

FEBRUARY 2018

Soroptimist News

Violence
and Conflict
Resolution:
Speak out!

Education:
Our most
powerful
weapon!

SIGBI
Conference
2018:
Liverpool
awaits!

- **SIGBI School Clubs: first two Clubs are Chartered**
- **CSW 62: New York awaits Soroptimist delegates**
- **UKPAC Study Day: a great day in Belfast**

**Women inspiring action,
transforming lives**

www.sigbi.org

Welcome to **Soroptimist** News from the Editor



Soroptimist International Great Britain & Ireland is an organisation in Special Consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC) since July 2013. This is in addition to the General Consultative status held by the umbrella organisation Soroptimist International. Soroptimist International is a recognised Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) representing women from all over the world.

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SIGBI Members - be proud of yourselves! Reading all your contributions to this issue has been a pleasure, so much positivity, so much energy, such dedication to improving the lives of women and girls across the Federation!

I think this is one of our best issues in a long time; perhaps the SIGBI Conference inspired you, perhaps it is the 'new blood' as in new Members that have propelled the action.

Whatever it is, keep it up please, because it makes for some great reading.

In this issue we report on two very emotive Programme Objectives, Education and Violence and Conflict Resolution. Sadly, they are both high profile issues in all our

countries and, I'm sorry to say, the UK is far from eradicating either issue.

So this gives us plenty to do, to do as much as possible to not only to raise awareness, which is extremely important, but to propose, discuss, plan and then activate projects to really Empower Today, Enable Tomorrow, as your President has asked.

When you are doing this, please remember that your reports and (high resolution!) photos – if you send them in – will inspire others to do the same... or more!




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Soroptimist News February 2018

- 3 A message from SIGBI President, Susan Biggs
- 4-5 Programme Objective: Education, Barbara Dixon, Programme Director, reports
- 6-7 Programme Objective: Violence and Conflict Resolution, Assistant Programme Director, Nisha Ghosh, reports
- 8 SIGBI School Clubs: Our first School Clubs are chartered!
- 9 SIGBI Conference 2018: Liverpool! Save the day and prepare for a great event
- 10 Friendship Links: Zarreen Babu, Friendship Link Co-ordinator, reports
- 11 Meru Womens' Garden Project: Patricia Gatherum, Federation Project Liaison, reports
- 12 CSW 62, Margaret Clark, Assistant Programme Director, reports
- 13 The United Nations, New York and Vienna: Beverley Bucur, Director of Advocacy, Soroptimist International, reports
- 14 - 17 SIGBI News: all the latest from SIGBI HQ
- 18 - 19 SIGBI Memorial Fund: 2017 recipients report
- 20 - 24 Club News and Celebrations

NEXT ISSUE: 16th May 2018, deadline for submissions: 8th April 2018

Featured Objective 1: Economic Empowerment (APD Rayner Rees)

Featured Objective 2: Advocacy within SIGBI (APD Margaret Clark)

Please send your contributions and news to: Soroptimist@written-image.com.

Please ensure that your submissions are similar in length to the items in this issue - that is, concise.

Please ensure that photos are high resolution and sent as JPEG files, in the same email but not embedded in the text file.

We are unable to use low resolution or low quality photos.

The Soroptimist News Schedule for 2018 is in the Members' area of the SIGBI website.



Empower Today Enable Tomorrow

President's message

Dear Sorooptimist Sisters

January has been and gone and here we are in February 2018. By the time you are reading this I will have presided over my first Federation Board meeting, attended the Annual General meeting of Number 63, met with the Past Federation Presidents and attended a Reception at the House of Commons to celebrate 35 years of Humanity and Inclusion (formerly Handicap International).



This makes me realise the responsibility that goes with the position of President of this wonderful organisation, but the President would be nothing without the teams around

her who ensure that she is at the right place at the right time with the correct piece of information.

I am extremely lucky with the teams that I have around me and so in my message today I would like to pay tribute to some of those women who are working together to ensure that Sorooptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland becomes the go-to organisation for today's women.

Our first teams meet together regularly across our Federation. They are our Sorooptimist Clubs, our School Clubs, our Associates and Linked Members all working to improve the lives of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities.

The women and girls in these teams allow us to make a difference and change the future for the better. The more women and girls who join these teams, encouraging each other, will ensure we can challenge gender norms which will

lead to a better world for everyone.

The next team is made up of women from across the globe who decide that they will take office and help keep our organisation in the spotlight. These are the Presidents, the Councillors, the Directors, the Secretaries, the Treasurers and the Programme Action Chairs. At whatever level you serve in this organisation the pay grade is the same. We do it because we want to help women and girls and make that difference.

My final team is the staff at the SIGBI HQ, without whom we would all be lost. The knowledge and commitment to the SIGBI cause by the five women in Stockport is exceptional and we should all remember it.

January is usually the time of the year when resolutions are made as to how we will change our lives for the better in the coming year. February is usually the time when the resolutions have been forgotten.

My resolution for 2018 is to work as hard as I can to ensure we are successful as an organisation for today's women.

With your help I hope to do that. Let's all be Team SIGBI together.

In friendship

Susan

Susan Biggs, President,
Sorooptimist International Great Britain and Ireland



Programme

Objective:

Education

Barbara Dixon
Programme Director
reports



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

Soroptimist International's primary goal is **Educate to Lead** and, for SIGBI Clubs, **Educate, Empower and Enable**.

For so many girls throughout the world education is denied because of poverty, cultural beliefs or household duties.

Lack of appropriate sanitation and sanitary products lead many to drop out of formal education once they reach puberty.

Education is the key to unlocking the poverty trap. However many women are also denied the right to further their education or gain new knowledge and skills for many reasons.

“Knowledge is power.

Information is liberating.

Education is the premise of progress, in every society, in every family.”

Kofi Annan

Projects on Education listed on the SIGBI database in the last six months total an impressive 1955 with an estimated income of several thousand pounds which benefitted over 6,000 women and girls.

The projects range from fundraising for partners through to supporting teachers or providing books and life skills.

Many projects listed as education are more suitable to be included as either enabling or empowering opportunities, but however they are listed Soroptimists throughout our Federation are working on a range of projects that improve education for women and girls.

St Austell and District works with The Olive Branch Foundation which supports a school and orphanage in the Ringa district of Kenya.

The school provides an education for the poorest and most vulnerable children in the district. It started with six children and one volunteer teacher in a mud hut.

Today there are 232 children, 12 teachers and seven ancillary staff. Full time education and a hot midday meal costs £5 per child per month. The families are very poor and can only pay £1 per month so they rely on people like us to help to fund the project.

SI South Kolkata (picture right) adopted a school in 2010 to improve its general standard and condition.

They subsidise the teachers' fees, facilitate snacks for the children, renovated the premises and provided chairs and tables. Over the years they have been observing World Literacy Day, Teachers' Day, Children's Day, Sports Day and other occasions with them.

In addition, currently SI South Kolkata members are taking sessions at the school every Saturday for Spoken English, Phonetics, Storytelling and Games.

Educational materials, toys and story books for these sessions have been partly sponsored by Dianne Stout of **SI Dundee**.

They have managed to improve the general standard of the school. The children today seem to be more enthusiastic about coming to school and there is an improvement in academic standards.

SI Crosby arranged a half-day conference where girls and boys from seven local schools were encouraged to consider careers in STEM - science, technology, engineering and maths.

Inspirational young women speakers outlined their careers, explaining their entry route into their chosen professions. They included Amanda Hughes, a former pupil of Sacred Heart, now an Assistant Chief Engineer for Military Trainer and Transport Engine products for Rolls Royce; Sajini Halai, Project Engineer at Jaguar Land Rover, Halewood and Marianne Thomson, an old girl of St. Mary's College, who, as Finance and Leader Development Programme Manager, recruits and helps develop finance graduates in BAE Systems UK Finance Leadership Programme.

Also from BAE Systems was Katherine Reynolds from the Accounts Receivable Team in Military Air and Information in Warton.

From the Royal Liverpool Hospital Trust, came

specialist biomedical scientists, Jessica Jones and Natasha Politt and Research Officer, Noelia Pitrelli Varquez, based at St. Paul's Clinical Eye Research Centre.

Rail Engineer and Project Co-ordinator, Nina Finlay and last but not least, Caroline Nurse, Building Structural Engineer at ARUP.

Their audience of 14 to 16 year olds was then given an opportunity to question each of the speakers further when they divided into smaller groups.

The conference room at Crosby Comrades Club was full of information regarding each of the STEM disciplines, including posters, parts of engines used for RAF fighter planes, hands on scientific experiments, exhibits and a wealth of information on female engineers, scientists and doctors.

