



NEWSLETTER

of Soroptimist International of South East England

JUNE 2009



Region
President
Jan Doyle

From the Region President.....

The year seems to be racing by. It is nearly June that's three-quarters of my year as your President passed!

Our Region Conference (see pictures below of President Jan and the students at the conference) was a pure indulgence for me as young people and children are so important to me. We hear many negative things about the young and I wanted us to celebrate the enterprise of our young people and with a lot of help from Beckenham and Medway Clubs we were able to do just that.



We had young people from 3 schools: Byron Road School, Gillingham, Cator Park School, Beckenham and Dover Grammar School for Boys.

We started with the headteacher and a teacher from Byron Road Community School (a primary school) telling us about their Boffins and Bodgers Club an after school science club where the children build go-carts and other electrical models. Their teacher was so enthusiastic about what the children were doing and had recently won the Teacher of the Year Award. Her enthusiasm and motivation for her subject and her love of what she was doing really came across in her talk and the children were developing a real love of science. What an inspiration to young people! I am sure if I had been enthused about science at such an early age I would have enjoyed it much more.

The girls from Cator Park School were also amazing. They had carried out a project in conjunction with the local police, "Why Knife Crime Is So Prevalent" in our society. It was really powerful and emotional. The two girls who made the presentation gave a very professional delivery which would have been very impressive if it had been a television production.



The girls are A level students and will be going on to University. I feel they are young women to watch as I am sure that in the future they will be part of the movers and shakers of this country.

In the afternoon we had three boys from Dover Grammar School. At the school enterprise is part of the culture and their headteacher, Sally Lees, gave us an insight as to what this meant. She too was enthusiastic about her school and it was plain to see that this enthusiasm had rubbed off on the boys. Their enterprise around the school in running a very successful stationery store, and an eco-group was inspiring. It was good to hear how this enterprising approach had turned a reluctant student into a really positive and enthusiastic young man.



If you were at the conference I am sure you won't have minded this reflection on what, was for me, almost the highlight of my year. I say almost because really it is proving to be such an interesting year. I have been very fortunate with invitations from Clubs and have really enjoyed meeting members I don't usually see at region meetings. I realise that not everyone can get to these meetings and would the hotel be able to cope if we all turned up I wonder! Nevertheless I would like to encourage you to come along to a region meeting if you haven't been for a long time.

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Items for publication in the next Region Newsletter **MUST** reach the Editor by 20th September, 2009

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Having said that, unfortunately I won't be at the June one as I am going to Norway, with other members from Folkestone, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of our sister club SI Hageausund. I have very mixed feelings – looking forward to visiting somewhere new and very sad to be missing Sir Geoffrey Nice's talk 'War Crimes – Why Prosecute?' As a prominent human rights lawyer who has been involved in war crime trials at The Hague, I know his talk will be very interesting.

Of course I will be at the following meeting, the last in my year, when Carwen Wynne-Howells our Federation President will join us. As you know she is judging the Daphne Whitmore Award so please club Presidents and Programme Action Officers get your entry in to Region Secretary Ann Reeves as soon as you can. President Carwen will also be presenting the 25 year badges, so again club Presidents and Secretaries please let me know who in your club is eligible and, last but not least, President Carwen will present June Bridgman with her Honorary Region Membership. I do hope that our October meeting will be a bumper attendance meeting.

Before that I shall be going to Strasbourg to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of SI Strasbourg; they have arranged a weekend which includes a visit to the Court of Human Rights and the European Parliament in Strasbourg – how our region chain has travelled this year. Of course I will visit my daughter and grandchildren whilst we are there.

Before the region meets again we have the summer to enjoy and I would like to wish you all a really good summer – lots of sunshine, relaxation and good company.- **Jan Doyle**



Almost at the halfway point the total raised by clubs all over the world and received by Soroptimist International now stands at **£282,155**.

