

# 1200 Soroptimists In Oakland For Golden Jubilee



**HEAD TABLE dignitaries at the Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage of the Soroptimists, held last Sunday in Goodman Hall, Oakland, included Southwestern Regional Governor Charlotte Chichester (at mike) Ortha Wulf-**

**ing, Mary Gianotti, Katharine Stinson, president of Soroptimist Federation of the Americas, Inc.; Ethel Lord, president of Soroptimist International Association; Bess Combs, celebration chairman; Violet Rich-**

**ardson Ward, founder president; Blanche Edgar, past governor; Oakland Councilman Dr. Raymond Eng; Dr. Ruth Thomas Heitfeld, and Alameda County Supervisor Fred Cooper. At right is bronze portrait**



**of the founder president. In right photo, SIA President Ethel Lord of Morristown, New Jersey, who was guest speaker, chats with Jeannette Romanoff of Alameda Soroptimist Club, who is Director of District I.**

(All Acamar Studio Photos)

## Soroptimists Urged to 'Belong, Believe, Build'

Nearly 1200 Soroptimists from all parts of the world gathered in Goodman Hall in Jack London Square to celebrate the founding of the world's largest classified service club for business and professional women last weekend.

The first Soroptimist Club was officially chartered

October 3, 1921 in Oakland, and the 50th anniversary was held October 3, 1971 — in the city of the organization's birth.

Dignitaries of the Soroptimist International Association, the Soroptimist Federation of the Americas, Inc., representatives of regions and clubs throughout the United States, as well as

nearly every club in Southwestern Region joined in the "Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage," which honored the founder president of the organization, Violet Richardson Ward, now a "life" member of the Berkeley Club, and founder member, Eloise Cushing, "life" member of the Oakland Club.

### SIA PRESIDENT

Guest speaker at the gala gathering, which was attended by nearly 30 members of the Soroptimist Club of Alameda and its two high school service clubs, the 'S' Clubs of Alameda and Encinal High Schools, was Ethel Lord of Morristown, New Jersey, president of Soroptimist International Association.

She praised Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Cushing, the two founding members present, for their vision, foresight and sacrifices in starting the Soroptimist organization, and told the Soroptimists attending "it is our responsibility to preserve the strong tenets they have given us."

"We must pinpoint new and meaningful projects — to be of service to humanity everywhere," she stressed. She also pointed out that women have great opportunities ahead — to lead the action through persuasion and common sense and to create a new "wave of under-



**ALAMEDA SOROPTIMIST CLUB** was well represented among the nearly 1200 members of the classified women's service club attending the 50th anniversary

**brunch. A portion of the Alameda group is shown above, with Gladys O'Rourke, president, at rear, right.**



made in our clubs and believe to Gladys O'Rourke, president of the Alameda Club.

Representing all "S" Clubs in Mickey Agnew Burch, Marge the pageant was Debbie Burns, Lelia Burton, Althea



**SPECIAL GUEST** of the Alameda Soroptimist Club at the Golden Jubilee celebration of the organization last Sunday was Mrs. Gisela Haack (center) of the Soroptimist Club of Remscheid, Germany. She presented a plaque from her city to Gladys O'Rourke (left), president of the Alameda Club. Looking on is Marie Neville, international goodwill and understanding chairman.

standing. She also urged all attending to support qualified women in public office, and especially to urge President Nixon's consideration of the appointment of a qualified woman to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**"THREE B's"**  
In discussion the "goals of Soroptimists for the next 50 years," she said everyone must have "The Three B's — Belong, Believe and Build."

"Every member is essential to the club — she told the 1200 Soroptimists, "we must not just be a member but must truly belong, giving our time and individual talent.

"We must believe in the tenets of Soroptimism and work at them — and to work and have the faith to move steadily forward, and to believe in the friends we have

standing. "We must build — we must be a member of the construction gang — not the wrecking crew."

Officially dedicated at the Golden Jubilee celebration was the bronze portrait of the founder president, with each club in Southwestern Region placing its history (in a capsule) in the base of the portrait — to be opened in 50 years. Placing Alameda Club's history was Mrs. Lelia Burton, charter president.