It was the second event of its kind organised by SI Crosby and grew from a challenge issued by Federation President, Margaret Emsley, to all Clubs, to do what they could to encourage girls in their area to consider STEM careers.

SI Crosby's President, Annette Hughes, who works for her family engineering company and whose daughter, Amanda, was one of the speakers, said she was delighted with the success of the event, adding that feedback from the schools had been extremely positive.

“We really hope the event will have helped, particularly the girls, when they come to make their subject choices for GCSEs and encouraged them to consider careers in STEM.” added Annette.

SI Kirkcaldy's decided that to help young people, and celebrate the Club's 60th Year, they would launch an Educate to Lead Award to recognise leadership amongst young women in their local schools. It is now given annually to





the Head Girl or the nominated pupil of each of the town's High Schools in turn.

President Heather presented Anna Machado, Head Girl St Andrew's High School (pictured above) with the Educate to Lead Award, a certificate and cheque to purchase books.

Club President Heather Stewart is a member of staff at the school.

Anna will leave school to study Cognitive Neuroscience at Edinburgh University.



SI Lewes and District held a night at the opera when professionals donated their time and skill to raise funds for a Nepal school and Pestalozzi.

SI Lewes has a link with Bloom school in Nepal and Pestalozzi, whose COE is a member of SI Lewes. They raised £1,400 to support the school and Pestalozzi – an organisation in East Sussex that supports gifted young people from third world countries to study for A levels in the UK and get scholarships at Universities throughout the world.



SI Leicester worked on a project to provide students at a Leicestershire school for children with moderate learning disabilities and autistic spectrum disorder with a range of fun, interesting and educational books to read at home. A Leicester Club Member has links with the school, which is for Leicestershire children aged between 11-16.

Some of the children, although not all, have little access to books of their own to read at home. 100 books, ranging from young fiction to science, geography to adventure, cartoons to drama were collected for these children.



SI Lira, Uganda's project enhances girls' education and reproductive health by providing sanitary pads, counselling, promotion of menstrual hygiene and incorporation of Adult Literacy for women to support girls' reproductive issues.

Despite the Universal Primary Education being promoted by the Government of Uganda, the enrolment and retention of girl pupils remains low. One major reasons is the lack of reproductive health support to girls from impoverished households.

Due to the lack of sanitary towels, adolescent counselling and material support towards menstrual hygiene, most of the girls dropped out of school due to fear and embarrassment.

This project is ongoing, but the immediate results is an increased number of adolescent girls attending school (150 in three schools have been supported), which has improved their confidence and their prospects.



SI Weston-super-Mare enjoyed an inspiring talk by Mazuko Solilo about her charity, Mulako SafeHome. Revisiting her home in Zambia she became aware of the plight of children orphaned when their parents died of AIDS. They led a disorganised life with friends and grandparents. They needed to attend school so Mazuba raised money to cover school fees. She also bought a piece of land and had a borehole drilled for water and showed the children that they must raise crops to feed themselves and to sell on to buy equipment and clothes for school.

Mazuba now helps 35 children whom she visits every four months, returning to the UK to sell goods made in their village to raise funds. At the meeting Mazuba and her friend, Hilda, had a large array of items for sale and raised over £200. The photo shows Mazuba, left, with her friend Hilda, who runs another charity.

SI Sutton Coldfield made a donation of books for a new library being opened by SI Durban. **SI Durban** has been a Friendship link of theirs for many years and they had previously supported their projects and members including Rita Caswell had visited their EMBO project.

When SI Sutton Coldfield heard that SI Durban members were kitting out a new library in a local school it was proposed that part of Rita's legacy be used to purchase the books.



SI San Fernando (above and main picture) held a workshop entitled "Autism and Neurodiversity" for primary school teachers.

The workshop was in collaboration with the Autistic Society of Trinidad and Tobago and the Ministry of Education; a continuation of the Club's project to educate teachers and parents about Autism.

They were able to increase awareness and understanding of autism and neurodiversity and train teachers, provide tools and strategies for teaching/learning in the classroom.

45 teachers participated in this interactive session. Feedback was extremely positive and several teachers expressed their desire for more training workshops.

The Diamond Education Grant (DEG)

Surprisingly of the 1955 projects carried out in the last six months only three have supported our own Diamond Education Fund.

The purpose of this Fund (set up as a registered charity in 1977 as the Golden Jubilee Fellowship) is to make grants to help women to advance their education.

The Fund Trustees concentrate on assisting recipients to update their skills, particularly after an unemployment break, or to acquire new skills, thereby improving their opportunities for employment and promotion.

Applicants do not have to be Soroptimists (and usually are not); the only requirement is that they are female and resident in one of the countries of our Federation. Applicants are mainly from the UK, but also from Bangladesh, Mauritius, Malawi, Nigeria, Ireland, South Africa, Uganda and Zimbabwe. Assistance is sought for courses as diverse as furniture upholstery to an MSc in primate conservation.

Due to the Fund's limited financial basis the grants given are usually a fraction of what is required for tuition fees or equipment crucial for the female applicants and it is not able to give grants to all who apply.

Considering our aim to Educate, Empower and Enable women and girls to achieve their full potential it is not time to reflect upon our already established fund to promote this and use the opportunity to engage with younger women and girls who come to know about Soroptimism through our enabling grants?

Listening to many members commenting on the number of projects they support would it not be sensible to devote our fund raising efforts and project work to supporting the Diamond Education Fund.

The fund's management is well established and brings hope to many who apply. Sadly it is never enough and often for only a few so if your Club, Region or National Association is looking for an educational project, please consider the DEG.

Programme

Objective:

Violence and Conflict Resolution

Nisha Ghosh,
Assistant Programme Director
reports



1

As Soroptimists align their projects with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5, 10, and 16 it is rewarding to hear of the life changing differences that this work is making in the community.

So how do Soroptimists measure the impact of their project on the ground? I've often wondered if that last field in the online project report form – 'Quote from a beneficiary' – is given its due importance when the reports are filed. It could assess, sum up the success and give sense of accomplishment of a project well delivered.

Human Trafficking

Some quotes from reports

"This doesn't happen in my town."

"Not widespread."

"I can't believe that happens here."

"Gosh I didn't know this."

Simple words that say a lot. The UKPAC's project survey on awareness of Human Trafficking among the public also drew some interesting comments. Human trafficking, the biggest money spinner of our times, spreading its deadly tentacles below the surface of social order – is well concealed.

Soroptimists from **SI Lurgan (4)**, **SI Canterbury**, **SI Bromley**, **SI Bedford**, **SI Slough Windsor and Maidenhead (10)**, **SI Grange over Sands**, **SI Darlington and District**, **SI Hamilton**, **SI Blackpool and District** and several other Clubs have, in their areas, conducted the survey and raised the awareness of this dreadful issue. The results of the questionnaires were shared with their local media, collated for local Members of Parliament and a copy was presented to the UK Anti-Slavery Commissioner.



2

Violence against Women

During the observance of the 16 Days of Activism to End Violence against Women, "Leave No One Behind – End Violence against Women" was at the heart of this year's theme,

The Campaign called on everyone to join the movement using the colour orange to make their action visible – and Soroptimists did – wearing orange and other shades of orange to protest and show their steely resolve. **SI Bangalore (1)** organised a street rally stopping the traffic and making bold orange protests. Other Indian Clubs, present there for the National Association Meeting, joined in.

Around the Federation, 16 days of Activism took different forms. **SI Aberdeen** wore purple teardrop badges for the whole 16 Days to express solidarity for victims of violence and protest against human trafficking.

SI Preston walked through their city to draw the public's attention to violence against women.

SI Dundee encouraged their MPs to vote for the ratification of the Istanbul Convention as part of the 16 Days of Activism.

SI Chennai and SI Chennai Downtown jointly attended an interactive workshop on gender violence to mark the 16 days.

SI Perth members joined the Perth Reclaim the Night walk as part of their activity during this period.

However, Soroptimists don't always wait for special days, in their mission to address violence against women. Exploring the hidden impact of domestic violence and working with refuge centres has given **SI St Albans and District** great understanding of the work that goes on.

Northern England Clubs including SI Tynemouth, Whitley Bay & District and local



3

agencies joined together to create a 'visual petition' which was presented to their MP.

At **SI Pune Metro East** an awareness session was for construction workers both men and women, conducted by a Counsellor who observed that the approach of the men was clearly patriarchal. **SI Paisley** representatives joined a public walk through the town centre to raise awareness.

