

## President's Message



My dear friends, what a lot has happened since we last met in the spring. Firstly the regional conference - what a fantastic weekend of Soroptimism where we were educated, empowered and enabled to a high degree. I would again like to extend my thanks to all the speakers and especially the conference committee for bringing it all together, you wouldn't have had much left of your Regional President without their support, and a special mention to the PR team of Val and Jenny for their online promotion.

I ask members to look out for the July edition of Lancashire Life for our "photo shoot".

I have completed several of my regional runs and will have completed another before the next regional meeting, also President Elect Margaret and I are due to take to the skies again soon with International President Ann. I have attended many Charter Dinners and I am always overwhelmed by the welcome I am given, including a wolf whistle at Southport's event, a first I believe for a Regional President.

I can't believe that I am half way through my year it is flying by and now that my exams are over I am enjoying it even more. I am looking forward to seeing your entries for the Rosebowl Challenge. I am due to attend more club dinners and events and also the UKPAC Study Day.

I wish you all an enjoyable summer and I look forward to seeing you all out and about of the next months.

*In Friendship, Victoria*

### NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT ELECT

I have just returned from an amazing visit to Japan, where I met up with two friends from New Zealand. Many people have asked me for my impressions of that beautiful country. It is welcoming, clean, safe and fascinating but overall ..... it is "full of Japanese". That may seem a strange remark but there are so few countries now with such an homogeneous population that it stands out above all else. We do not live in one of those few. On returning home I was struck again with the knowledge that we live in a society that is rich in a variety of cultures. It made me think..... how does my club (and your club) react to those diverse cultures around us? Do we reach out to all the different groups within our locality? Do we rise to the challenges it brings; are we tolerant of diversity; do we see the similarities between us and our sisters next door or down the street, or do we see the differences? I'm still thinking....



*In friendship, Margaret*

### KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES



The photograph above was 'tweeted' recently by SI St Helens and shows members holding a banner to share a message of support with their longstanding friendship link of SI Apapa in Nigeria, after the recent kidnapping of school girls in that country.

On the right is President Victoria wearing her 'Ask me why I'm a Soroptimist' T shirt after running the 'Rock n' Roll' Marathon in Liverpool this month. Our Website Administrator, Jenny Stanistreet, has sent it to SIGBI in response to their request for clubs' photo of the month (for Facebook & Twitter). We shall see if they use it.



## ASHTON-U-LYNE



Paul and Kevin from North West Blood Bikers came to talk to members of SI Ashton-u Lyne at their March Speaker Meeting. The North West branch of the charity was set up in 2011 and now carries not only blood but other vital emergency items, which includes anything from scans to breast milk. There is only one area in the UK which does not have a Blood Bikers group and their purpose is to transport items free of charge all over the country as an out of hours service. North West Blood Bikers currently have 14 riders and 5 specialised motor bikes and there are also 5 controllers, plus one response car and one transit van. The riders who all have full time day jobs elect to work any three nights out of seven for the charity. The Blood Bikers are not a blue light service, but they are fully trained by ROSPA and both bike and rider are fully kitted out to a high visibility standard. Average running costs are in the region of £40,000 all of which comes from public donations and all the riders are volunteers who want to give something back to their community. In the 2 years that the North West Bikers have been running they have saved the local Tameside Hospital over £20,000 in taxi costs. They started dealing only with Tameside but have now taken on other Trusts including Pennine Acute. They also transport items for St Ann's Hospice. The Duty controller has responsibility for each rider who are guided by a very sophisticated satellite navigation system, and no bike is allowed to travel in temperatures below 2 degrees centigrade. All the bikes have been named after people who have been major sponsors of the team or people with whom the riders have formed a close association through their volunteer work.

## WIDNES



Soroptimist International of Widnes are celebrating 70years in Widnes. To mark this occasion the club, under the Presidency of Mrs. Linda Redhead, have sponsored the Moor Lane Roundabout where the display of flowers and plants depicts their logo. President Linda was joined on the roundabout by the Mayor Cllr. Mrs. Margaret Ratcliffe and members of the club, where they released blue and yellow balloons. During this exciting year members hope to raise enough money to build a kitchen in Malawi for the charity "Mary's Meals."