**REMSCHIED CLUB**

Also placing a capsule in the portrait was Mrs. Gisela Haack of the Soroptimist Club of Remscheid, Germany, who was a special guest of the Alameda Club at the event. She also presented a special plaque from Remscheid and a book of her city to Violet Richardson Ward, as well as

Head table guests included Alameda County Supervisor Fred Cooper of Alameda; Dr. Raymond Eng, representing the Mayor of Oakland, who both brought official greetings and congratulations to the Soroptimist organization.

Also at the head table were Katharine Stinson of Arlington, Virginia, president of the Soroptimist Federation of the Americas, Inc.; Mrs. Blanche Edgar, past governor of Southwestern Region who is credited with organizing many Soroptimists Clubs through the years; Dr. Ruth Thomas Heitfeld, past regional governor; Charlotte Chichester, currently serving as regional governor; and Bess Combs, who coordinated the 50th anniversary celebration, including the publishing of the region's history.

**HISTORICAL PAGEANT**

A pageant, giving the history of the organization and featuring members in the dress of the last 50 years, was a feature of the celebration.

Members of the Alameda High "S" Club, the first to be chartered in Southwestern Region.

"S" Club members from throughout the region served as escorts to the dignitaries as they entered the banquet hall.

Alamedans attending the "Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage" included Jeannette Romanoff, director of District I; Gladys O'Rourke, president of the Alameda Club, and Nadine Barbara, Phillis Bentson,

Hagemann, Flory Kennard, Dorothy Kerry, Marie Neville, Dorothy Ramsey, Fern Robinson, Mary Selby, Elizabeth Stratton, Barbara Stevenson, Sara Traude, Anna Trento, Anne Ward and Bernice Horgan.



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BARBARA STEVENSON  
WOMEN'S EDITOR

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**"WALL TO WALL" SOROPTIMISTS** was one way to describe Goodman Hall in Jack London Square last Sunday morning, when nearly 1200 Soroptimists from throughout California, the nation and the world gathered for the Golden Jubilee Pilgrimage to the city where "it all began" 50 years ago.



**READY TO ENTER** Goodman Hall with other dignitaries are two district directors of Southwestern Region, Soroptimist Federation of the Americas, Inc. — Jeannette Romanoff (second from left) of Alameda, and Vada Vink (right) of Patterson. They were escorted by members of 'S' Clubs, high school girls service clubs sponsored by Soroptimists.

## Golden Jubilee

# Fifty years of Soroptimism celebrated



**FLAPPER** — Margaret Bohanon, leader of the Antioch group, wore a flapper costume in a pageant of Soroptimist presidents, each of whom wore an outfit from the era in which her club was chartered.

In her keynote speech at the Golden Jubilee 50-year pilgrimage in Oakland last Sunday Ethel Loard of New Jersey, president of the Soroptimist International Association, called upon women everywhere to assert themselves. She urged each one of them to take pen in hand and deluge President Richard Nixon with requests that he appoint a woman to the Supreme Court bench.

Over 1200 Soroptimists and friends applauded her speech as a climax to a double-featured event, following a meeting of clubs in District One the day before at the Hotel Leamington also in Oakland.

Bess Combs of the Antioch club was general chairman of the pilgrimage, with Mrs. Geneva Kipp, also of Antioch in charge of financial arrangements for the brunch which was served during the festivities.

Scores of chartered busses decked with colorful signs proclaiming the gala occasion made Goodman Hall in Jack London Square their destination, filled with singing Soroptimists from every part of California.

The two stars of the day were a gracious duo, Mrs. Violet Richardson Ward, founder president, a member of the Berkeley club and Miss Eloise Cushing founder member of the Oakland club. Tributes were paid to them by Soroptimists from many parts of the country, and from Germany and Turkey as well.

A highlight of the program was the dedication of a bronze statue of the head and shoulders of Mrs. Ward. Mrs. Mary Gianotti, past regional governor, a member of the El

Cerrito club, conducted the dedication rites. Following this a roll call was made, and representatives of various Soroptimist clubs placed capsules in the base of the statue, to be opened 50 years hence.

The capsules contained a strip of paper one inch wide and 12 inches long on which was written a club history on one side and a 50-year prophecy on the other.

Lela Sater, charter president of the Antioch club and Joanne Byer, president of the East Contra Costa Club participated in the ritual. The former club was chartered in May, 1953, and the latter in May, 1970.

