

Soroptimist International of Great Britain & Ireland

SOUTH LANCASHIRE LEADER

Editor - Norma Parry *SI Oldham & District*

Volume 2
Issue 18
December 2011



President's Message



I decided to become a member of Soroptimist International almost 35 years ago whilst, still a busy manager for a multi national company. That decision has been so special as it has brought into my life a different and much wider view on the world and its opportunities. It inspired me to try to ensure these opportunities were available to all women world wide but in addition especially it has brought so many

friends into my life along the way.

It was therefore through such friendship and encouragement, and naturally with a sense of pride and real privilege that I was installed as your Regional President at the Federation Conference in Brighton in October. It was made all the more special with so many of my friends being present and I thank you all sincerely for all the support and especially for joining me at my little get together on the Friday Evening. It is encouraging to know that members are so supportive and I have felt quite overwhelmed by all the cards, messages and good wishes I have received.

My appreciation also goes to all members who were able to attend my Installation Party organised by my own very supportive Ramsbottom club members. It was a lovely evening and I hope that you all enjoyed it as much as I did.

South Lancashire Soroptimists, you have always achieved much by working together on your Programme Action (**the life blood of our organisation**) to assess Local, National and International needs. During my year I wish to encourage all clubs to digest the new Programme Objectives for 2011/2015, continue the good work you are currently involved with; or even embark on a new joint project with a neighbouring club, thus through teamwork having a greater impact on the particular goal in question.

My aim this year is to promote such teamwork, so as to encourage you all in every club to continue working together in your varying roles. To encourage each other, and particularly our newer members, to consider joining the executive and/or becoming a club officer or more importantly Club President. Remember no one is born to be President, all of us be it Club, Region or Federation are - OCM's - "*Ordinary Complaining Members*" - and we eventually grow within the organisation to take up such roles. Each year, we as Presidents bring a different perspective to that year, but we all do it for the benefit of the organisation, thus ensuring the advancement and the status of women everywhere, whilst enjoying fun and friendship along the way.

Teamwork is also the theme of the Joint Regional one day Conference in Liverpool on Saturday 12th May 2012. Please try to join us for what we are sure will be a very informative and good value day with interesting speakers and good member participation

During the coming months, I look forward to working with you all, meeting many of you at your club events, as well as Regional meetings, and being of any personal assistance I am able to give.

In conclusion, may I share with you all a few words from our new Federation President, Maureen Maguire's inaugural address at Conference "*there are many challenges for this organisation and ourselves as the 21st century moves into its second decade, but **together** we can drive future developments*" therefore encompassing her special theme of "**Facing the Future Together.**" Soroptimist friends let us all embrace that theme and remember that we are all part of a team.

Together - Everyone - Achieves - More

In Friendship

Denise

NEWS ABOUT THE BENEVOLENT FUND

I should like to bring to members' attention the recent changes that have been made in the application procedure to the Benevolent Fund. It was decided at the AGM on 5th November that it is no longer necessary for an applicant to have two sponsors. Instead, any present or past member of three years standing, who is experiencing financial hardship, should now contact the Benevolent Fund representative directly. The representative will provide a report for the Trustees and a decision reached as to whether the Benevolent Fund is able to help.

It is therefore important that all members are aware of my contact details which are as follows;

email: lesleymargaretpritchard@hotmail.co.uk: **mobile:** 07988 612605: **landline:** 01706 223223

Lesley Pritchard, South Lancs Benevolent Fund Representative

OUT AND ABOUT IN THE REGION . . .

LEIGH & DISTRICT

The Club has been taking a leading role in Community events in the last three months. In September SI Leigh were again involved in planning the Town's Heritage week-end in partnership with council officials, representatives from the Parish Church and other voluntary organisations. Club members undertook tours of the Town Hall where the Spinning Jenny plaque is hung in the Foyer. The plaque was restored by the Club in partnership with other local organisations some years ago following fundraising events to raise the necessary £4000. Visitors to the Town Hall included the Deputy Mayor Myra Whiteside, her Consort and 90 local schoolchildren. Evaluation forms completed by the public were extremely positive, and once again raised the Club's profile and that of Soroptimism generally.



"Pictured are members of the club (wearing their new promotional SI sashes!) with Deputy Mayor Myra Whiteside and her husband"

And on 7 October President Bev Beenham and members hosted a "World's Biggest Coffee Morning" in aid of Macmillan Cancer Care in the Mayor's Parlour at Leigh Town Hall, attended by the Deputy Mayor and Andy Burnham MP (former Secretary of State for Education). Members sold delicious home made cakes and biscuits, raising nearly £300 for Macmillan.

CROSBY

SI Crosby recently held an open evening in order to interest potential new members.