Please tell me about the amounts you have sent to federation so that I can keep the **Region total** up-to-date. Please tell me about the activities you organise to raise this money. Unusual or novel ideas from clubs are circulated via the ideas bank on the website. If you are stuck for an idea then maybe you will find some inspiration here. www.projectsierra.org

The **Study Tour** took place in February. Reports and photos of this in the magazine and on the website give a much clearer picture of the extent and progress of the project. Another Study Tour is planned for January 2010 when two representatives from each of the four federations will see the work first hand and we can expect further exciting reports and pictures.

By October I will have spoken to half the clubs in the Region about Project Sierra. Recently, I have spent three enjoyable evenings with members of SI Canterbury, SI Haywards Heath and SI East Grinstead. Talks to SI Croydon and District, SI Ashford and in October SI Lewes and District have been arranged. If you have a space in your programme and would like to hear more about the project (with or without the PowerPoint presentation) just get in touch.

Club activities:

SI East Grinstead ~ A member from the East Grinstead club 'exported' the Count Your Blessings list to a club in Florida which she visits regularly. The result was a cheque for £100, which the club sent to Federation on behalf of SI Orlando.

SI Sevenoaks ~ The club has sent a total of £800 from the proceeds of their annual Quiz nights in 2008 and 2009.

SI Canterbury ~ We are eagerly awaiting the publication of their Anthology of Poetry later in the year.

Don't forget to report your activities – Happy fund-raising!

*Ann Greenfield
Project Sierra Ambassador*

YAKS AND YURTS— A BECKENHAM SOROPTIMIST IN MONGOLIA

Beckenham held its annual International Evening in March, when joint-president Christine welcomed us to Ben Curtis Park for a buffet supper in aid of our new water project for Mufindi Orphans in Tanzania. The planned speaker cancelled because of illness but member Jenni Mogridge (pictured right) stepped in with a talk about her recent visit to Mongolia. Only about 6,000 U.K. residents per year visit that area. Jenni is an intrepid traveller and her group helped to construct their own yurt, bought flat-pack from the Mongolian equivalent of IKEA, before living in it for several days. In the Gobi Desert Jenni sampled local delicacies such as fermented mares' milk and learned useful phrases such as "Hold the dog". Her slides were excellent, showing a lot of animals and a few people and everyone enjoyed the evening.— [Christine Thomas](#)



MORE FROM SI BECKENHAM: 60th Anniversary project- the Mufindi water project—The Beckenham club will celebrate its 60th anniversary in 3 years time. We wanted a special project to celebrate that, preferably related to the provision of clean water supplies. One of our members travelled in Southern Tanzania and found just the thing. Mufindi is a rural area in the southern highlands of Tanzania 6700 feet above the Great Rift Valley accessed by 4 wheel drive vehicle along increasingly narrow, unmade tracks.

The Fox family has developed a tea and coffee estate over many years. Their philosophy has been to work in partnership with the local village structures so any help provided is enabling and can be sustained by local people. They also aim to ensure that charitable funds are spent directly in the communities with the minimum spent on infrastructure.

The Orphans in the Wild charity has ambitious plans. Two orphanages (for children orphaned by AIDS), a hospital/clinic and school are well on the way to completion but none of these services has a reliable, clean water supply. It will not be expensive to establish storage for rains to be collected during the rainy season- £3,500 will do the job for all 3 projects.

Beckenham Soroptimists aim to raise the funds for this as a way of marking their 60th anniversary in three years' time- but the money being raised is already being used by the project.

Open evening—Alison Driscoll, our membership Officer led the organisation of our open evening on 30 March 2009. Considerable effort went into displays of SI activity on a local, regional, national and international basis. We were delighted to welcome Penny Veness who spoke about her SI work and travels with her usual wit and enthusiasm and, to ensure that the full benefit of being a Soroptimist was apparent, the refreshments were special too. We were delighted to welcome 16 visitors. Will it result in the recruitment of new members? We don't know yet but we know we've spread the word; most of them hadn't heard of SI before. The extract from a letter we received after the meeting is very encouraging-

"I was very impressed by last night's meeting and found it fascinating. I really didn't know what to expect beforehand. There seems to be so much going on, and such a charming bunch of women too. I like the fact that the organisation is active on so many levels, and actually achieves real goals as well as provides links and lasting friendships. I would like to come to next week's talk and look forward to seeing you again then."

