



**Soroptimist  
International  
Edinburgh  
news  
notes  
anecdotes**

Issue 171

June 2018

**SCOTLAND'S PATH TO  
CLIMATE JUSTICE**

Following Pat's report last month on the event at the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation, Lindsey continues:-  
The afternoon speakers at the ECCI on 27<sup>th</sup> April were all female, and a very able and clever group of knowledgeable young ladies!

The speakers included:  
Natashe Nkonde, from BLACK LIVES MATTER on Environmental Racism;  
Louise McKeever, YOUNG FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SCOTLAND on Intergenerational Equity;  
Sinead Mercier an independent researcher on Climate Issues, on JUST TRANSITION;  
Emma Simpson, LGBT rights campaigner on gender and environmental justice.

Each of the speakers had some very interesting and challenging viewpoints – not all of them would be acceptable to many older (and wiser) people. We have lived through our houses having no central heating and coal fires being lit in dining rooms, kitchen/breakfast rooms (boiler for the hot water) and sitting rooms. Rubbish was burned in boilers or put out – twice a week – for the dustbin collections!!

We have progressed – and learned the hard way – that this was not sustainable!

However, Louise did feel that the situation had developed and was 'very much our (older generation) fault and they (younger generation) would be left to deal with it!' Taken in isolation, one has to agree, but then so many other things have moved forward, progressed and we have to hope that the world is a better place in which to live. But agreement on the 'sorting out' has to be immediate – the world is already damaged and time is no longer on our side.

However, 'reimagining a world without borders' has, according to Natasha, a long way to go – what the wealthier western society does, really impacts upon the poorer third world countries, lack of water being a prime example. In Soroptimism we are all well aware of this problem – a young girl having to walk miles every single day to collect water for her family, means that she will, in most cases, lose the opportunity to continue with her education.

Emma made the audience aware that many migrants leave their homes because of their gender choices, it being no longer safe to remain in some African and Middle Eastern countries.

Sinead is a parliamentary researcher for the Green Party of Ireland. Justice may come in very simple forms – the removal of a trunk road development in Eire a short distance away from a 'fairy tree' meant the local community were kept happy and contented!!

All in all it was encouraging, if challenging, to hear the youth of today take charge, and make their feelings known – it is their world now and it is up to them to make the big adjustments and improvements needed to offer Climate Justice to all.

*Lindsey*

## Visit from a German Soroptimist



L. to R. Myint Su, Christa

I was the only one able to meet Christa from SI Speyer in Germany at short notice. I thought it would be a good idea to meet at SYH as it is central and she would see our club's regular meeting place.

She brought greetings from one of the youngest Soroptimist clubs (both in age of club and members) to one of the oldest! They are only 9 years old and, to my envy, said that they have to limit the number wanting to join their club because of accommodation restraints. They seem to be a very dynamic club, growing their brand with visits to schools to talk to schoolgirls and wearing the 'Ask Me Why I Am a Soroptimist' T-shirt at all opportunities.

SI Speyer also gets itself known in the community by volunteering in local charities and sponsorships for deserving young girls. Christa had brought a student to Berwick-on-Tweed on a SI Speyer sponsored trip. It was a good opportunity for her to meet up with her daughter who is currently working in Manchester.

### *Christa writes*

"The programme which we offer to the girls does not necessarily imply travelling; it is called 'I do my thing'; girls apply with

their own educational project, which should basically be appropriate for their own sustainable development. Laura is, in fact, the first girl actually going abroad; others were offered language lessons (English, French, German, Spanish), piano lessons, yoga lessons, art lessons, rowing tuition or a training on the job with Soroptimists....., the student (*Laura, I presume, MS*) was accompanied to Berwick-on Tweed; while she is enjoying her week there, I am travelling in Scotland, currently I am writing you from Ullapool; tomorrow my way will lead me to the Isle of Skye. I am in contact with our mentee every day and will be meeting her in Berwick next Sunday to escort her home.

"It was such a pleasant exchange that we had on that sunny Saturday morning last week, thank you again for offering your time! I hope you seized the opportunity for a walk with your husband, as you had planned. It would be such a pleasure for me to welcome you in my town, Speyer and in our region, the Pfalz and Kurpfalz, and to introduce you to some other Speyer Soroptimists.

"My daughter and myself enjoyed Royal Botanic Garden and when she returned to Manchester I walked back to the City centre in the sunshine."  
(from Christa's email to me, MS)

Christa left us a gift - 'The Artist's Mug' which they sell to raise funds. When I asked how they went about actually selling something like that, she said many local shops help when they hear about their charitable work. Wasn't this what we used to do in our fund-raising days?