Kay Davis, charter president of the East county club, participated in a pageant when each Soroptimist paraded across the stage in the costume of the time in which her particular club was chartered. The first of these were the "flappers" of the 1920's, and the last was Miss Katharine Stinson, president of the Soroptimist Federation of the Americas. She was wearing a red, white and blue space suit, complete with bubbled plastic headpiece.

Joining the hostesses for the pilgrimage who served in costumes of the roaring 20's was Mrs. Margaret Bohannon, president of the Antioch club.

During the day first sales were made of a golden-covered comprehensive history pool of Soroptimists which was written by Miss Combs.

Among those who attended the pilgrimage from Antioch were: Julie and Mary Vargo, Sula O'Hara, Ramona Thomas,

Millie Burris, Roberta Slattery, Ruth Cole, Zoe Raines, Marty Graham, Virginia Calisesi, Betty Malley, Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Rexroth, Mr. and Mrs. Verne Green, Mr. and Mrs. George Shaw, Mr. and Mrs. William Sylvester, and Mrs. Evelyn Little.

Attending from the East County club were: Mr. and Mrs. Lenny Byer, Barbara Guise and Julia Arce.

About 250 delegates and visitors from 37 of 38 clubs in district one attended the day-long meeting Saturday at the Hotel Leamington in Oakland on Saturday.

Hon. Jaqueline Taber, judge of the Oakland-Piedmont Municipal court addressed the women on the subject "What's It All About". As keynote speaker she told of the struggles she had to become a lawyer, a field she was in 18 years before she was appointed to the bench in 1967. As many adults had helped her on the way, she urged Soroptimists to assist struggling young people (especially women) who aspire to be active in their chosen field.

Mrs. Jeannette Romanoff, an educator from Alameda, as district director was in charge of the meeting, and was honored at a gala banquet at the Leamington Saturday night. Mrs. Charlotte Chichester, regional governor, also an educator from Delano was the honoree at a noon luncheon.

Mrs. Davis represented the East county club at the district meeting. Others who joined her at the meeting, but did not attend the Sunday pilgrimage from the Antioch club included Alverna Osmund and May Maunder.



**BOUQUET AND BUST** — Joanne Byer, president of the East County Soroptimist Club, added her congratulations to the honors bestowed upon Violet Richardson Ward, founder president of the international organization which originated in Oakland 50 years ago.



PRESIDENT and CHARTER PRESIDENT, Elsie Bakke, right and Margaret Shields of the Soroptimist Club of Lake County, admire the attractive Soroptimist scarf designed to commemorate the Soroptimist Federation's Golden Jubilee year. Mrs. Bakke and Mrs. Shields attended the 50th anniversary celebration in Oakland Sunday. (Observer photo)

## Lake Soroptimists to Golden Jubilee

LAKEPORT — Five members of the Soroptimist Club of Clear Lake attended the District 1 meeting and Golden Jubilee celebration in Oakland this past weekend.

Attending were Mrs. Sigurd A. Bakke, (Elsie) president, Mrs. Floyd (Margaret) Shields, charter president; Mrs. L. L. (Agnes) Cooper, Mrs. L. C. (Della) McNaught and Mrs. George (Louise) Bossert.

An interesting note for Lake county Soroptimists is

the fact that Bess Combs of Antioch was general chairman of the 50th Anniversary steering committee which planned the Golden Jubilee celebration attracting 1200 women to Jack London Square Sunday. Mrs. Combs is the daughter of Julia Combs of Lakeport and the sister of Agnes Combs, a member of the Lake county schools staff

The first Soroptimist club was chartered Oct. 3, 1921, in Oakland with 80 members and is now in 42 countries with a membership of over 50,000, the largest classified women's organization in the world.

Part of the jubilee pageant was a parade of fashions in the mode of the time of the chartering of each club, beginning in the 1920s. The Lake County club, chartered

in June of 1955, was represented by Charter President Shields.

President Bakke along with some 130 others, placed a small capsule containing a brief history of the Lake county in a niche of a bust of Founder President Violet Richardson Ward of Oakland. Soroptimist of Clear Lake's President Virginia Paul also placed a scroll in the niche

which will be opened in another 50 years.

The Clear Lake club was honored to have its centerpiece, created by Soroptimists Mary Jean Cremer and Blanche Glazner, used at the head table during the jubilee luncheon.

The Clear Lake club was chartered under sponsorship of the Lake county club in 1964.