"Thanks to the Soroptimists, we are able to offer clean clothing and enough supplies to provide early assistance to vulnerable victims. It is of immense value and will help victims begin the process of recovery."

The provision of essential services for survivors of violence is the frontline response to those whose lives have just been ruptured; providers must have the survivor's dignity and safety as central concerns.

Starter Packs were prepared by **SI Kirkintilloch**, **SI Durham and SI Darlington and District**, given at various refuge centres. **SI Lewisham and SI South East England** have supported Athena by raising funds for victims of violence at Refuges Centres.

SI Bedford supports victims at the "Moving On" house with material and other coping mechanisms.

SI Penrith's commitment for survivors of domestic abuse is through their involvement with the local Eden Forum Against Domestic Violence. Support for the Women's Refuge is also extended by **SI Stratford-upon-Avon** and **SI Stourbridge**



4



5

and District to the refuge 'New Beginnings'.

Harrogate Domestic Violence Refuge receives support from **SI Harrogate** to enable and empower women to develop their position after a traumatic episode in their lives.

Helping survivors of domestic abuse to be economically empowered is the most rewarding experience.

"This is the only place I feel I can let my emotions out in the week and I will be believed and feel safe"

This is a quote from a victim who received help at the One Stop Café, a project of **SI Canterbury**, that enables women still suffering from the trauma of past and in some cases present domestic abuse, to grow in confidence and interact purposefully within their community whilst rebuilding their lives.

Soroptimists elsewhere are crusading for gender parity by empowering others with laws and awareness that would safe guard them.

SI South Kolkata undertook a project for under privileged, mostly illiterate or semi-literate women/girls who are often ignorant about their rights. They were educated about their legal rights and the various agencies available for redress.

SI Ikeja led the National Project of **SI Nigeria** with the maiden edition of "Rape and Sexual Violence Campaign" at four schools, which was attended by 250 students and four teachers.

This award-winning project attempts to break the silence against sexual violence and rape, the number one crime in the country.

SI Lewisham and South East London members gathered clothes, linen and towels together for Rita Buhanda to take to the Mweheki Womens Group in Uganda where all the women have escaped domestic violence. Two little girls benefitted from new dresses and they are clearly thrilled to bits.

SI Pune Metro East, (8) in their "Girls



8



6

Moving Forward" project conducted a Gender Sensitisation event, empowering young girls from underprivileged backgrounds who were on the threshold of working and likely to be harassed and discriminated against.

SI Yaounde created awareness on the importance of education rather than early marriage. Girls are empowered to know their rights and develop their potentials.

SI Middlesbrough organised a successful participative education project for sexually exploited youth.

SI Skipton, with Soroptimists from throughout Yorkshire, wore 'orange' on 25th November at the start of the United Nations 16 Days of Action for the Elimination of violence against women and girls and its mission to 'Orange the World'.

The Yorkshire President's theme for this year is 'Power of the Second Chance' with Yorkshire Clubs raising awareness and supporting women and girls affected by violence.

Despite the driving sleet and cold, members from **SI Blackpool**, **SI Blackburn**, **SI Garstang** and **SI Grange over Sands** joined **SI Preston** (6) on a walk through the town centre to mark the Day of the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

Members were thrilled that members of Men Against Violence joined the 'throng' too. It was pretty quiet in the town but the ladies couldn't really be missed as they were carrying orange balloons, placards and a banner - not to mention chanting of 'Stop Violence Against Women!'

SI Stockport raised funds to refurbish two Greater Manchester video interview rooms and their associated waiting rooms, at a local unit. The facilities are used by both adult and child victims of rape, serious assault and domestic violence, (some 300 individuals per year) and their witnesses as well as those attending to provide support.

SI Weston-super-Mare held a very successful "Soroptimists Railing Against Abuse" event on 25th November.

Over 60 Soroptimists from 11 Clubs within



9



7

SI South West and Channel Islands (7) and others travelled by train to Bristol Temple Meads station then walked through Bristol to the Lord Mayor's Chapel, distributing Loves me, Loves me not bookmarks to passers-by. The 10,000 bookmarks were paid for with a grant from the Avon & Somerset PCC's Community Action Fund.

At the chapel, they were addressed by the Lord Mayor, a representative of Victim Support and very powerfully, by the Avon and Somerset PCC, Sue Mountstevens, Dame Joan Collins and her daughter, Tara Newley Arkle.

SIGBI Conference 2017

*"If it were between countries,
we'd call it a war.
If it were a disease,
we'd call it an epidemic.
If it were an oil spill,
we'd call it a disaster.
But it is happening to women,
and it's just an everyday affair.
It is violence against women.
It is rape at home and on dates.
It is sexual harassment at work and
sexual abuse of the young.
It is murder."*

Michael Kaufman
SIGBI Conference 2017

The focus at the Cardiff Conference was the White Ribbon Campaign, with the co-founder Michael Kaufman as a key speaker.

SI Stafford, **SI Drogheda**, **SI Lurgan**, **SI Bromley**, **SI Barnstaple and District**, (5) **SI Wakefield**, **SI Port Talbot**, **SI Newry** and **Mourne**, **SI Drogheda**, **SI Downpatrick**, **SI Lancaster**, **SI Ipswich and District** and many other Clubs have held special events to raise their voices and call for time for a new world order.

And yes, Soroptimists are adding to a Planet 50:50 by 2030.

Tell Soroptimist News about your activities!



10



SIGBI School Clubs

Isobel Smith
Director of Organisational Development
reports

SIGBI has been looking at alternative forms of Membership for a few years as a way of raising our profile, particularly to younger women.

As part of this, we piloted School Clubs in 2017 aimed at Primary and Secondary Schools with membership open to both boys and girls.

Over the Pilot period, we had two School Clubs in the pipeline and we are thrilled to say that both have now been chartered.

Thank you to SI Preston and SI Fylde for their pioneering spirit, allowing us to learn from their experience and to Karen Rainford, SI Preston and Liz Batten, SI Winchester and District for their input into the design of the School Club offer.

The Pilot has now come to an end and we're excited to announce that our School Club membership offer is live!

There are many good reasons to want to start a School Club. Your school years are one of the best opportunities you will ever get to explore new activities, try different things, see what you're passionate about. Keep in mind that colleges are really looking at pupils' CVs, to see activities that have somehow developed talents that will be used later in life, developed the child's leadership skills, allowed them to show involvement with their community, and allowed them to make an impact.

Activities after school don't just keep children busy or entertained. They can also offer great developmental benefits that will help them academically and socially.

Mixing with existing friends in a new environment helps children learn to share and appreciate each other's talents and abilities as well as grow in confidence and independence.

Programme Action activities provide the opportunity to research a project or pursue an interest in ways there isn't the time or facilities for at school.

Being supported by a Soroptimist Club provides children with positive role models. Members who are sharing their skills provide a valuable new take on the world for children, especially teenagers, and can become respected mentors.

The School Club Guide and supporting governance documents are on the SIGBI website in the Members' area of the website - <https://sigbi.org/members/clubs/school-clubs/>. The School Club pays a small administration fee of £20.00, but there are no fees for individual Members of the School Club.

For more information please contact Sally Higgins at SIGBI HQ – sally@sigbi.org.

8 FEBRUARY 2018

SI Preston School Club Charter

SI Preston's School Club held the first School Club Charter ceremony in November 2017, organised by Nicola McDermott, Head of Religious Studies & Citizenship and Karen Rainford, Member of SI Preston and the school's mentor.

The event was attended by parents and guardians, staff, pupils, governors, members of SI Preston, the Regional President of SI North West and Isle of Man, representatives of the charity Partners in Education Swaziland (PIES) and the local MP, Seema Kennedy.

Head Teacher, Karen Pomeroy welcomed everyone describing how the Club had started. Preston Club Member, Karen Rainford, described how Membership in many organisations is in decline but with the introduction of the School Club initiative this will – hopefully – be the beginning of a new exciting era. She added that SI Preston Members were motivated by the girls and are so proud that the School Club is such a success.

Three students, Ashleigh, Aamina and Jawharah, lit a candle each representing Hope, Peace and Friendship. Each girl had written a short speech explaining the importance of the three qualities in being a Member of Soroptimist International.

After this the 33 students were presented with the official School Club badges and certificates.

In her President's speech, Charlotte Hamer (Year 11) spoke about the importance of the work of the Soroptimisses in making her feel like she was giving back to society, not just on a local level, but globally.

Norman Yates, a representative from the charity PIEs came to receive a cheque from the girls and announced that they had recently found a girl who needs a sponsor to start secondary school. Thanks to the money raised by our girls, Zodwa Dlamini, in Swaziland, started school in January 2018.