## SOUTHPORT



SI Southport took up Regional President Victoria's challenge for the Regional Rose Bowl by having a 'Spring into Action' walk. They set off from Victoria Park, Southport where they had previously planted a tree to commemorate Maureen Fearn's Mayoral Year, then on to the Lord Street gardens where they have a bed planted outside Sainsbury's, then to Hesketh Park where they restored the Blind Garden working with Southport Rotary Club and finishing at the Botanic Gardens where they sponsor a planter. Fourteen members, including their member Madam Mayor Maureen and her Consort, together with a member who celebrated her 97th Birthday in January and several husbands all completed the four mile walk. A tremendous achievement for their oldest member who was wearing shoes with a small heel as she cannot wear flat shoes. They got coverage in the two local papers and also a digital paper which went out far and wide all with photographs. Diana, their oldest member, centre on the front row.

## BOLTON

President Cynthia's chosen charity for her Presidential year was Bolton Street Angels and her idea for fundraising was to hold a monthly coffee club in members' homes to which neighbours and friends were invited. Bolton Street Angels is an organisation manned by volunteers whose aim is to make the town centre a safer place for late night revellers. On a Saturday night between the hours of 10pm and 3am they patrol the streets offering assistance to those in need and providing a safe haven in the form of a cafe. Funds raised, together with the proceeds from an evening of music by the Ladybridge Singers, resulted in a donation of £1,450 which made a significant difference to the work of the Street Angels. The money raised was in addition to the Bolton Club's regular charities. Club members had lots of fun raising this money as the coffee club gave the opportunity to meet new people and chat to old friends.



## REGIONAL PROGRAMME ACTION NOTICE

There is a workshop with a floor space of 192 square metres and all facilities available at HMP Styal, Wilmslow Cheshire SK9 4HR. Do you know of anyone in business who may be interested in setting up a contract of purposeful work for 30+ female prisoners there? If so contact Eddie Tarry, LBA/Waste Environment Manager at the prison for more information [eddie.j.tarry@hmps.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:eddie.j.tarry@hmps.gsi.gov.uk)

## ST HELENS



SI St Helens held an impromptu flash mob event of song and dance to raise awareness for 'Stop The Traffik' to show local people that violence against women must stop. One hour of their time was all it took in St Helens Church Square, where they also sold hand produced fridge magnets, made at a fun club meeting depicting "STRONG HANDS STOP VIOLENCE" This theme was repeated on the handmade banner – a very impressive sight.



## CROSBY

When a German offers to cook traditional food as a fundraiser, what do you do? Take him up on the offer, of course! Hence, members of SI Crosby, plus family and friends, enjoyed an evening of German food and music. Maggie Tatam (Chair of Fundraising) opened up her kitchen to Ulrich Pfeiffer, who just happens to be married to Helen, the club's Vice-President and PAC Officer.

Ulli prepared a three-course meal for the two dozen diners: smoked trout with horseradish cream and rye bread; pork loin, sausages, frankfurters, mashed potatoes and spiced sauerkraut; apple strudel, cream and ice cream. The meal was rounded off with a glass of schnapps – and "prost" from all. President Pam thanked Ulli for all his hard work during the day. She also commended his three costumed assistants – Helen, and fellow club members, Barbara Beeching and Helen Hall. "We've had great evening," she said. "Maggie's home withstood the onslaught and Ulli has given us a night to remember. Plus we've raised over £400. Danke schön."



## LIVERPOOL



The standard was described as "astronomically high" by one judge in SI Liverpool's ninth Public Speaking Competition for 11 to 14 year old school children. The contestants chose one of three subjects to talk about for three minutes. It was hard to believe that the fifteen contestants were only Key Stage 3 pupils. There were definitely one or two future leaders in the making, with their cogent arguments, fluent delivery and obvious enthusiasm for their chosen topic. All fifteen students were amazing and Regional President Victoria and President Anne agreed that it "gives great hope for the future of our youngsters". The overall winner was Matthew Heneghan from St Edward's College.

## BOOTLE

SI Bootle came to the rescue after reading an article in the local paper about a pensioners' knitting group in Bootle that had been let down by the charity they were supporting. The group had been knitting jumpers for babies in Uganda, but they could not get them there without the charity. Bootle club offered to take the jumpers off their hands as they were ideal for their project, supporting the extremely poor in the village of Poiana, Romania. The offer was welcomed with open arms, and there was even a surplus which will be passed on to other nearby poverty stricken villages.



