

Memories: Honouring our Past Members

In 1977 when I joined our club, many of the rules were different but the members were the same, women who were dedicated Soroptimists. As to rules, you couldn't join unless you were working. Everyone had a category and there were supposed to be no more than two members from the same category. You could stay on in the club when you retired but you could no longer hold any office position., You became a Sustaining Member and paid lower fees. This didn't suit Dianne Hutchison and I so we changed our original category to, Volunteerism, so we could continue as Active members.

A major program at that time and for the next 25 years was the UNICEF orange Hallowe'en boxes. Our Sustaining members played a major role in running this program. Our members contacted the schools, ordered the supplies, packaged the supplies, delivered to schools and after Hallowe'en picked up the money collected and counted the money. One school used to do a penny drive - this meant that we would have about 700 pounds of pennies from that school alone. The collecting, sorting and counting fell to the Sustaining Members. Two days were spent using the city's machines that were used to count the parking meter money. We would go to Jeff Purvey's for lunch and one year when we were there Prime Minister Jean Chretien came in for lunch and went round our table talking to us. This program took a lot of 'woman' power but it was very successful. Over the years with the support of the schools and the work of the children we raised about \$400,000. for UNICEF.

The 1990 SIA convention was held in Toronto at the Royal York. About 2000 women attended and our Peterborough members were very involved. Maureen Pammett was our key member on the organizing committee while several members, under the leadership of past president Joan Moyer, organized the 'Soroptimist Store' in conjunction with Thunder Bay members. We made and sold the blue Soroptimist scarves, had lots of maple syrup and candy and many other local items plus the turquoise and items from Thunder Bay. Sales were excellent.

Our club has had some wonderful members, although some join and leave for different reasons we have had so many lifetime members. One member, who became a Life Member due to health reasons, was just two months short of her hundredth birthday when she died. Betty Verner, Dianne Hutchison and I met to remember many of those long-time members. We want to honour their Soroptimist membership. We remember them as strong women and good friends:

Joan Sparrow, Gail Cowing, Rita Giardino, Maureen Pammett, Mignon Mayneord, Marion Bothwell, Gisela Schubert, Eleanor Carroll, Esther Might, Florence Spencely, Grace Northey, Opal Sharpe, Grace Smith, Markie Wolstenholme, Eva Pukey, Donna McGregor, Betty Wright, Eva Robb, Dorothy Case, Pat Strode and all the women who have been proud to be members of Soroptimist International of Peterborough.