This is an incredible achievement and the girls are extremely proud. In six months they raised the funds to change the life of a girl who would otherwise have missed secondary education.

Maureen Howarth, Regional President, SI North West and Isle of Man, congratulated the girls on making history as the first ever Soroptimist School Club. She recognised the importance of the



'Soroptimisses' as the future and the assurance that their work will continue for many more generations.

Karen Pomeroy, Head Teacher, Penwortham Girls' High School, said, "I am delighted that we have started the very first Soroptimist School Club. It is fantastic that we have been able to get actively involved in a project that empowers women and girls across the globe. A large number of girls have joined the group, ably supported by Miss McDermott, and I have been surprised at how much they have achieved in such a short time.

"A real highlight is the money they raised to support the education of Zodwa Dlamini in Swaziland. I am also extremely grateful for the support of SI Preston Members."

The girls wrote the Candle Ceremony Speeches:

Ashleigh: Hope "In a world of such inequality, hope is one of the single most important values. By providing aid like food, shelter and other basic amenities, the Soroptimisses are able to provide hope along with the foundations for a happier, healthier life for women around the world."

Aamina: Peace "In a world like this, complete peace will never be achieved but being part of the Soroptimisses means we can be content and at peace within, knowing we're doing our part to give hope and create connections to those less fortunate."

Jawharah: Friendship "The candle of friendship presents a unique bond created through the values of hope and peace. It connects women and girls through their similarities and differences, and unites them as one. Providing them with the resources they need to flourish, empowers them to support one another along their beautiful journey."

AKS Young Soroptimists' Charter

The new **AKS Young Soroptimists' Club** was chartered on 23rd January 2018 in a celebration in the School Pavilion. Fylde Soroptimists were proud to host the event as Regional President, Maureen Howarth and Regional Membership Officer, Karen Rainford, attended to present the Charter, Members' badges and certificates. A unique event was the presentation of a membership certificate to Head Boy, Sam Southern. It is hoped that the boys at the School will support the girls' Club as ambassadors for the White Ribbon Campaign to end violence against women.

Guests were invited to participate in a candle lighting ceremony for Peace and Friendship Worldwide. The guests also enjoyed wonderful refreshments provided by AKS Hospitality. Fylde Soroptimists have been fully supported by the School in the formation of this new club and thanks were given to Head, Mike Walton, and Deputy Head, Paul Crouch, for all their encouragement in this venture.

The Young Soroptimists have been doing amazing work in helping with the Fylde Club's projects, especially the "80 for 80" toilet



twinning campaign. To date they have twinned 17 toilets with more in the pipeline and the first President of the Young Soroptimists' Club, Georgia Waring, gave a brief overview of their work to date. The Club are also helping with a project for the Philippine Community Fund by collecting ringpulls to enable women to earn an income making jewellery and bags enabling their children to access education. The Fylde Soroptimists will support the new AKS Club in all their future projects and are looking forward to working together for many years. For information about the Soroptimist Club please email fyldesorops@gmail.com or ring the Secretary on 01253 726576.

See you in Liverpool in October!

25-27 October 2018 at the ACC



A message from the Conference Chairman, Tricia Coll

President Susan has appointed her conference team who are busy working to bring you an exciting and stimulating

few days in Liverpool. It is many years since a Federation Conference was held in Liverpool and a great deal has changed in the area. Liverpool was a key trade and migration port from the 18th to the early 20th centuries. It is also, famously, the home town of The Beatles.

Ferries (including the aptly named 'Dazzle' ferry) cruise the waterfront, where the iconic mercantile buildings – the "Three Graces" – Royal Liver Building, Cunard Building and Port of Liverpool Building – stand on the Pier Head.



Most of our speakers are now booked and among them are:

Terry Waite, who became well known when he was held a hostage in the Lebanon for five years. These days he is President of the charity Y Care International, the YMCA's international development and relief agency. The YMCA is the oldest and largest youth charity in the world. Terry is also patron of AbleChildAfrica and Habitat for Humanity Great Britain and President of Emmaus UK, a charity for formerly homeless people.

Sally Kettle is an ocean rower and the first woman to row the Atlantic Ocean twice from East to West. She competed in The Ocean Rowing Society Atlantic Rowing Regatta in 2004 with her mother, Sarah Kettle, becoming the first mother and daughter team to row an ocean.

Emily Rose Yates will take you through her personal journey of an adventurous

wheelchair user, from cage diving with sharks to being the first disabled woman to cross the Sinai Desert by camel. She was the Disability Consultant at MetroRio as well as writing the Lonely Planet's Accessible Rio in 2016. Emily is a colourful and inspirational lady.

Ann-Marie Wilson 28 Too Many is a registered charity established in 2010 by Dr. Ann-Marie Wilson to undertake research and provide knowledge and tools to those working to end FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) in the countries in Africa where it is practised and across the diaspora worldwide.

Liverpool Car Park Fire You may be aware that a fire happened in a car park in Liverpool recently. The ACC have assured us that the venue was not damaged, all of the car spaces they have reserved for our Conference will be absolutely fine and that the event will be able to proceed as planned.

A Message from President Susan

The theme of the Liverpool Conference is **"Empower today - Enable tomorrow"**.



I chose this because too often we are so tied up in empowering and enabling women and girls that we often forget the need to look after ourselves as well.

We must learn to empower and enable ourselves to thrive. We have to enable ourselves to pass the enjoyment of Soroptimism onto others.

The venue is booked, the plans are made, and registration opens in March.

Look out for details in the SIGBI News Briefings and on our website:

www.sigbi.org/liverpool2018.



Friendship Links

Zarreen Babu
Friendship Link Co-ordinator, reports

Joint Projects are essential to the combined efforts of our Clubs across the globe to create an impact.

Clubs need funds, ideas, expertise to plan successful projects for their community.

Plan projects together with your friendship links making an effort to do at least one joint project with them and then please REPORT, REPORT, REPORT

Here is a summary of the type of joint projects that have been shown in the past issues.

EDUCATION:

Clubs throughout the Federation have joined hands with their Friendship Links to build libraries, provide stationery and school bags, supported the tuition of children and helped with funds for tutorials of young children in maths and science.

A group of youths from an Assisted Therapeutic Community for the recovery of people with mental disabilities in Enna travelled to Malta. A group of Maltese youths, also from an Assisted Therapeutic Community, travelled to Sicily at the same time gaining cultural experience while helping the patients.

HEALTH

There have been many projects by Clubs on affordable hygienic sanitary protection where sanitary kits are distributed and hygiene awareness is taught. This is an ongoing requirement in impoverished areas and research continues on napkins and menstrual cups.

Interesting names have been given like Girls for Girls, Project Dignity, SNAP and others. Funds have been collected to reach out to sick children and training of nurses as well as the continuing education in the Knickers for Knowledge project.

WATER

Projects have been completed across Africa and India to help children get safe and provide clean water, with projects that installed cisterns, taps, water tanks and water purifying systems.

TRAFFICKING

You have probably read about the project that SI Dundee and SI Calcutta have worked on with a local NGO, Apne Aap where presentations and interviews have empowered women and girls to resist and end sex trafficking.

FUND RAISING

Clubs have crossed borders to see what their friendship links are doing and participated in bazaars, swimathons, knitting and stitching clothes to gather funds for projects.

LATEST NEWS IN FRIENDSHIP LINKS

SI Pune Metro East has had a Friendship Link with **SI Dundee** since 2015. It was initiated by SI Dundee as some of its members were involved with a large project named Seema's Home in Pune. The children of sex workers who have been rescued from the red light area by the NGO Kayakalp are housed here. Soroptimists and several agencies in the UK have raised money to build the home.

SI Pune has provided books and facilitated an activity room at the new Home where a collage painted by SIPME members decorates the wall.

SI Buxton and District has a Friendship link with **SI Kerteminde** in Denmark.

The Danish members gave the Buxton Club a set of three candles when they visited Buxton. One is lighted for the local Club, one for Region, and one for Soroptimist International, at the start of each dinner meeting.



SI Bournemouth members were amazed when mother and son, Stephney and Jono Hornblow, said they would cycle 963 miles from John O'Groats in Scotland to Land's End in England on a tandem cycle to raise funds for the Club's charity, Cementing Futures.

To date, fundraising has exceeded £2000.

Stephney, aged 65, had a health scare in 2016 which inspired her to lose five stones in weight – hence she included cycle training on her journey to fitness and to benefit a charity.

Her son Jono was a huge encouragement and volunteered to be the other half of a tandem.