An investigation into an 'honour' based murder.—A special lecture/speaker meeting was held on 6th April. DCI Caroline Goode (right) from the Homicide and Serious Crime Command of the Metropolitan Police talked about the violent murder of a 20 year old Iraqi Kurdish woman by the male members of her family because she had flouted their cultural requirements of women. Members and guests were horrified at the experiences of the victim and the difficulties the police experienced in investigating the crime, including the problems in finding the body. We were impressed by DCI Goode's determination and commitment to her work. She is now involved in offering training to police officers on these crimes. £75 was collected for the charity Karma Nirvana, an organisation in Derby that supports women at risk of honour retribution and recommended by DCI Goode.— [Jenni Mogridge](#)



CROYDON CLUB PRESENTS £1000 AT THE ANNUAL YOUNG CARERS' TEA PARTY

On 18 February, at the annual Young Carers' Tea Party organised by Croydon Club, President Patricia presented a cheque for £1000 to Jonathan Andrew, Young Carers' Support Project Co-ordinator. This money will be used to purchase laptops for their homework club. "After half-term, there is a deadline for completion of GCSE course work," said Jonathan "and many of the youngsters do not have access to computers outside school, so the new laptops will be of great help."

The Croydon Club had approached Murielle McClelland, Every Child Matters Facilitator at the Department of Children, Young People and Learners, to see whether there was a local project they could support. Five years ago, Murielle identified the need for young carers to have additional support with their education and a qualified and experienced teacher was employed on a part-time basis. The teacher's role is to work one-to-one with individual young carers, to provide a homework club, to raise awareness of their needs in schools and to support young carers with issues of self esteem and bullying. The project has been very successful and recently one girl was offered a place at Cambridge University.

Croydon Soroptimists have had a long association with the Young Carers' Support Project and during 2007-8 selected the Project as the focus for their fundraising. Last November, at the end of their 18 months term of office, Presidents Jean Naish and Penny Veness presented a cheque for £2,400.— [Patricia Painting](#)



FROM LEFT: Mayoress and Mayor of Croydon, Diana Wilson (teacher), Jonathan Andrew, Patricia Painting, Helen Carter (Young Carers), Murielle McClelland and Vilma McKenzie
Picture by Laurie Painting

EASTBOURNE BEACH CLEAN



Holidaymakers seeing a group of determined women (see picture on left) with rubber gloves and armed with bags on Eastbourne beach recently may have wondered what was happening. It was Eastbourne Club members back at Pinnacle Point, Eastbourne to carry out their regular beach clean.

They picked up more than four large bags of litter and reported that much of this was on the paths rather than the actual beach and included seven plastic bags of dogs mess. This had not been such a problem with their past beach cleans so the Club has notified the Council so they can consider the provision of special bins.

The Beach cleans began in 2002 when the Club adopted the beach at Pinnacle Point which is popular for barbecues. Members clean around 100 metres of beach three or four times a year and usually clear away up to 7 bags of rubbish, much of it plastic. These are carried to the cliff top for collection by the Council.—[Gloria Pearce](#)

CELEBRATING ITS PRESIDENTS—SI HASTINGS LUNCH

Hastings Club hosted a lunch on 2nd May at the Royal Victoria Hotel. It was a joint celebration of the departing President, Megan Traice and the incoming President, Linda Sangster. The club was pleased to welcome the Region President, Jan Doyle and Federation Councillor, Denise Staplehurst who gave us an interesting talk on Soroptimism, detailing all we stood for and had achieved.

A cheque for £624 was presented to Mary Plucknett for East Sussex Disability Association, President Megan's chosen charity for her year of office.

