

## SIGBI Programme Director's Blog December 2017

November has been a month of ups and downs for me.

### **On the Downs-**

Our house sale fell through and the weather caused storm damage to the house we are selling.

My husband was ill and then I got an infection which curtailed my visits to club, Region and UKPAC.

And we had news that several friends or their partners were seriously ill.

### **On the Ups-**

I had a wonderful trip to Dewsbury for an open evening at which at least 4 potential new Members were identified.

I had a very successful meeting with the North Wales Police anti-trafficking department who are eager to work more closely with Soroptimists.

The first draft of the Soroptimist Anti-trafficking booklet was received from Kin Ann Williamson.

We had a successful olive harvest in Greece and my husband, like an expectant father is waiting to see how much oil and what quality it will be as I am typing this.

### ***Interesting that most of the “ups” were related to Soroptimism.***

There is so much going on regarding our organisation at the moment.



This time of year centres around our 16 days of activism with many Clubs, Regions, National Associations and Countries all working to ORANGE their locality. It is so rewarding to see how many activities are advertised through social media- I hope they are followed up by Programme Focus forms!

In January we will have our first full FMB meeting when there will be much discussion on

progress towards Vision 2021, papers will be presented by Board members to facilitate change and decisions made on how we move forward.

Conference was a time to collect views and ideas from Members as to how you want those changes to be made. Passing comments are seldom ignored, the conversations over coffee give as many ideas as a formal session and the Board does listen and tries to act on many of those ideas.

It is surprising to note how few people know who is on the Programme Team, or cannot put faces to the names they know.

In conjunction with President Susan's idea of opening up her blog to other members of the Board I will be asking members of my team to take a turn in writing this blog from January, in the hope that we become closer to the Membership.

I found it amusing to hear the Management Board referred to as "SIGBI High Command" but was also saddened to think that perhaps that is how we are seen by some so I hope this slight change will make us all less remote and more approachable.



As we head towards the end of the Gregorian Year and many will be celebrating Christmas I hope you all enjoy the Festive Season.

I am sure this will be a balance between family and friends, fun, food- perhaps a few little drinks and that we will not forget service to others.

I started by listing my ups and downs, but when I compare those to the downs suffered by millions in the world who have no “ups” to look forward too I have to chastise myself for being so selfish. I cannot help feeling angry or sad about things that go wrong in my life- I am only human- but I still have so much to be grateful for that I should not complain too loudly.

Soroptimism for me is about being able and willing to give a ray of hope to the women and girls around the world who have little or nothing to look forward to. I have the ability to speak freely, campaign, advocate and act to make small but significant changes in the lives of those women and girls – you do too so on their behalf I thank you for your contributions and urge you to continue the fight.

Yours in friendship

Barbara Dixon  
Programme Director