Do read the leaflet which you'll see inside the mug.

*Myint Su*

# Give Women the Vote

Marches took place in all four capitals of the countries of the UK on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2018 to commemorate the Suffrage movement and the centenary of some women getting the vote. London, Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh had support from thousands of women of all ages.

Two members of SI Woking and District were interviewed briefly on the BBC.

The Edinburgh march started on Middle Meadow Walk, went down the Mound, along Princes Street, up the North Bridge and down the High Street to Holyrood Park. There was great enthusiasm and much camaraderie as we went along (I only managed to join the march in Princes Street.) A group of Girl Guides behind me was singing "We are the Girl Guides, we are the best in Scotland."

Their excitement was palpable and they certainly made themselves heard.

All in all it was a very successful day and many stayed in Holyrood with picnics, others considered climbing Arthur's Seat (though I do not know if anyone did) and all enjoyed the sunshine.

**Ed**

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## Dates for Your Diary 2018

Sept	1	SISSR, AGM, Kirkintilloch
	12	Business Meeting
	26	Speaker Meeting
Oct	5-7	SI Kiev, 25 <sup>th</sup> anniversary
	10	Business Meeting
	24	Speaker Meeting
	25-27	SIGBI Federation Conf. Liverpool
Nov	14	Business Meeting
	28	tbc
Dec	12	Social

Jessie Stephen, commemorated on the Great Tapestry of Scotland\*, was an active Suffragette over 100 years ago. As we celebrate 100 years of some women getting the vote her memory has been rekindled by her great niece, Sheena, who was interviewed on TV. She told the story of Jessie, a very young maid in Glasgow, who used to put acid into pillar boxes as her contribution to the suffragette cause.

Winifred and Isabel had been on duty at the Scottish Parliament when the Tapestry was on display in 2013. Sheena sought them out on that occasion and introduced herself. Sheena is one of Isabel's neighbours.

**Ed**

\*Panel 123, stitched by members of SI Edinburgh.

# Women Got the Vote

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## Collecting Clothes for EDA

Further to the supplement with SIEnna 168, February 2018 and the Business Meeting minutes on page 5 of this edition, the current situation is that EDA cannot accept used clothes.

**Ed**

**Items for SIEnna 172** should be sent to the editor by 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

SI Edinburgh web address:  
[www.sigbi.org/edinburgh](http://www.sigbi.org/edinburgh)

## **SIE Business Meeting held on 13 June 2018 at Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel**

**Present** President Gari Donn (in Chair) plus 8 members plus Abigail (SI Southampton), who will be moving to Edinburgh in the future.  
Apologies for absence were received from 9 members.

**SI Vision and Mission statement:** This was read by Anna.

### **News of members**

Margaret is now home from hospital. Kathleen is unwell.  
President Gari has sent a card to SI Cockermouth re Wendy.

### **Matters arising from previous minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 9 May 2018 were agreed. (Proposed by Christine; seconded by Isabel).  
GDPR It was agreed that Edith's use of a version of SIENNA without surnames and any contact details for the website was a sensible approach. It was also noted that there is still some consideration to be given to the setting up of club email addresses and the way in which general emails to members are sent. It is understood that Pat and Carolyn have been looking at actions which SIE needs to take.  
EVOC It was agreed that as membership for SIE would cost nothing we should join EVOC. (Proposed by Anna; seconded by Isabel). It was noted that we would need to find a club representative in due course.

### **Correspondence (Christine)**

- Voting to determine which candidates should be supported for 2 SIGBI positions was carried out. It was agreed to support Johanna for the role of Vice President and Yvonne for the role of Assistant Programme Director – Education. (Christine will submit the required voting papers)
- SIGBI articles of association – It was agreed to vote in favour of the proposed change, which was designed to help SIGBI meet the requirements for achieving charitable status. (Christine will return the completed voting paper)

### **Press & Publicity (Christine)**

Christine drew the attention of members to a photograph which she had submitted and which had been published in the Evening News on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

### **Treasurer (Myint Su's report – submitted in her absence)**

Myint Su confirmed that she and Isabel were being added to the list of signatories for the RBS account (Carolyn and Dorothy are already signatories).

The RBS a/c stands at £2,017.49 as at 5 June 2018.

All ECYH meeting dates for 2018/19 have been confirmed and the necessary deposit paid.

Payments due to SIGBI and Scotland South have been made.