The proceeds of the raffle, £48, will be donated to Demelza House Children's Hospice. This is the chosen charity of the new President Linda and is the first of our fund raisers for this deserving charity.— [Brenda Blythe](#)



From left; Mary Plucknett, Linda Sangster, Megan Traice, Jan Doyle, Denise Staplehurst

UN INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Celebration at Lewes—On Sunday 8th March, UN International Women's Day, SI Lewes & District held a successful Breakfast meeting. Thirty-nine women attended including our supportive Region President, Jan Doyle; Membership Officer and Federation Councillor Denise Staplehurst; and Media officer Kate Serjeant. The local guests were the Mayor Elect of Lewes, several councillors, Chief Inspector of police, representatives of the medical professions, social services and education, the MPs wife and various other professions and businesses.



Lewes Soroptimist Joan, right, in animated conversation with Denise Staplehurst

I picked the idea up from the UNIFEM newsletter and developed it. The Polish owner, Kasia, of a new restaurant – Artisan – in Lewes was enthusiastic. Working on the assumption that one would get a third of those invited we decided that 40 would be a comfortable number. Around 90 people were invited and then there were nine SI Lewes members, so the maths was somewhere near right!

We offered a quality continental breakfast for £7.50 from 9.30 - 11.30 am, sat in groups from 5 to 8 to eat, get to know each other and discuss any issues that arose. At the end we a shared what had been discussed. These were mostly local issues: ideas on how to help women locally and sharing of those already in existence; community buses; domestic violence (the main world killer of women); that women are the moral guardians and need to be listened to; and that young people need somewhere specific to congregate although there is already the Nutty Wizzard Café, and we were told of the developing Landport Youth Centre that lost the lead off its roof to thieves and now leaks badly.

Outcome: More women now know about Soroptimists; interest was expressed in joining our meetings by some; and we are looking into the Landport Youth Centre as a project for the coming year. An interesting outcome all round. It has already been agreed to repeat this event next year.-

Beryl Bartter

Not just a talking shop—To celebrate International Women's Day SI Gravesend Club invited women's groups in Gravesham to a morning seminar on the 7th March to explore what they have in common and decide how they might collectively take up ways of working together to tackle local issues of concern. The keynote speaker was Amanda Cottrell, a former High Sheriff of Kent, a Kent Ambassador and Chairman of Kent Visitors' Tourist Board.



Amanda Cottrell (left) with speakers from the women's groups and Soroptimist facilitators

Topics discussed included the environment, violence against women, child abuse, forced marriages, teenage pregnancy, women and obesity and young people's issues with drugs, sex and relationships.

The morning was deemed a huge success with requests to repeat the event next year. As a follow up a report was circulated and an invitation to participate in a litter pick in Gravesham to mark World Environment Day.-

Isobel Kesby

SOROPTIMIST (EASTBOURNE) HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Eastbourne Soroptimists in East Sussex are the latest club to hand over their Housing Association properties to another Association. The Management Committee and Shareholders of the Soroptimist (Eastbourne) Housing Association had agreed that the best way to secure the future of their 3 properties and their tenants was a Transfer of Engagement with another like-minded housing association. Like other small voluntary housing associations, they found the continual legislation being imposed was too onerous for voluntary committee members. They believed the future was with a professionally managed association.

After careful consideration, Sussex Housing and Care (SHC) was chosen because it offers a local presence and its ethos reflects that of Soroptimists. SHC, who are based in Seaford, East Sussex, will carry on the excellent service that residents have rightly come to expect.

The Management Committee were assisted in the transfer by consultant, Peter Bird of Primary Business Support, who specialise in charitable and not-for-profit organisation.-

Carole Deschamps

OUR PRISONS – PAINTING YOU A PICTURE

(Education and rehabilitation opportunities
in our overcrowded, overpopulated prison system)

Paul McDowell, Governor of Brixton Prison, gave the 90 guests at Croydon's Annual Inter-Club Friendship Supper a fascinating talk about his job. As a keen supporter of Luton Town Football Club and the Glastonbury Festival, he came over as a man of many parts with a humane and sophisticated approach to what many might regard as an impossible task.