Sandy Taylor, President, hosted the evening which attended by the Mayor of Sefton Cllr. Carol Cummins; and following a welcome reception, presented a view of her presidential year so far and what her membership meant to her.

Membership Officer, Pat Williams, organised an evening of short talks from representatives of local charities that benefit from fund raising by SI Crosby.

The charities represented were: Sefton Women's and Children's Aid (Mrs. Lesley Paterson, Chief Executive). Sightline Northwest (Mrs. Eileen Green) Alder Hey Children's Cardiac Research Appeal (Mr. Nelson Alphonso, Consultant Cardiac Surgeon at Alder Hey Hospital).

The Regional Membership Officer, Margaret Davies, spoke of the future of Soroptimist International and the importance of new membership.

Regional President, South Lancashire, Jenny Stanistreet, concluded the evening with a vote of thanks to the speakers.

There were fourteen invited guests and of these eight so far have expressed an interest in possible membership.



ST. HELENS

Purple Teardrop Campaign

Purple was our theme for our October meeting

Understanding about trafficking and slavery was our aim

Raising awareness is what we achieved

Petition signing promoted our action for change

Letting all members join in by dressing in purple

Enlightening and enjoyable evening

The Regional President was our special guest

Excellent P A reports highlighting our achievements

A lot of fun and friendship

Reading of the poem "When I grow old I will wear purple"

Decorating our tables and prizes in purple

Reporting of raising over £3,000 at our

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Organising our exciting future activities for November and December

Pleasure at the success we are achieving!

OLDHAM



SI Oldham & District, have once again collected twenty four Shoe Boxes for Samaritans Purse. These as usual have been added to the boxes from Thorp Primary School in Royton. Despite the economic climate more boxes have been donated this year and the club were pleased to receive a certificate from Samaritans Purse for their efforts

ROCHDALE

In the middle of August, SI Rochdale held their second very successful Friendship Evening at Springhill Hospice.

Regional President Jenny Stanistreet and fellow Soroptimists from Bury, Ramsbottom, Oldham, Ashton-under-Lyne and Pendleside, as well as a great many friends of the club, were welcomed by President Ann and members of SI Rochdale.

Entertainment for the evening was from Freda Farnworth accompanied by Mr Edward Rigg. Freda sang songs made famous by Gracie Fields, as she felt the choice very appropriate with Gracie being a Rochdale lass.

The entertainment was followed by a very lavish buffet supper provided by the members of SI Rochdale, which was enjoyed by all.

Retail therapy was also available in the form of jewellery, pashminas and handbags from C'est Chic.

Following a raffle the sum of £359 was raised which will be shared by President Ann's Charities, Springhill Hospice and the North West Air Ambulance.

Thank you SI Rochdale from all your guests on the evening.

... WITH NEWS FROM THE CLUBS

ST. HELENS

The members of S.I. St Helens enjoyed a wonderful occasion at Knowsley Hall on Merseyside, the ancestral seat of Lord and Lady Derby. It was full of happy chatting ladies enjoying coffee whilst raising money for MACMILLAN. We very much appreciate being able to host this event in such prestigious surroundings and so generously donated by them. This has turned into one of the biggest coffee mornings held in the North West and we were very proud to be able to host it again. This event has become so special along with the fresh coffee and homemade biscuits donated by members. The staff at Knowsley deserve a special thanks for their much valued help.



Pictured is Judith Stewart, Regional Fundraiser for Macmillan in the North West, receiving a cheque for £3,597.91. Judith very smartly secured match funding from Barclays bank to the amount of £3000 going straight into Macmillan St Helens and District account.

ASHTON-under-LYNE

At the September Speaker Meeting, Ashton-under-Lyne were pleased to welcome Anna Fletcher, from the Ashton Reporter.

Anna was born in Tameside but has recently been living in Australia and in coming back to the UK is looking to promote women in the area. It proved to be a nostalgic evening as Anna found that Membership Secretary Irene Melvin was one of her former teachers.

The speaker for the evening had sadly had to withdraw, so President Jeanette spoke to the club about how she found her long lost brother. This was a very personal story told with great sensitivity and feeling which pulled the heart strings of all present. Congratulations Jeanette for a most illuminating talk.

SOUTHPORT

As part of our Programme Action activities, Past President Doreen Roberts has been leading a project with the local Alzheimer's Society producing 'Life Story' books. We prepared three books over the summer for gentlemen who were suffering from the early stages of this debilitating disease. The books recorded their background, upbringing, family milestones, career and any other key events in their lives. In early September, we presented these books to our clients at an informal lunch. They were delighted with the finished documents.



On Friendship Night, we lit a candle for each of our Friendship links and the photo shows President Carol with the candles for our six links and an one extra for Soroptimist International. We enjoyed an excellent supper organised by International Committee Chair Heather Shulver.