As regards the examination of the accounts, Myint Su asked if SIE would be happy for her husband, Clive, to do this. She has asked SIGBI, who indicated that there would be no objection provided SIE members agreed. The feeling amongst those at the meeting was that it would not be best practice for the examiner to be so closely related to the Treasurer. Members were grateful to Clive for his willingness to do this, however. Those at the meeting suggested a few possible names and will follow these up.

### **Scotland South**

Myint Su had reported to President Gari that £3,900 had been disbursed by 3S Fund last year, and that the amounts paid to applicants depended on the length of their projects.

The next meeting will be in Kirkintilloch on 1 September and will include the AGM.

### **Programme Action (Alison)**

Alison apologised for having missed meetings recently, due to church commitments. She indicated that she would submit Programme Focus Reports (PFRs) for the period from April 2017 to March 2018 for the following:

- Cranston Street Hostel – collection of toiletries etc and Christmas gifts;
- Scottish Superwomen of Science – help given;
- Blythswood Care shoeboxes;
- Marie Curie collections;
- 3S Fund;
- Sight Village (2017) – volunteer guides;
- EDA – items collected for refugees (sewing items etc);
- Target Ovarian Cancer – volunteer helpers at event;
- Scottish Love in Action – volunteer helper at event;
- Various collections, eg books for Better World books.

See Lindsey's article in SIENNA for news on 'Kids Love Clothes'.

Marine Conservation Society is holding a beach clean-up event at Bo'ness on 13 September. Equipment will be supplied.

### **Club leaflet and poster**

Isabel circulated copies of the club leaflet. It was agreed that 500 copies should be printed (with cost taken from the Legacy Fund).

As Marjory was not at the meeting there was no news on progress with the poster.

### **Club programme**

President Gari and Christine will liaise re arranging the meeting programme for 2018/19.

### **3S Fund**

No report.

### **Friendship Groups**

South and West groups have met. Due to absences the North group has been unable to have a full meeting.

### **Summer Social at President Gari's on 27 June**

President Gari confirmed that she had invited UN House interns to attend. A list was available for members to indicate whether or not they would attend the event, which starts at 6pm. Volunteers to provide savoury or sweet items for a light supper were requested.

President Gari suggested that members might be interested in visiting Penicuik Print Museum at 4pm, prior to visiting her house.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Carolyn is compiling a special SIENNA on the 90<sup>th</sup> year and has asked for any pictures etc that are relevant.
- EDA – it will cost £3,000 to send another container to Syrian refugees. Donations of goods (sewing/knitting items, clothing etc) or money would be welcomed.
- Several members attended the march on 10 June to celebrate 100 years of votes for women.
- A member of SI East Grinstead has contacted SIE to advise that her son is performing a one-man show at the Fringe. She is looking for accommodation – perhaps a reciprocal arrangement.

### **Next meeting**

This will be held on 12 September 2018 at Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel, at 7:30pm.



## SIE Social 27<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

The Penicuik and Papermaking Heritage Centre (web page available with opening times etc) was very interesting, though a little unfinished in decor. About a dozen Edinburgh Soroptimists were there and were taken round by Rodger - who gave us all the details of how Penicuik had been a very important paper making town - several families had mills and went on to found mills in Canada. The ability to produce good quality writing and printing paper had come via China, France and the Low Countries but sadly now is no longer produced in Scotland - globalisation we were told!! We then made our way out to the home of President Gari in perfect June weather, with the sun sparkling on the reservoir and a marquee waiting for us in the garden where we could enjoy refreshments and mingle - network - with the interns, Navya included, who had come out from UNHouse. We were then joined by Pat, Myint Su and Clive. We had a bountiful array of finger food, Soroptimists contributing to the spread. This was followed by the presentation of Long Service Awards to Marjory, Clephane, Kathleen and Pat by Gari who also presented Anna with her Past President's badge.



*Past President Anna (centre) receives her Past President's badge from President Gari (right) at the club's summer social.*

Our long servers gave us a few insights - prompted by Gari - into why they had joined Soroptimists - friendship being one of the reasons! One or two of the Interns braved the cold and swam in the reservoir before Gari offered tea and coffee and we all made sure everyone had a lift back to Edinburgh. A 'fun' part of the evening had been the raising of a second marquee in the garden with Gari's husband Malcolm in charge, in preparation for the forthcoming wedding of one of their daughters. Organising the tall and the short, to put up the roof made for an interesting photo shoot - a happy and enjoyable Summer Social for us all after a pretty memorable year!

*Lindsey*



*We heard about 'fun' in Lindsey's article – this photo proves it.*

Now we are on holiday for the summer – and it has been a glorious start – so enjoy it whenever you can.

I'll be back at the end of September.

*Ed*