He explained that Brixton Prison is so old and overcrowded that it is very difficult indeed to do anything more than focus on the basic needs of security and safety, and to provide healthcare which many inmates have previously lacked. The prison has no workshops and only 50 education places. It can provide activity for only a quarter of its 800 inhabitants: three quarters do nothing. There is a good chaplaincy service for all faiths. Innovative schemes like a prison radio station or the provision of musical instruments through musician Billy Bragg's charity Jail Guitar Doors, could fall foul of media prejudice.

Mr McDowell felt that the current economic climate would make it even more difficult to ask the question whether the country could afford prisons not to be higher in the priority list. He quoted Winston Churchill "Nothing can be more abhorrent to democracy than to imprison a person or keep him in prison because he is unpopular. This is really the test of civilisation."

Paul McDowell left us with the rather old fashioned thought that rehabilitation can of course be achieved when men grow up and find a good woman!

The raffle raised £323 to be shared between the President's Charity and a project of Mr McDowell's choosing. He requested that the money be used to support the Prison Radio Association.- [Laurie Painting](#)



Honorary Member Ethel French gives the vote of thanks to Paul McDowell, Governor of Brixton Prison.

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF SERVICE



Region President Jan Doyle, Jean Turner and President Patricia in front of Croydon Club's new banner.

At a packed Annual Inter-Club Friendship Supper held at The Chateau on 12th March, Croydon Club member Jean Turner was delighted to receive her long-service certificate from Region President Jan Doyle.

Jean joined SI Sutton in 1958. She was club president on two occasions, the second time when the club celebrated its Golden Jubilee. In 1964 she attended her first International Convention. She was treasurer of the Southern Divisional Union (now Southern Region) for several years, becoming president in 1974. For the first time ever the SIGBI conference was held outside the UK and so Jean had to travel to Sydney to be inducted. She found it a wonderful experience.

When Sutton Club closed several years ago, Jean joined SI Croydon, since when she has served as club secretary and as treasurer for the South East Region.

Jean received messages of congratulations from Clubs in the South East Region and from members and past members currently in China, India and Singapore.- [Patricia Painting](#)

FAIRTRADE FORTNIGHT 2009

Hastings Soroptimists joined in the 'Bananathon' held at Park Road Methodist Church on Saturday 7th March. This was a national record breaking event. How many people were eating a banana at 11 a.m.? Result awaited.....- [Brenda Blythe](#)

From l to r: Lynda Johnson, Rosemary Iddenden, and Eileen Fermor



PROGRAMME ACTION NEWS



Hilary
Rowberry

SI South East Region Conference(*Enterprising Youth*) was really inspiring; the young people we met made us feel confident that they will be future leaders and team players with their enthusiasm and enterprising skills. Listening to these young people was the tonic needed to continue our own programme action projects with the same vigour!

UKPAC are encouraging us to focus on particular programme objectives: violence against women and elder care. We feedback to them under these headings and only on developments or new happenings. So please report projects' progress.

A UKPAC lobbyist is needed – please see your club secretary for a job description if you are interested.

Friendship Club joint projects – have you got a project established with your friendship clubs? We would like to share ideas on how you started your projects and what they are. Please let me know.

REMINDER! Clubs have until the middle of June to inform any member of the Programme Team about a project they would like to be considered for presentation at the Cardiff Conference in October.

From PAM May 2009 magazine

Even careful and experienced drivers sometimes forget that low CO2 emissions go hand-in-hand with smarter driving, and that you can save a lot of cash at the pumps.

