nations and peoples. Our friendship links with Poland were established back in 2001 . Jane, Barbara and Sarah were the hosts for the visit from 3 Members of SI Warsaw became Members of our Club. Malgosia, Jola and Danusia arrived at Luton on a Friday afternoon for a whirlwind tour of Hertfordshire, its history and beautiful countryside. Although two of our guests had visited SI St Albans once before, we spent Friday evening getting to know each other at the Kings Lodge pub at Hunton Bridge - a former hunting lodge built for King Charles I in 1642. This historic hostelry has beautiful pargetting on the outside (a bit difficult to translate!) traditional beams and a large fireplace with plasterwork bearing the royal crest in the
main bar. As you can imagine, there was no shortage of chat! The autumn weather was kind to us, and with the trees in Verulamium Park just turning orange and yellow, we got the best view of the Abbey as we walked through the park for our guided tour on Saturday morning. Jean, Janet and her husband, and Madeline joined us at the cathedral where our tour was somewhat disrupted by a rehearsal for Mendelssohn's Elijah which was due to be performed that evening. Malgosia, whose daughter plays in an orchestra in Warsaw, certainly found the time listening to the rehearsal, and the wonderful voice of a young boy soprano one of the highlights of that day! After lunch at the Water End Barn, another historic inn, an afternoon sightseeing around the market, visiting the museum and some retail therapy everyone appreciated the chance to rest our feet, sink into some comfy chairs and enjoy a glass of wine and good company! Later was the wonderful buffet Jean put together for us all to enjoy that evening to which several other Members came.
During a weekend with a strong historical focus, our visit to Bletchley Park could not have been more appropriate, as a basis for cementing the friendships formed and sharing some common history. We were unaware of just how much investment has taken place on the Estate where the World War II codebreakers worked in secret to break the Enigma Code. Interactive displays, lots of human-interest stories, film, photographs and reconstructions of the huts where so many women (in particular) worked, Alan Turing's office and a substantial collection of codebreaking material and cipher machines kept us all enthralled. But none probably realised in advance the role of three Polish mathematicians played by sharing their work and a mock-up of an Enigma machine with the Allies early on and starting the process through which the codes could be cracked. So important was their contribution that a permanent memorial has now been erected.



L -R Malgosia, Danusia, Jane, Barbara, Jola, Sarah and Madeline at the Polish Memorial.

Sarah's vegetarian shepherd's pie and supper proved to be another hit on Sunday evening, and enabled our husbands and other Members to join in the festivities. All too soon the weekend came to an end, with warm words and hospitality shared by all, and an invitation to join SI Warsaw and other European Clubs in Krakov from 2-4 July 2021 for the 22nd Congress of SI Europe. The spirit of the weekend was spelt out by our Polish friends themselves who wrote :

"We are very grateful, from the bottom of our hearts, for your hospitality. We appreciate it very much. We had a wonderful time in St Albans and Watford and all the places we visited, especially The Bletchley Park. But the most important for us was just the time we spent together. For a moment we were a part of your everyday life, to some extent, of course. It is for sure the best way to know each other better and make the deeper relations. We also hope we make a progress in our English a little."

For more photos and other insights, please see www.sigbi.org/st-albans/2019/warsaw19/ *Barbara*.

Toilet Twinning. In our ambition to make St Albans a "Toilet twinned city" we were delighted to find that when St Peter's Church recently had their toilets reburbished they also installed no less than five certificates.



In the picture we have the Reverend Mark Dearnley, vicar of St Peter's Church and Natalie Liley, Churchwarden

They had seen the news item in the Herts Ad in August and took the opportunity to join our "St Albans Toilet Twinned City" campaign.

The number of twinned toilets in St Albans is growing, life-changing for many communities. We are well on the way to be appointed as an official 'Toilet Twinned City' – there is more news later in this newsletter too.

Oct 24th-26th Five Members of our Club attended the annual Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Conference this year in Bournemouth – they are pictured here from l to r Becca Powell, Denise Powell, Ann Beatty, Ameeta Sabharwal, Jane Slatter (plus the Club's mascot Sally Bear). To read the reports of the conference do go to the website www.sigbi.org/bournemouth2019 The theme was **#ThinkOnIt** and included some inspiring and thought provoking speakers on mental health. One of the speakers spoke very movingly about how working with the charity Toilet Twinning has helped her





manage to own mental health. We were all very proud to be there to support Denise Powell's installation as President of Soroptimist International London Chilterns Region, our Region. It's not just Soroptimists who enjoyed the experience – two husbands a brother-in-law and a son were guests of Members of our Club this year too, also. Denise's sister, a Soroptimist. Soroptimist Conferences are always an opportunity for Soroptimist friendship – we were able to catch up with two past Members of the Club Hilary Ratcliffe and Indira Biswas-Benbow (with her daughter Natasha), plus cementing existing friendships and making new ones.