Cementing Futures is a really worthwhile cause bringing education, hope and dignity to children living in the slums of Dhaka who cannot currently access state provided education.

The charity was founded in response to the need identified by **SI Dhaka, Bangladesh**;

whose established Friendship Link with SI Bournemouth meant that there was trust that all monies sent to them would go directly to the educational programmes.

The pre-primary and primary education programmes provide premises, trained teachers and equipment, along with a daily nutritional snack. The children are taught basic literacy and numeracy in Bengali and English with an aim of moving into the state education system as the opportunity arises.

The 'Jogle' (ride) started and ended on glorious sunny days. Memories were made of beautiful views, cycling up hills one of which reached an elevation of over 5000 feet.

Special thanks go to Stephney's husband Tim and friend Brian who provided meals from a camper van en route, Bobbie White and Liz Dominey from SI Bournemouth were "roadies." Soroptimists provided generous hospitality

along the route, namely Carol and John Rudd SI Penrith; Ann and Peter Dawson, SI Stafford; Kate Moore, SI Newcastle and District, Ruth Demisis, SI Taunton; Liz and Bobbie were joined by Penrith members for dinner and gave a talk about the 'Jogle' at SI Taunton's meeting.

Thank you all from the children of Dhaka for their continuing education!

COMMUNICATION

SIGBI has many platforms from where you can find out about the needs of a country and learn about projects being done: **SIGBI NEWS, FL Newsletter, SOROPTIVOICE, PAM and SIGBI Club websites**. Do have a look at these. Getting active on Facebook and other social media are ways of working together to find out the types of projects happening. Help where you can and REPORT.

MERU WOMEN'S GARDEN PROJECT

A partnership between
 **CHILD**
Great Britain & Ireland Charity No: 1138528

Patricia Gatherum
Federation Project Liaison reports



I must congratulate you all. You raised £1,880.23p in December, making a total of £101,978 raised so far. This is amazing at a time when many Clubs are busy with local projects.

In December we held a meeting with Ambassadors Marti, International Programme manager for Child.org, and Amanjit, our Project Officer.

CIFORD held the Alternative Rites of Passage training for boys and girls in December.

92 girls went through the training – 60 were expected so the numbers are definitely improving. The girls were recruited through the schools this time and it really worked with 17 girls having to be turned away due to capacity problems.

The 92 who took part stayed for a week

and CIFORD is just waiting for the surveys to be returned so they can assess the impact of the week. It seems to have gone really well with lots of positive feedback and coverage in the local news.

Unfortunately the boys' forum was not so successful, with only three attending. The reason for this seems to be because there is a stigma with hosting the boys and girls seminars together.

The boys were teased by other boys who implied that those boys who did go were going to the girls' sessions.

CIFORD will be rethinking their approach and recruitment strategy for future boys' forums. It seems that it was not such a good idea to run them side by side.

They are not going to give up however, and will attempt to find a new way

to engage the boys in the community. Hopefully the next one should be in April.

Quotations have been received for the boreholes but there are still some questions which need answers, like locations and how many additional pumps will be required.

The quotes at the moment are too high so CIFORD is trying to reduce these. They will update us as soon as there is news.

Marti is now on Maternity leave so I wish her well. Amanjit is as always willing to help if needed.

Please remember to send money raised to SIGBI HQ and write 'Meru Women's Garden Project' on the back of the cheque. These regular donations are keeping the project going and they are greatly appreciated.



SI Garforth Elmet held three events to raise funds for the Meru Women's Garden Project. They held a Garden Party where members had a lovely time surrounded by delicious cakes, sunshine and flowers.

President Ann Kurth held a supper evening for members and guests at her house where the food had a 'Kenyan' theme.

And finally, the Club also held a 'Gardeners Question Time' event which was very well supported. Cheese and wine were served and a good time was had by all. The total amount sent to the Meru Garden Project was £561.



SI Leigh & District and SI Wigan raised £259 for the Meru Women's Garden Project with a vegetarian buffet supper and home grown plants, herbs and vegetables for sale.

Pam Warhurst CBE, spoke about how her project 'Incredible Edible' developed as local people planted sustainable vegetables and fruit trees in public spaces such as Health Centres, Police Stations and derelict land – for the whole community. It is hoped that this can become an economic enterprise selling items in local markets and encouraging groups to undertake mini 'Incredible Edible' projects.



SI Medway had a stall at a boot fair in Rainham, Kent, selling a wide variety of items donated by members of the Club. The brave Members who attended the stall needed to rise at the crack of dawn but nevertheless had a thoroughly enjoyable day raising £273 in all, most of which went to the Meru Garden Project. It also proved a good opportunity to advertise Soroptimists by offering the Club's leaflets. It was such a success that it will be repeated this year and the lessons learned this time will hopefully mean that even more money is raised next time.



SI Hertford and District's annual Frugal Supper turned out to be not so-very-frugal as members and friends tucked into some delicious desserts. £240 was raised for the Meru Women's Garden Project.



SI Widnes Members went for a sponsored walk in aid of the Meru Women's Garden Project, it somehow turned into a blackberrying session. Perhaps that was even more appropriate!



SI Swansea raised £600 at a Quiz night for the Meru Women's Garden Project, Noah's Ark Children's Hospital in Cardiff and other local charities. The Club also had boards of SIGBI information for those unaware of Soroptimists.

CSW 62 New York

Margaret Clark
Assistant Programme Director, Advocacy
reports

Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls

Excitement is rising as we near the start of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 62. Our hopes and dreams of a better future 'Leaving no one behind' fire our ambitions to change the world.

CSW62 runs from 11th to 23rd March 2018 in New York where the opportunity to make a difference thrives.

Priority theme: "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls."

Review theme: "Participation in and access of women to the media and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women" (agreed conclusions of the 47th session);

Soroptimist International will present at CSW on the multilayered problems faced by rural women and will collate information from all the Federations on how we are tackling the problem and successful outcomes. Diversity Unites! Together we make a difference.

As the late Jo Cox MP said, "There is more unites us than divides us". Let's do it and change the world.

- 80% of the world's poor live in rural areas
- 43% on average of the agricultural labour force in developing countries are women
- 40 billion hours a year on average are spent by women collecting water in sub-Saharan Africa. These are just a few examples.

There will be a series of CSW training webinars and skypes which will help and support those new to CSW and will also be a useful refresher and update for others. You may see CSW62 simplified! Most areas will be covered in the different sessions and help is available from various resources internally and externally. Internal training dates will be provided.

NGO CSW/NY has created an online Orientation video series for those who are new to CSW. A new video covering different topics is released every week.

These videos contain helpful information, advice, and instructions to prepare you for CSW62 – on YouTube search for NGO CSW/NY and view the videos.

Follow NGO CSW/NY on twitter at @NGO_CSW_NY and see their Facebook page (NGO CSW NY (NGO Committee on the Status of Women, New York) for updates.

Soroptimists working together and utilising the experience of our members will provide greater results and impact and with a unified approach from each of the Federations, material for social media including Facebook, twitter, photographs and blogs will provide a global Soroptimist picture for global impact.

The first week at CSW involves networking and attending parallel events. The second week is highly focused on work on the text documents which is concentrated, diplomatic, challenging and requires working long hours to achieve deadlines in order to reach Agreed Conclusions.

A difficult task, as agreement is needed from the 193 United Nations member states who have equal representation in the UN General Assembly.

Six Soroptimist International United Nations Representatives will be on hand to support Federations with their valuable expertise and can be seen at daily meetings in the UN building.

Each of the Caucus Groups has meetings, as do the Country Missions, so it is important that delegates make links where possible before attending CSW to become familiarised with the issues and lobbying mechanisms.

The Soroptimist Advocacy Guide can be



accessed on this link via the SIGBI Advocacy webpage: www.sigbi.org/members/programme/programme-areas/advocacy/.

Familiarity with the Soroptimist Where We Stand Statements is imperative and these can also be found on the SIGBI Website under Programme. Statements are constantly being added so regular reference should be made.

Here is an extract from the Soroptimist Statement on Rural Women:

"Soroptimist International urges governments, civil society, the private sector and other partners to support the recommendations contained in the Secretary General's report Improvement of the situation of women and girls in rural areas. Soroptimist International believes that priority measures are needed for rural women to achieve gender equality and empowerment. Determination and focus is needed- see other Statements."

Soroptimist CSW ASKS will be updated and it is critical delegates are aware of these which will again be listed on the SI website.