1. Slow down! By driving at 70mph you could be using 9% more fuel than at 60 and 15% more than at 50.
2. Nice and smooth. Over-revving your engine burns fuel, so change up gears early. In a diesel car keep revs below 2000rpm, and on a petrol car below 2500rpm.
3. Stay back, keep moving. In slow traffic keep well behind the car in front and smoothly slow down when you see it braking. That way it may have moved on again before you catch up and you can avoid stopping.
4. Switch off. If you're likely to be at a stop for more than three minutes, switching off your engine is cheaper on your pocket and the environment.
5. Check the pressure. It only takes a minute to check your tyre pressure. Keeping tyres at the pressure stated in your car manual helps to improve road handling and fuel efficiency.
6. Be kind to your car. It is a precision piece of engineering, yet any clobber in the boot weights it down. Time for a spring clean?

Ruth Dodd—APD Environment

And finally-

Visiting Croydon Club to hear an excellent speaker at a supper meeting was an opportunity to get to know more members and see Programme Action first hand at one of the Region clubs. Do invite me to your club! - **Hilary Rowberry, Region Programme Action Officer**



Denise Staplehurst, Region Membership Officer and Federation Councillor writes on membership—It is good to know that clubs have now formally elected a membership officer to be on their club executive committee and I helped to produce the job description which I hope will be helpful to you. In the SEE Region many clubs already had a membership officer so we were ahead of many clubs and the meetings at Region before the main meeting have proved very useful. I hope those clubs who have previously not attended the pre meeting at 9 o'clock might now be able to join us.

Membership is important and the Region has worked hard to get new members in clubs and maintain their numbers. This year 4 clubs had a letter of congratulation on getting new members so, well done! Keep up the good work! Remember there is a Region CD to help you and I am always available to come along to clubs to support in any way I can.

SUNDAY CONCERT AND HIGH TEA



At East Court Mansion on the 17th May SI East Grinstead boosted their fund raising support for the Ghana education project with a splendid concert provided in partnership with children past and present (picture on left) of Fonthill Lodge School, East Grinstead.

London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art spoken verse pieces featured in the first half followed by Old Fonthillians performing on piano, drums, guitar and vocal.

In the interval a scrumptious high tea was served by the Soroptimists and then everyone settled down to a superb second half of vocalists and instrumentalists.

What a wealth of talent at Fonthill Lodge School and a really enjoyable partnership between SI East Grinstead, children, parents and friends.....

.....and **“for People and for Animals”** - President Judi Bedingfield's theme for her year of office was rounded off with the presentation of a cheque for £1000 to Riding for the Disabled Burstow Group, Surrey.

As well as raising money for Project Sierra a Family and a Future, and Born Free we have also supported our ongoing Ghana project along with lots more local and speaker donations. It has been a very interesting year and as President Judi quoted at the beginning of her year from Saint Francis of Assisi “Give us the grace to see all animals as gifts from You and to treat them with respect for they are Your creation.”-**Angela Edwards**



Presentation of £1000 cheque

CONSIDERING CREATING A CLUB WEBSITE? READ ON

A personal experience of transferring to the new SIGBI club website
(and a few tips which may be of help to others)
(www.soroptimist-gbi.co.uk/croydon-and-district)

“Just download the information from your existing site and transfer it to the new site...” Sounds easy, doesn't it?

At my first attempt I think it took two hours before I was able to ‘post’ one news item and another four before I admitted defeat in trying to upload a photograph. I lost count of the number of hours I expended before achieving the Croydon Club website. Anyway, that was several months ago.

The SIGBI website is not perfect but I believe improvements are on the way. It is a powerful tool with an array of options which I don't understand – and don't really want to understand, not if I want a life – so I operate in a simple way. Guidelines have been produced by SIGBI but I hope my notes will also be of help. Please use the Croydon and District site as an example only – each Club will need its own unique structure.

On the website there is the option to write a POST or a PAGE. Posts are for short-term items and pages are for information that does not change very often, but which can be amended and updated at any time. The Club News post is the home page of the website and is fixed. However, pages can be arranged in any order you wish.

Prior planning and preparation will save time when you start to input data on line. You might want to create a ‘website’ folder in which to keep the text and copies of the photographs used.