Soroptimist Conferences are always an opportunity for Soroptimist friendship – we were able to catch up with two past Members of the Club Hilary Ratcliffe and Indira Biswas-Benbow, plus cementing existing friendships and making new ones. Hilary and Indira both joined our Club Members for a meal and lots of lively conversation around the table before conference started on the Thursday. Indira and her family moved to Warwick a number of years ago and she became a Member of the Stratford-on-Avon Soroptimist Club. Indira's daughter Natasha is now 21 and finishing her studies of Ceramic Art at University in Hampshire so she was able to come to the conference on the Saturday. Hilary brought along to the meal three delightful Members of the Sheffield Club she now belongs to, Denise's husband John was also there and my husband Jack. Hilary is following our example and has the Sheffield Soroptimists campaigning for Sheffield to become a Toilet Twinned City. Jack and I dropped in on Hilary on our way back from visiting our family in Sheffield recently and could see how well they have settled into the area - I have to say I have always loved the scenery in the Peak District where they live so do visit if you get a chance. *Jane*

11 Nov



First off we heard from Charlotte Balazs (in the pic right) and Vivien Sheehan (in the pic centre) Older Womens Co-housing for over 50's **www.owch.org.uk**. They showed a video called **Senior Co-housing The Way We Do It** which explained how it works. Ann Beatty (in the pic left), one of our Members, invited Charlotte and Vivien to tell us about it because they all live at the OWCH New Ground Co-housing in Barnet. We asked lots of questions and were impressed by the responses. Co-housing sounds supportive for women living on their own. It was wonderful to hear how it made the residents feel healthier (mentally and physically), and thus less dependent on social services. We are invited to visit next year.

also…..



World Toilet Day was marked with a bottle sale in aid of **Toilet Twinning**. Members brought bottles and jars of things no longer needed/wanted which raised a wonderful £61 on the night. We gave out some more collecting boxes the contents of which we will collect after Christmas. Jane Slatter showed the excellent video below from Toilet Twinning which was presented at the Bournemouth Conference and explains how important toilets are, especially for girls. 4.2 billion people live without safely managed sanitation. Jane also shared what she had said on Radio Verulam the week before the meeting – we need to get to 30 for St Albans to become a toilet twinned city. The Club already has some other donations for Toilet Twinning so we will be able to twin at least 3 more in the new year!

And……



As always we provide Christmas presents for women in the **St Albans and Hertsmere Women's Refuge**. Because this was the last meeting before Christmas Members brought lots of wrapped gifts – see the picture here with Rita Andrews who will be playing Santa and delivering them – they will be greatly appreciated. There is also a good stash of tea, coffee and sugar at the back of the table for Rita to deliver from our Club Members to the Refuge too.

Nov 25th

Our own **Kathy Weston** gave a packed-house some brilliant tips and strategies to help families **raise resilient girls** when she delivered her inspirational talk at Townsend School St Albans**.** The talk covered the current state of girls' mental health, how in this "age of anxiety" it must to be talked about and managed. Kathy explained the mechanics of resilience and how families can give girls the confidence to thrive. The role of digital technology was detailed and the harm from social media undermining children's views of themselves. There were a few great questions from the floor and then most of the audience left the room almost reeling from the volume of useful information they had received and still processing what they had heard. **25th November** is an important date for Soroptimists all around the world – it is the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women



30th November. Members from Soroptimist Clubs in the **London Chilterns Region** and guests celebrated **Human Rights Day** at the Region's meeting/conference. The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed on 10 Dec 1948. A moving Soroptimist tradition to celebrate Human Rights Day is to light candles in recognition of the work of Soroptimists and women around the world in striving to ensure that the human rights of women and children are protected everywhere. Pictured here with the framed preamble to the declaration and the candles they had lit are (l to r) Denise Powell, President SI London Chilterns, Johanna Raffan SI Great Britain and Ireland President-Elect, Kate Bellinis Member of SI Hertford and Ameeta Sabharwal Member of SI St Albans and District. The three candles you can see each represent SI Clubs, Federations and International.