More about CSW

During the Commission's annual two-week session, representatives of UN Member States, civil society organisations and UN entities gather at UN HQ in New York. They discuss progress and gaps in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the key global policy document on gender equality, and the 23rd special session of the General Assembly held in 2000 (Beijing+5), as well as emerging issues that affect gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Member States agree on further actions to accelerate progress and promote women's enjoyment of their political, economic and social rights. The outcomes and recommendations of each session are forwarded to ECOSOC for follow-up.

What is ECOSOC?

Non-governmental, non-profit, public or voluntary organisations may formally contribute to the work of the United Nations after being granted consultative status with the Economic and Social Council under Article 71 of the Charter of the United Nations and on Economic and Social Council Resolution 1996/31.

ECOSOC serves as the central mechanism for the activities of the United Nations system and its specialised agencies and supervises the subsidiary and expert bodies in the economic, social and environmental fields. It engages a wide variety of stakeholders – policymakers, parliamentarians, academics, major groups, foundations, business sector representatives and 3,200+ registered non-governmental organisations – in a productive dialogue on sustainable development through a programmatic cycle of meetings. The Council's work is guided by an issue-based approach and there is an annual theme that accompanies each cycle, ensuring a sustained and focused discussion.

Soroptimist International, SIGBI, SI Europe and SI SW Pacific have forms of ECOSOC status. As SI America does not have this status we share our allocation of passes CSW with them. ECOSOC status gives us a voice at the United Nations.

To keep this voice we need to record our Programme Action work on the SIGBI database so that it can be accessed as evidence to retain our status. It is important. Go to: www.sigbi.org/members and click Members' Login. Enter your surname and Membership Number. Click on "Management Membership and Programme Databases" Click on Add New Report then click Complete form and submit.

Practice and it becomes easy! Home or in New York we can all contribute to positive outcomes and everyone is needed and valued.

The United Nations New York & Vienna

Beverley Bucur
Director of Advocacy Soroptimist International
reports



UN New York

The UN representatives in New York are busy all year long. The first meeting of the year was the 56th Commission for Social Development, which took place between 29th January and 8th February 2018.

The Priority Theme for the meeting was: "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all".

SI UN Representative, Marie D'Amato Rizzi, a member of the NGO Committee on Social Development, organised a side event on 6th February, "Strategies for Poverty Eradication: Grassroots Take on SDG Awareness and Implementation".

The event, sponsored by DESA/DSPD, explored details of the findings of a survey disseminated in April 2017 to Federations, which measured the degree to which grassroots organisations serving people "most likely to be left behind" are aware of their country's programmes and initiatives related to sustainable development.

SI UN Representative Vanessa Treer has helped to organise an event sponsored by Soroptimist International and the Coalition for Global Citizenship 2030. "Eradicating Poverty: A Workshop on the Role of Global Citizenship" was presented on 2nd February 2018.

The NGO Committee on Ageing and the International Federation on Ageing also organised

side events on 1st February 2018 for CSocD, "Ageism: a prejudice against our future selves".

SI UN Representative Frances Zainoeddin has helped to organise this workshop in her capacity on Ageing.

Prior to CSocD, on 28th January 2018, the NGO Commission for Social Development, hosted a Civil Society Forum. A draft resolution on social protection was prepared and circulated amongst NGOs.

Many countries have expressed interest in sponsoring a resolution, none have yet taken the lead.

New York UN Representative Bette Levy is attending meetings in preparation for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, held from Monday, 9th July, to Wednesday, 18th July 2018.

The theme will be "Transformation Towards Sustainable and Resilient Societies".

The set of goals to be reviewed in depth will be the following:

- Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
- Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
- Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
- Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, that will be considered each year.

UN Vienna

The Academic Council on the United Nations

System sponsored the annual ACUNS-UN Vienna Conference between 10th - 12th January 2018.

The 2018 Vienna UN Conference is a multidisciplinary event with compelling speakers from UN organisations, the academic community, permanent Missions, business leaders, and NGOs focusing on the theme of Achieving Gender Equality and Female Empowerment: A Collaborative Vision of SDG 5.

SI President, Mariet Verhoef-Cohen attended ACUNS and was invited to "Women's Critical Role in the Common Good" panel which took place on 12th January.

The panel looked at enhancing women's role in securing mandatory common good resources, focusing on water resources for women and girls.

Dr. Martina Gredler, SI UN Representative from Vienna participated in "Empowering Female Leaders" panel on 10th January.

The panel looked at systems and strategies for ensuring equal opportunities for women regarding leadership at all levels of decision-making.

Where We Stand Statements Approved

The SI Board approved two new Where We Stand Statements: Climate Change and Rural Women. To view these statements please visit the Members' section of the Soroptimist International website: www.soroptimistinternational.org



21st Quadrennial Convention



The 21st Quadrennial Convention hosted by SI South West Pacific (SISWP) will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 19th - 21st July 2019, making it a historic first time in Asia.

The three day Convention will have global keynote speakers and panellists on topics that focus on key United Nations Sustainable Development Goals that empower and advance the rights and status of women and girls.

We fervently hope that many Members from SIGBI will save the date and keep yourself updated, as new developments are being unveiled on our website www.siconventionkl2019.org.

The SI Convention Committee looks forward to welcoming our Soroptimist delegates from SIGBI as well as the other three Federations to a fun filled, memorable and uniquely "Malaysia, All of Asia" experience in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.



Soroptimist
International
Great Britain & Ireland
SIGBI
News



Communications

Lisa Roscoe, Communications Officer

New publicity photograph!

We have a new photograph which Clubs can use for their publicity purposes. Why not use it as your Facebook Cover photo and on your Club Website, as well as on printed materials and posters?

With Membership Month 2018 coming up soon, you could also use this photo to advertise your events.

This photo along with some of the other recent promotional photographs can be found in the Communications section of the Members' Area under Digital Tools & Images.

Does your Club have a Social Media Champion?

It's amazing to see Members embracing social media, this was particularly evident at the Conference in Cardiff where our Hashtag #SoroptimistCardiff2017 generated 1,256,321 impressions (accounts the tweets were delivered to) which is an incredible amount.

At the 2018 Conference in Liverpool we will be asking every Club to nominate a social media champion.

This is a great opportunity to encourage more Members to use social media whilst at conference and help get our message out to more people. Just think one day we could get our hashtag trending!

If you would like to set up a personal or Club Facebook or Twitter account we have 'How to Guides' in the Members area which will help you, these are in the Communications section of the Members' Area under Websites and Social Media, Social Media.

Any problem?

Please contact Lisa Roscoe lisa@sigbi.org

14 FEBRUARY 2018



Soroptimist
International
Great Britain & Ireland

EASTBOURNE AND DISTRICT SOROPTIMISTS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CONFERENCE

10.30am - 4.30pm

Thursday, 8th March 2018
at Eastbourne Town Hall

In collaboration with the Mayor of Eastbourne
and in support of the charities **EMBRACE** and **REBOURNE CORNER**.

Tickets £15 (light lunch included).

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

•Women and Leadership - Making Work Work

Rebecca Taylor, Assistant Principal of Sussex Downs College

•Women in Public Office

Sara Stonor, Vice Lord Lieutenant and Deborah Bedford JP, Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex

•The Role of Women in Suicide Prevention

Fiona Malcolm, Deputy CEO and Executive Director of Operations, The Samaritans

•Keeping the Focus on Girls' Learning

Jennifer Smith, Head Teacher, Brighton and Hove Prep High Sixth Girls School

•Human Trafficking: Survivors not Victims

Lorraine McIntyre, Sophie Hayes Foundation

•The Hidden Women of Eastbourne

Laura Murphy, Founder of WayFinderWoman Trust and mtc2 Ltd

Please note: The Town Hall is a listed building and the Assembly Hall is on the first floor. Unfortunately at present there is restricted access for wheelchair users. There is a small lift but it cannot take large/motorised wheelchairs. We also have to ensure that everyone can exit the building without issue in case of emergency. If you have mobility requirements, please let us know.

SEATS ARE LIMITED SO PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

To reserve a place please email Lynne Chiswick at lynne.chiswick@sky.com



In 2017, **SI St Albans and District** had the most Members that anyone can remember attending Conference – 11 Members attended, six of whom were "Conference virgins".

Ten are shown in the picture, with the Club mascot, Sally Bear – unfortunately I'm not in the picture as I had to leave early.

The Club Members all got to know each other much better whilst away together – in a similar way to team building away events that companies organise – I am sure we will all work together much more effectively as a result.

Before we went to Cardiff we were contacted by Cecile Hodoul, a Member of SI Victoria in the Seychelles who was attending Conference on her own (some of us knew Cecile already).

Once we knew she was coming on her own

Making new friends at the SIGBI Conference

Jane Slatter, SI St Albans

we 'adopted' her and are all now firm friends – Cecile is at the front right in the picture.