First, plan the structure: how many pages do you need and on what topics – President's Message, Club Diary, Our Club, Our Projects, Our Friendship Links, etc, etc.

Second, decide on the text for each page. Type and save this in WORD so that you can check spellings, etc, and the text will be safe if anything goes wrong. A line space between paragraphs is unnecessary as the website input screen inserts these automatically.



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.....Cont'd from Page 8

Third, decide which photographs you wish to use. I save copies of photographs at 50% of original size for inclusion but when uploading a picture, there is an option to insert in 'thumbnail', 'medium' or 'full' size. Don't attempt to manually re-size the photograph in the input screen as it doesn't retain the aspect ratio.

Once you've completed your planning and preparation, then the fun begins!

We'll start by putting in place your new PAGES. So, log-in to your website and go to Write Page. Type the heading you want to appear on the side-bar on the home page (ie, President's Message) then cut and paste the text from WORD into the input screen. Text is automatically formatted but if you wish to make changes go to the 'format' box on the input screen tool bar. Once your text has been inserted, leave a line space under the last paragraph and insert a line _____ across the page. This separates out your text from the automated messages which appear at the bottom of the final published page. Press 'Save'.

If this is to be the first page, scroll down to the bottom of the main screen until you see 'Page Order' and a box with a 0. Change the 0 to 1.

Return to the top of the main screen and press 'Save'. To check that you are happy with the page, go to 'View This Page'. Return to the input screen. If no photograph is to be included, select 'Publish'.

To insert a photograph, click the star symbol to the right of 'Add media'. This opens another screen from where you upload a photograph from your computer. Once uploaded, enter a caption (on the final published page, the caption will appear when the cursor is placed over the photograph). Select the size – 'medium' is automatically selected – click 'Insert into Post'. The photograph will appear at the beginning of the text. It can be moved to a different position but, as yet, text will not wrap around the picture. If your picture is large, you might wish to insert a line break so that the text starts below the picture.

Press 'Save' again. View the page to make sure you are happy. Return to the input screen and select 'Publish'.

Repeat the process for further pages. The page numbers can be changed at any time.

Club News. Items for this section are called POSTS, so this time go to Write Post and insert your text and photographs in exactly the same way as for pages. The title will appear on the home page with the body of the text on a sub-page. The latest news item will always appear first.

Posts are for up-to-date news or notices of forthcoming events and should not be kept for too long. Personally, I would not keep anything for more than three months. If it's something memorable you feel should be retained, why not create a separate page? For example, Croydon has a Past Presidents' Charities page.

Similarly for the Club Diary. Input as much advance information as possible but, once an event is over, remove it from the screen. Anyone looking at your site will not be interested in the fact that you had a business meeting three week's ago. Photographs can be inserted into diary entries.

To create a link to another website, it is not necessary to quote the website address in your text. For example, if you mention WaterAid, highlight the word WaterAid and click the 'link' icon (like a chain) on the input screen toolbar. This will open a box where you enter the website address. On the final published page WaterAid will appear underlined and a click on the word will link directly to their website.

Despite my earlier frustrations, creating your SIGBI Club website is well worth the effort and provided you update it regularly, the workload is minimal. At Croydon, we publish the address on everything and speakers, potential members and others do find it useful. - [Patricia Painting SI Croydon and District](#)

FROM HAYWARD'S HEATH— On May 8th SI of Hayward's Heath and District held a fundraising talk by Mr. Richard Allen about the coming of the railway to Mid Sussex and how it changed the lives of everyone living in the area. This was in aid of the Parkinson's Disease Society for which they raised £420.—[Eva Hudson](#)

DIARY DATES

2009

11th June
23rd July

Medway Towns, Fashion Show contact Angela Howe,
Croydon, "Life upon the wicked stage" 40 years of amateur operatics by Laurie Painting former
Treasury and MOD Official, £1.50 payable on the night, contact Patricia Painting,
5th September Croydon, Poetry on the Patio with actress Pamela Lyme, £7.50, contact Patricia Painting
24th September Croydon, Follow up to Inter Club Supper, Erwin James, writer, columnist, former prisoner
will be the guest speaker, contact Patricia Painting