6th Dec to 9th Dec



St Stephen's church, Watling Street held a Christmas Tree Festival this year. The picture (left) here is of the St Albans Soroptimists' tree – with the theme of the carol "The Holly and the Ivy". Here are the tree decorators (l to r) Jane Slatter, Jean Eaton and Madeline Skinner. There is another picture of our tree at the beginning of this letter. It was quite magical when they switched the lights on to about 40 trees.

9th December

Once again we sang carols at St Albans station raising £350 ably assisted by our Soroptidogs and celebrating the start of the Christmas period with a meal at the 6 Bells.









11th December

Watling View School for pupils with profound learning difficulties had a **Christmas Stall on St Albans Market** again this year on Wed 11 Dec. Students from the school made and prepared plants and crafts as Christmas gifts to sell to raise funds for the school.
Barbara Saunders (pictured looking very festive) and Debbie Tankard (photographer) helped staff and pupils on the stall. The young people were able to engage with members of the public and to gain practical experience of selling items which they had previously made.
The stall made over £120 which is the best ever!



13th December



Jane and Debbie Tankard were delighted to be invited to present Steve Simpson with a framed **Toilet Twinning** Certificate on Fri 13 Dec for **Radio Verulam 92.6** . This follows a broadcast on 19 Nov to mark World Toilet Day. Presenters raised £60 to twin their loo – Steve said "I put a jar in the studio and every time a presenter made a mistake they put £1 in the jar. It didn't take long!" The studio loo is now twinned with a latrine in Mzikubora, Mzimba District, Malawi. This Toilet Twinned loo number 20 in St Albans becoming a Toilet Twinned City!

LEND WITH CARE

In April we lent a total of £180 via Lend with care. This was split evenly between 4 women's groups three based in Malawi and one in Zambia. These groups ran a variety of businesses from retail to agriculture. They all have children to support; some their own and some are taking care of orphans.

Each group of women had asked for loans two of which were over £1000 and the other two over £3000. Via the lend with care system the loans were funded by a large number of individuals and groups like us. The microfinance arrangement is not interest free to the borrower, but the rate is very much lower than through any other means and it is the only way small businesses and individuals can access finance to try and earn money to improve their lot. They all say that their priority is educating their children. We lent to groups rather than individuals because we are supporting more people but also the women offer each other support and are all responsible for the loan and are therefore less likely to default. We do not receive interest and there is a cost to us due to currency exchange and fluctuation and of course the risk of default.

So far we have recouped £150 as two of the groups have repaid their loan completely. The others have 2 more payments to make and so should have repaid by December in which case we will have recovered almost the full amount. Between our 4 groups we have supported 61 entrepreneurs with 205 family Members.

Our Club has a fair amount of uncommitted funds so in the new year we will need to decide whether to repeat this exercise and if so, how much we want to commit.

See www.lendwithcare.org for more information. Below are some details of the groups we have supported.

The New Foundation group are based in the Choma district of Zambia. The group has a Membership of 14 women between the ages of 24 and 39. The women are married and have 39 children between them, all of whom are in school. These women are involved in small scale businesses selling food and groceries. Their stalls are in the market of Choma. They started these businesses to help lift the living standards of their families.

The Kondwerani group is composed of 17 women entrepreneurs based in Chikwawa. Most of the Members are married with children as well as caring for orphans between them. They have various small businesses such as selling fish, vegetables, groceries and cereals in order to earn a living and support their families.

The Tiyambuke group consists of 14 women entrepreneurs based in the Mzuzu district. They care for children of their own as well as sharing in the care of orphans of the community. The women operate various small businesses but mainly farming, in order to support their families.

Bindula is a group of 16 women entrepreneurs based in the Lilongwe district. Between them they care for 72 dependent children as well as caring for the orphans of the community. They support their families with businesses including restaurants, selling snacks, vegetables, groceries, and cereals. The group requested their first loan in order to buy stock in bulk to boost their businesses. *Thanks Sarah*

Coffee at Club Meetings for 2020

The coffee rota for the next session is as below. There is not too much involved. The two who "volunteer" will arrange between them who will bring along some milk. Otherwise everything will be available courtesy Joan Williams.

13th January	Rita Andrews and Catherine Moore
27th January	Janet A-C and Helen Byrne
10th February	Amanda Brown & Diane Kingham
9th March	Sarah Lichman and Denise Powell
23rd March	Madeline Skinner and Debbie Tankard

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If you cannot make the date I give please either swap with someone else and/or let me know. *Jean*

Go and get your 2020 diary, lots to put into your new diary!!