If several Members of your Club or Region are attending Conference in Liverpool, why not get in touch with Members from other Clubs/Countries who are going on their own or in small groups to invite them to spend time with you, and join in any social activities?

Similarly, if you are travelling to Conference alone, why not ask who is going from your Club's Friendship Links and arrange to meet up. If they know you are going they can invite you to their social gatherings too.

If you see someone wearing a yellow lanyard, stop and have a chat with them. This is their first time at Conference so make them feel welcome.

This will help all our Members to get more from Conference - not just from what is in the programme, but from the extra-curricular activities too! Let's work together to make the Liverpool Conference a magical experience for everyone.

Awareness, Advocacy and Action for Justice UKPAC Study Day

Saturday 7th July 2018
Europa Hotel
Belfast, Northern Ireland



2018 is the year for the UK Programme Action Committee to hold their bi-annual study day.

The programme is designed to feedback to members our progress:

- on the Prison Reform Work and the use to which our Transforming Lives Report has contributed to the agenda;
- on the full results of the slavery survey and how the information gleaned will help address the problems of slavery and trafficking across the UK.

The programme for the day

Morning speakers:



Dame Vera Baird QC, Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Northumberland and a Member of SI Newcastle upon Tyne; Prison Reform – Women in the criminal justice system.

Dame Vera was previously UK Government Minister and the UK Government's Solicitor General for England and Wales, the House of Commons' most senior law officer. As Solicitor General she was particularly involved in criminal justice policy and legislation, especially on gender and equality policies.

Peter Dawson - Director, the Prison Reform Trust;

Transforming Lives: Reducing Women's Imprisonment – Opportunities for Progress
Peter joined the PRT in May 2015 and became its Director in August 2016. He has long experience within the criminal Justice System ranging across the Home Office, the Prison Department and as a Prison Governor. He also has experience in the private sector with Sodexo in community rehabilitation.

Afternoon speakers:

Justice Teresa Doherty CBE, a Member of SI Bangor, Northern Ireland;

Exploitation of Children – in peace time and in war.

Justice Teresa Doherty CBE practiced law between 1976-1987, in Northern Ireland and Papua New Guinea and was noted for her work for women rights and for prisoners. She was the first woman judge in the South Pacific Islands region.

Justice Doherty served as a High Court Judge and at the Court of Appeals of Sierra Leone following the civil war there. Her dissenting opinion declaring forced marriage as a crime against humanity was upheld on appeal and is the first declaration in international law on this crime.

Kim Ann Williamson & Kay Richmond
Full report of our slavery survey; analysis of the results and responses;

Kim Ann Williamson is Inclusion and Community Engagement Manager, Crown Prosecution Service Cymru Wales. Her anti-slavery work has now widened to chair the UK Modern Slavery Training Delivery Group which reports to the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit. International work includes leading the Wales/Albania 'Task and Finish' Group and working with the Home Office Modern Slavery Unit on their work with 'Source Countries'.

Morning breakout sessions

What is Restorative Justice (RJ)?

David Merrington; a volunteer with Victim Support; he both supports victims of crime in the community and is a trained and practicing RJ facilitator (Senior Practitioner)

Muslim Women in Prison; the untold story

Sofia Buncy from the Muslim Women in Prison Project is the researcher and co-author of the first report into Muslim Women in British Prisons. She is the founder and Co-ordinator of the Muslim Women in Prison Rehabilitation Project and is developing a national reputation for her rehabilitation work with Muslim Women Prisoners.

Whose Crime Is It, Anyway? Work to support children and families affected by imprisonment

Prof. Nancy Loucks is the Chief Executive of Families Outside, a Scottish voluntary organisation that works on behalf of families affected by imprisonment

Afternoon breakout sessions:



UK Modern Slavery Survey - its use and implications;
Kim Ann Williamson *Unseen UK - Modern slavery, hidden in plain sight.*

Justine Currell – CEO of 'Unseen', who runs the Modern Slavery Helpline and is Deputy PCC in Bedfordshire; Justine will work to influence other Governments internationally to take action to address modern slavery and, in particular, business supply chain issues.

Barnardos – Advocates for trafficked children

Allyson Davies – from Barnardos, based in Wales and involved with the UK Government's trial of advocates for children who are trafficked, taking place in Greater Manchester, Hampshire/ Isle of Wight and Wales;

REGISTRATION

The registration fee is £75.00 to cover overhead charges and refreshments throughout the day. Non-Soroptimists are welcome to join us.

Details are available on our website:

<https://sigbi.org/ukpac/studyday/>

where you can also find details for our speakers and breakout session leaders.

Registration will be handled by SIGBI HQ, thanks to Joanne Voller at SIGBI.

The Europa Hotel is offering special delegate rates for accommodation.

The cost per room and breakfast is:

Friday - £110 for a single and

£130 for a double/twin.

Saturday - £130 for a single

and £150 for a double/twin.

The Friday night rate is also available for 3/4/5th July and 8/9/10th July.

Rooms may be booked at the Europa Hotel by contacting Reservations – Tel: 028 9027 1066 and quoting "UKPAC July 18".



What's May? Membership Month!



Jean Campbell
SI Perth...
WOW!

Judith Grocott
Director of Membership
reports

May 2018 will be our third annual Membership Month and I am sure that it will be our most successful so far.

Do you have your plans in place? Don't leave planning until May, that could lead to disappointment and a missed opportunity to benefit from the accumulated publicity generated by us all working together to encourage membership of our wonderful organisation.

There are posters, project plans and many other tools to help you in the Membership Month Toolkit, which can be found on the website under Members/Clubs/ Recruitment Events/ Membership Month Toolkit.

In this section there is also a new Promotional Image that can be used, along with all the instructions for downloading and use. Keep an eye on this section, we will be adding to it as May draws nearer.

Membership Matters, which is now back in its new exciting bi-monthly format will also carry new ideas and updates - as will the SIGBI News Briefings.

We are always open to new ideas and suggestions and will be delighted to hear from you. Please think about picture and video opportunities, as we will once again be running the best picture and video competition which was so popular last year.

Who could not have been impressed by SI Bombay Chembur's picture and SI Newtown's video? They have given us something to aspire to.

The strapline, 'Ask me why I'm a Soroptimist' has worked well through the last two years' Membership Months and we will be continuing with it into 2018, so the T-shirts and badges you have already bought can be re-used.

I was particularly pleased to receive a picture from Jean

Campbell of SI Perth (above) sporting one of the T-shirts on their stand at the first WOW (Women of the World) Festival in Perth. More about that in Membership Matters.

As the years roll by we are all becoming more comfortable and aware of the usefulness of social media. There is a new infographic which has been edited to the correct sizes for use as your Twitter or Facebook header photograph. Wouldn't it be great if we all used them during May? We would definitely raise our profile.

We will once again be doing a Thunderclap - this has been taken up by more members each year. Have you been involved? Please sign up for it this year when Lisa circulates the details, I promise it doesn't hurt or cost you anything!

We have loved seeing your #whysoroptimist quotes and images from the past couple of

years, so keep these coming!

There is a template of the quote card in the Toolkit for you to use as SI Folkestone did - see the photo below.

Finally, good luck - and you know the old saying 'Fail to plan is plan to fail'. I look forward to seeing and hearing all that is happening in the coming weeks re this important part of our Soroptimist year.



Membership Matters



SI Darlington & District
(above) welcomed two new members at their December meeting, making a total of five during 2017.



SI Pune Metro East takes membership issues very seriously. Since its Charter in 2010 membership, has never dropped below 30. The Club prides itself with winning nominations and awards each year, which, they say, is possible only through

their committed and sustained membership.

The highlight of 2016 was the film 'Ask Me Why I'm a Soroptimist' made for Membership Month Competition which apparently shattered viewing records on the SIGBI website.

Membership strengthening meetings are held to keep members informed of running of the Club and project handling.

The Club Communications Officer held a session to introduce members to ways of writing for Soroptimist publications.

A professional photographer was invited to give tips on taking effective pictures for documentation.

Earlier this year an external resource person conducted a team building session which was well received.

Though six members moved on, nine new members joined and were given an orientation by President Anubha.



SI High Wycombe and District joined the celebrations for International Day of the Girl at High Wycombe Town Hall. Dosti, a charity giving friendship and support to Asian women, which they have supported, helped Thames Valley Police to organise the day. The Club's focus was on attracting new members with a new and eye catching stand. They all wore blue and white Fascinators on their heads. Why? "Well we are fascinating women who enjoy being Soroptimists!"