3rd October

SEE Region Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Maidstone—presentation of long service badges and The
Daphne Whitmore Award

29th-31st October

SIGBI Federation Conference, Cardiff—"Horizons Sing"

19th November

Croydon, House of Lords Lunch, contact Patricia Painting,

10th December

SEE Region Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Maidstone

2010

13th February

SEE Region Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Maidstone

23rd April

SI Hastings: Golf Day and Dinner—fund raiser for Demelza House and to celebrate the club's
50th Anniversary—watch for details.

24th April

SEE Region Conference

12th June

SEE Region Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Maidstone

2nd October

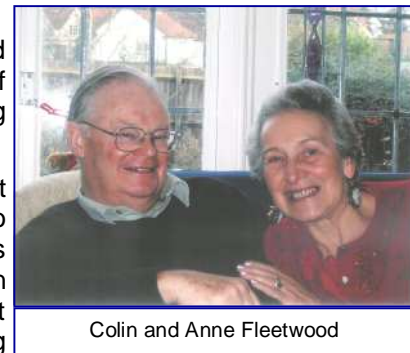
SEE Region Meeting, Hilton Hotel, Maidstone

MEMORIAL PROJECT HELPS COMMUNITY

The memory of a longstanding member of Sevenoaks Soroptimists lives on thanks to a project to help local nurses.

Retired restaurateur Nancy Ellison was ill in hospital and asked the nurses how Soroptimists could help them. Staff said that if the club could raise the money for two portable blood testing machines it would be invaluable for community nursing teams.

After Nancy died, President Anne Fleetwood decided that it would be very fitting if the club could donate the equipment. So members bought two top-of-the-range CoaguChek machines used for monitoring heart patients who are taking drugs to thin the blood to ensure that it does not form clots. The on-the-spot testing by district nurses saves patients having to make long journeys to hospital and then wait until their GPs get the results.



Colin and Anne Fleetwood

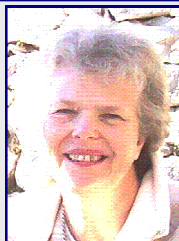
Soon afterwards Anne's husband Colin was himself diagnosed as having heart problems and was really surprised when he was tested with one of the machines donated by the Soroptimists. The couple soon featured in the local press. Anne said: "After experiencing weekly queuing at the hospital for blood tests we were delighted Colin was one of the first patients to be offered testing using a newly arrived CoaguChek machine at our nearby doctors' surgery." - Janet Weston

SI GRAVESEND HELPS LEAVE AN ENVIRONMENT LEGACY



A small working party of members together with a couple of stalwart husbands joined a local Brownie group to help clear the site and plant upwards of 100 saplings at Kay's Garden, Meopham where the local Guiding movement will be planting 700 forest trees this year. Seven different native varieties have been donated by the Woodland Trust as part of its campaign involving one million children planting 12 million trees across the UK—Isobel Kesby

Right: Brownies, Soroptimists with husbands and children ready to plant the saplings



From the Editor...

Enjoy this Newsletter? Ever considered editing it? This is my penultimate edition as your editor. After 6 years I am standing down with the change of Executive in the autumn and the Region is looking for someone to carry on in the role. This means that the first edition for the new editor will be the December 2009 edition. I have enjoyed my time as editor and I will give every assistance to my successor. If you are interested please contact me or Region President Jan Doyle or President Elect Janis Day. I can assure you it is a satisfying and fun role.

In friendship—Valerie Boswell

The Region Newsletter is edited

by Valerie Boswell

Contributions should be sent:

- by post or email in Word-compatible format (**important**)
- by fax
- by email to:
boswellpji@uwclub.net
(text and picture files can be attached to emails)