13th Jan Club Meeting catch up after the Christmas Break and report back from Region Meeting (plus a speaker details to follow)
27th Jan Speaker Meeting from our Learning Ops Team. We hear from Earthworks who we have supported for many years, providing horticultural training for people with learning disabilities. We also hear from Watling View School for pupils with severe learning difficulties who we have also supported at their Christmas stall in St Albans Market.
28th Jan St Albans Girls School (STAGS) Big |Interview Day where we volunteer to join the team of interviewers.
10th Feb Club Meeting – update from the Womens Refuge and cheque presentation. All welcome – bring your friends
24th Feb Social evening – meet for a meal and bring your friends who might be interested in meeting us to find out more
25th Feb Pancake Day in St Albans Town Centre – help support Home Start who are running the event. Volunteers are needed from 10am.
6th Mar International Women's Day – Inspiring Women event at STAGS
9th Mar Club Meeting and our own International Women's Day event.
14th Mar London Chilterns Region International Women's Day meeting/conference at Lancaster Hall Hotel London. Travel with fellow Members and have a really interesting day.
21st Mar QUIZ Night – our popular fundraising quiz at Homewood Road URC. Tell everyone!
23rd Mar Our own Linda Shall will report on the Carbon Literacy Project and we will hear about the Region meeting held on the previous Saturday.
27th Apr AGM at the transept St Mary's Redbourn 7.00 pm Reflect on the last year and look forward to the new year. Also enjoy some light refreshments.

Perhaps you will want to go on to the Exec Committee to find out more, help to run the Club or take office for the coming year. Ask any of the current Exec Members for details.

For Club year 2020-2021

Our own Club programme is still being created but meanwhile put these in your diary.

12th May S I Osaka (one of our Friendship Links) is celebrating their 50th Anniversary. We are invited to join in the celebrations. For more info ask Catherine Moore or Helen Byrne
24th May Charity Bookstall in St Albans market. This is part of the St Albans Sustainable week activities.
13th Jun Region Meeting held this time at Milton Keynes
1st Aug UKPAC Study Day in Durham. "Sex Drugs and Rock'n Roll"
10th Oct Region AGM at Lancaster Hall Hotel London
29-31 Oct Federation conference to be held in Belfast this year

The Club programme is kept up-to-date on the Club website so please keep checking this link:
www.sigbi.org/st-albans/Club/programme/

Region Meetings are held quarterly. If you have never been to a Region meeting I would recommend it as they are always very interesting. **Also don't forget that if you are a "first timer" to a Region Meeting, you will receive £10 for a London meeting or £15 for an out of London one toward your expenses**

Please don't forget to always let Denise Powell or Sarah Lichman know if you change your telephone number or address so that we can keep our records straight (and Jane for email). Denise will update the Contact Sheet and Sarah will advise SIGBI if you haven't already done it on your on-line SIGBI Membership record.

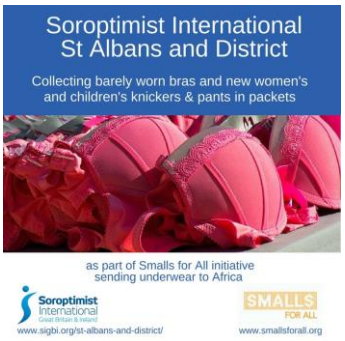




Dont forget.....

your milk bottle tops, 'gently' used bras, uses postage stamps, broken jewellery. Just bring them along to Club. All go to a good cause

Also when you are shopping why not get an extra packet of tea or coffee, bring it along to Club and it will go the Womens' Refuge - they get through a lot of "Cuppas" !!!



Groan from Jean solution

You do not bury survivors!!!!! Sorry....

Note from the Editor

The next newsletter will be in March so if you have anything you would like to put in, please send it to me, no need to wait until then, get it off your desk on to mine and I will make sure it is included. Perhaps you would rather deliver your "life talk" in writing rather than present it verbally, have an interesting story to share with us, a comment about the Club or a particular item you would like to air or an interesting holiday story. If you have a favourite famous woman in business, art, history, music, and I am sure you all know SOMEONE!!!

*If you have any news of Members - be it yourself or another Member (with their permission of course) that you think we can share **do please let me know**. Maybe you might like to do a "Letter to the Editor" with any comments about our Club - could be a new section!*

. I look forward to hearing from you, Jean

If you want any further information on anything do look at the website www.sigbi.org/st-albans



Jean Eaton *jean.eaton43@gmail.com*

As part of General Data Protection Regulation please advise if you don't want to be contacted by us in the future.