## WIGAN



SIGBI's Big Project - Birthing in Gambia - has received very enthusiastic support from SI Wigan with two recent events. Members and guests enjoyed a friendly meal at the Wheel in Wigan. There was a raffle and treasure hunt (supported by Tower College) and this helped to raise £166. Dr Saroj Jamdar and her husband Mr Jai Jamdar held an 'Indian Take Away' event at their home. They cooked a full and tasty menu for their guests and with over 35 members attending £310 was raised. Well done SI Wigan



## MANCHESTER

Following the Lord Mayor's attendance at the Charter Dinner in March, Immediate Past President Susan and members of SI Manchester were invited to visit the Lord Mayor's Parlour in Manchester Town Hall on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The spacious apartments are on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor overlooking Albert Square, and historically the Lord Mayor was required to live there during his or her year in office. The rooms are now used to entertain visiting dignitaries, including the royal family when they come to the city. Members were entertained by the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor Susan Cooley, who be installed as Lord Mayor in June. She is the Council's Older People's Champion and will be looking at the contribution to life in the city by people over the age of 50 during her year in office.



## WARRINGTON



World Health Day saw SI Warrington raise more than £80 for Breast Cancer Research in just three hours. Members decided to focus on breast cancer as a condition which had affected a number of members and their families and friends. Because the knitted Remembrance poppies had proven a success, members were keen to make pink flowers to sell on April 7. Half an hour was set aside before a business meeting and Georgina Walker ran a workshop to show members how to make flowers out of ribbon. Others knitted pink flowers. The Cockhedge Shopping Centre in Warrington gave permission to sell from the covered area outside Asda and this was the perfect spot with a high footfall and shelter from the weather. A total of £83.47 was raised. Many folk opted to give a donation rather than take a flower. People who hadn't seemed to notice the flowers when they went into the shopping centre came back with their purses already out. It was useful to have a mix of stick-pin and safety-pin fastenings so children could buy the safer option. Only four members were needed for the selling, two at a time doing 90 minutes each. Members also distributed information leaflets about Soroptimist International and cards publicising the club's current bra collection campaign. Publicity material was downloaded from the Cancer Research UK website. Most charities have downloads available to help with fundraising. Now the club hopes to do the same thing again in October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

## RAMSBOTTOM

Saturday the 3<sup>rd</sup> and Sunday the 4<sup>th</sup> May saw SI Ramsbottom members standing in Morrison's Supermarket foyer assisting with the Red Cross collection days. They had been asked to help by their local organiser and, being Soroptimists, they agreed. Both days were very cold, definitely wrap up weather, despite the date. About eight members in all took part and approximately £450.00 was collected. Members were able to spread awareness of Soroptimism as a secondary strategy, especially to those women who seemed likely candidates for membership. Tabards were worn over heavy coats and jumpers and even hats were supplied as seen in the accompanying photograph.



## STOCKPORT

SI Stockport's annual plant sale was a great success once again, raising over £600 for their charities. President Ruth, Past President Sue and PAO Debbie are shown with Regional PAC Chair Margaret Molyneux. The weather was glorious, the plants outstanding, the company congenial and the cakes (kindly donated by Park Cakes) were delicious. Once again the scouts lent them their large gazebo/small marquee and this year it was a refuge from sunburn instead of rain. Thanks to all who helped with serving teas, selling plants, overseeing the Tombola etcetera, and also to all those who came along and bought the plants.

## BURY

SI Bury's annual Charity Lunch was well attended; everyone enjoyed a delicious meal prepared and served by members of the social committee. Guests also enjoyed 'having a go' on the chocolate tombola. There was also a raffle with many excellent prizes. President Pauline was pleased to welcome Regional President Elect Margaret Baker. They are seen being served by Social Chairman Joan Rees and PAO Beryl Downing.



## CONTACT INFORMATION

If you wish to contact either of our Regional Representatives, who are Lesley Pritchard (Benevolent Fund) and Yvonne Gibbon (BIG Project) or any of the regional officers, you can do so by using the South Lancashire email address. Send your message to [s.i.southlancs@btinternet.com](mailto:s.i.southlancs@btinternet.com) and it will be relayed to them. As the *South Lancashire Leader* is published on the web site it no longer includes personal contact details.

## CALL TO CONFERENCE 2015

SI NORTH WEST ENGLAND and the IOM

Theme: Vital Voice (Women Leading Change)

Date: Saturday 16th May 2015

Venue: Preston Marriott Hotel

## CLOSING DATE

The closing date for submissions to the September edition of the *South Lancashire Leader* is **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August 2014**