SI Southport held their annual Christmas Coffee Morning on Saturday, 19 November with craft stalls, tombola, Christmas Hamper raffle and Christmas Cake raffle. Members and friends attended and £1,160 was raised for President Carol's charity 'Crossroads Care'. Members were delighted with the amount raised which is the best ever.



Members of S. I. Southport organised a small charity lunch on Thursday, 24 November at Mere Sands Nature Reserve. Members joined with members from the Nature Reserve to raise funds which will be used to commence a joint project between the Nature Reserve and the Girl Guides. The Reserve runs educational workshops teaching about the environment. The lunch raised £725.50.



WIDNES

Members of SI Widnes attended an Open Day at Widnes Masonic Hall. They hosted a stand and members were able to introduce the visiting ladies to Soroptimism and answer any question that they may have had.

This is the latest effort in the Widnes club's "Raising Public Awareness" Campaign and follows many other events during the year including a stand at the local Steam Rally.



REPORT FROM BRIGHTON BY SI RAMSBOTTOM

Eighty members from South Lancashire joined more than a thousand delegates at what is believed to be the largest conference of women taking place in Britain. They and Soroptimists from 30 other countries heard the results of a world-wide survey charting the impact of their campaigns and fund-raising. Also discussed were ways of achieving our next big issue, which is finding ways to educate women for leadership.

Soroptimists have raised £1million to help train women into employment in

Sierra Leone following the 20 year civil war. Among the speakers at the annual conference in Brighton were the writer and broadcaster Sandi Toksvig and the founder of the campaign for female education in Africa, Ann Cotton.

Barbara Hulmes, the President of Soroptimist International of Ramsbottom, lead twelve members from Ramsbottom who supported Denise Baldwin as she was installed as the new President of South Lancashire Region for the next twelve months.

AWARDS LUNCH

The South Lancashire Awards and New Members Lunch was held at The Wrightington Hotel on Sunday 25th September. It was well attended by the majority of clubs in the region and it was a pleasure to welcome many new members.



President Jenny was also able to hand over a cheque for £1,800, being the sum raised through her "Nest Egg Challenge." to Ken Johnson, Chairman of the Multiple Sclerosis National Council for England. Ken promised that the money would

be used by the MS Society in the North West."

SI Widnes were the lucky winners of the Rosebowl and a report on how they achieved this will be given at the December Regional Meeting.



The speaker was Sameem Ali, who is a Manchester City Councillor and also a member of Manchester club. Sameem has herself been a

victim of Domestic Violence and Forced Marriage and is now working hard to put a stop to this, alongside the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Other awards which were presented on the day included the Programme Action Award which went to SI Oldham and District for their "Caring and Sharing" Open Day held in March 2011 to coincide with International Women's Day.



The award for the winning Bowling Team was presented to SI Liverpool and The Tricia Fahey award for best bowler was awarded to Hildah McAllen from SI Bootle and accepted on the day by Caroline Holmes.



The new members lunch is traditionally a bi-annual event and it has been decided that the awards will be presented on the alternate years when the lunch is not held, at the September Regional Meeting.

Joint Regional Conference 2012

This will be a one day conference, held at The Crowne Plaza Hotel in Liverpool on Saturday 12th May 2012. The theme for the Conference will be **TEAMWORK** and booking forms are now available and can be downloaded from the South Lancashire website at:

www.sigbi.org/south-lancashire

Alternatively please contact Barbara Hulmes from SI Ramsbottom

Regional Workshop

A Regional Workshop for Membership and Publicity was hosted by Margaret Davies and Norma Parry on Saturday 12th November at United Reformed Church, Wigan.

There was a good turn out from eleven of the clubs in the region and the input from members present was very rewarding. Topics ranged from the qualities of a prospective new member and the items for inclusion in a New Members Pack, to the usefulness of a club website and how to build a successful press release.

Thanks must go to members of the Wigan club for their hospitality on our arrival and also to President Denise for her support on the day.



Margaret and Norma will send the results of the workshop to all clubs via email to those attending and via hard copy to those clubs unable to be there on the day.

New President's Party

A party hosted by SI Ramsbottom to welcome our new Regional President, Denise Baldwin was held on Saturday 12th November, where a good time was had by all who attended. Representatives from all clubs in the region were there to support Denise.

In true Soroptimist style, food fun and friendship were there in abundance. A quiz organised by Barbara Hulmes, President of SI Ramsbottom showed photos of our Regional Officers in their very much younger days and there was a great deal of hilarity as the results were announced.



The entertainment for the evening was provided by Natasha Larkin who delighted us all with her violin skills. Natasha had stepped in at short notice but

provided a stunning and flawless performance.

Denise, a member of the Ramsbottom club, praised the fellow members of her club for their generous hospitality and support without whose hard work and help in the kitchen, the evening would not have been possible.