"This provoked much interest and comment and gained seven provisional new members. A delightful day of friendship, fun and food and new friends."



Dr Vi Pritchard, **SI Nantwich Region President, Cheshire, North Wales & Wirral 1985/6**, reports that it is the custom in Cheshire, North Wales and Wirral Region for the Regional President for the year and the Club Presidents during that year, to meet subsequently for a reunion lunch once each year.

Vi says, "The first year there were 22 presidents but over the years our numbers have diminished. When we met in September 2017 there were just six of us (plus one visitor) celebrating our 30th reunion in Llandudno."

Is this a record? There cannot be many groups who have met for thirty years!

SIGBI Shopping



Soroptimist booklet
3 booklets per pack
@ £1.00 a pack plus P&P.



NEW: What sort of woman is a Soroptimist?

Pack of 50 @
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Programme Action Leaflets
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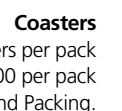
Dynamic 'S' Badge
Height 25mm with
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SIGBI Dynamic 'S' Badge
size 36mm x
23.5mm with
butterfly fastening
£2.00 plus P&P.



Past President's Badge
£2.50 plus P&P.



Coasters
6 coasters per pack
£2.00 per pack
plus Postage and Packing.

In the mail

17th November 2017 – Clubs/ Regions/NA/Networks

1. New Publicity Photograph
2. Meru Leaflets
3. Reminder re CSW62
4. I am not a witch
5. Social Media Stats from Conference
6. SIGBI Order Form – 3 November 2017
7. FPAC Minutes & Conference Evaluation

1st December 2017 – Clubs/Regions/ NA/Networks

1. Liverpool Conference 25-27 October 2018 & General Meeting Information
2. Federation Project 2019-2022
3. Federation Vacancies 2018
4. Grant of Friendship – New South Wales
5. SIGBI Trading Ltd – Directors Required
6. Club Photo of the Month – November 2017
7. No 63 Shareholders
8. Federation Office Christmas Closures
9. No 63 Shareholder Information

15th December 2017 – Clubs/ Regions/NA/Networks

1. SIGBI School Clubs
2. Meru Women's Garden Project
3. SIGBI Auditors – Statement
4. Respect Statement
5. Updated Donation Form 2017
6. No 63 Shareholders

5th January 2018 – Clubs/Regions/ NA/Networks

1. Friendship Link Letter & Registration Form
2. Friendship Link Application Form
3. Happy New Year 2018
4. Club Photo of the Month – December 2017
5. Liverpool 2018 Conference – VISAs
6. Friendship Link Newsletter – January 2018
7. Respect Statement
8. SIGBI Retailing
9. SI Advocacy Guidelines
10. SIGBI Trading Ltd – Directors Required

19th January 2018 – Clubs/Regions/ NA/Networks

1. Women's Voting Centenary Grant Scheme
2. Annual Returns 2018
3. Next Federation Project
4. Her Majesty's Garden Party – 5 June 2018
5. SIGBI Trading Ltd – Directors Required
6. UKPAC Study Day – 7 July 2018
7. UKPAC Vacancy – Website and Communications Officer
8. 2019 SIGBI Diary Order Form

**Educate,
Empower,
Enable**

TO ORDER

The full list of retail items is available from Joanne or via the Members' area of www.sigbi.org/Members under "SIGBI Shop". There is an order form for items from SIGBI and from Corporate Insignia on the website. All items exclusive of postage and packing. Do not send money with your order. SIGBI Ltd sends all orders by the most economical postage, cost is dependent on the weight and size of the goods. An invoice plus post and packing will be sent with your order. Contact: Joanne Voller, Sales Officer, Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd., 2nd Floor, Beckwith House, Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK4 1AF. T: 0161 480 7686 F: 0161 477 6152 E: hq@sigbi.org. To pay by credit card, provide Card Number, Expiry Date and Security Code (3 digit number on reverse of card) with your order. Please allow 7-10 days for your order to be processed. **All item costs are + P&P.**



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2000 Club

Winners December 2017

Mary Goodman	£1000	SI Birmingham Central
Anne Spence	£500	SI Kettering & District
M. Garland	£500	SI Bristol
Cherril Pritchard	£250	SI Bilston
Susan West	£250	SI Bristol

Winners January 2018

Dorothy Howes	£100	SI London East
E. Archer	£100	SI Chesterfield
Denise Baldwin	£50	SI Ramsbottom
Joyce Pedersen	£50	SI Kettering
SI Bristol	£25	SI Bristol
Jennifer Lawrence	£25	SI Birmingham Central

The 2000 Club was set up in 2000 to raise funds for the upkeep of Number 63, our Club in London. Anyone can join, the cost is £1 per week. Six winners are chosen each month by SI Plymouth. The first two win £100, the next two win £50 and the remaining two win £25. Twice a year in the big draw, the first prize is £1,000, the two second prizes are £500 and the last two win £250. On the Number 63 website there is an application form to join the 2000 Club - <http://www.number63.co.uk/>



SIGBI Memorial Fund

Patricia Adams, President, SI Port of Spain and Debra Smith, SI Cape of Good Hope, were recipients of the SIGBI Memorial Fund, which enables members to attend the SIGBI Conference. Here are their letters of thanks after the Conference.



Patricia Adams writes:

Dear President Susan and Members

I would like to sincerely thank you for affording me the opportunity through the Memorial Fund Award to attend my first SIGBI Conference at Cardiff 2017.

As the President of Soroptimist International Port of Spain (SIPOS), I found myself stepping out of my shyness and meeting other sisters from around the world who were always willing to share and connect.

It was a fantastic experience all round. The team of five that came from Trinidad and Tobago were from three different Clubs and had never worked together as closely as we had to in this conference.

I was very impressed and inspired by what my sisters have been doing in their own Clubs and they have been duly recognised and rewarded by SIGBI. This augurs well for the future of our National Association, Soroptimist International Trinidad and Tobago (SITT) to which we all belong.

This was also the first time that I met Soroptimist members from the Caribbean Region and the friendship that we have shared will be lasting.

The Programme Action session on Thursday was the beginning of greater things that were to come over the next two days. All of the speakers were exceptional and their messages were consistent – success requires persistence and belief, and with team support all things become achievable.

Listening to the many successful Soroptimist stories over the weekend, I now have a greater appreciation for Partnerships through which skills are pooled, without which, the number of lives impacted would not have been possible. This actually proved to be true for our Club, which was nominated for a Best Practice Award for a poetry competition run with Roots Foundation for International Day of Peace 2016.

18 FEBRUARY 2018

I was also very impressed with the magnitude of the work that Soroptimist women all over the world are doing, particularly with the 17 UN Sustainable goals, to make this world a better place for all.

The passion and commitment to the range of projects Soroptimists have been putting their energies behind, as well as their persistence, has convinced me that this is the only way that the 17 UN Sustainable Goals can be tackled and positive change will come – one at a time.

January 2018 will mark the 60th anniversary of Soroptimist International Port of Spain and I would really like to see our Club membership grow to include as many as 60 young women by January 2019.

There is more than enough to advocate for in our country, and instead of merely complaining or commenting on issues, Soroptimists can show them how they could use their passion to raise their voices and get into action, and make a significant difference in another woman's or child's life.

The Conference has shown me that what Soroptimists are doing is serious business with tangible results. Women united in action are an unbeatable, unstoppable force.

SI Port of Spain has established contact with Kim and Angelina who presented to Conference and we will link with them to reignite our Human Trafficking awareness programme in our schools and communities.

I hope that I can convey this spirit to my Club and enthuse our Members to 'grow our brand' and increase our activity and effectiveness in 2018-2019.

Did I mention how much fun it was? I haven't laughed so wholeheartedly everyday for a long time. Thanks!

Debra Smith writes:

Dear President Susan and Members

I was very privileged to receive a Memorial Fund award to attend the Cardiff Conference and am most grateful to SIGBI for providing the opportunity to attend. Never before had I seen so many fellow Soroptimists gathered together, ready to be 'wowed', to 'Step up, lead the way' to be inspired and reminded of what being a Soroptimist really means.

As a first time attendee I wore a yellow lanyard which whilst a conversation opener was little more. It would have been exciting to have coffee or tea with some of the committee members or even meet other Memorial Fund recipients but this was not to be ...a lost opportunity I feel. However I must stress all the Soroptimists I met

could not have been kinder and it was wonderful to exchange information about Club projects and other activities, all of which I will share with my Club on my return. I am most grateful that I had the opportunity to talk with them.

My first experience was when I was invited as a non-participant member to the FPAC Forum where I learnt a great deal, being especially inspired by Pat Black, but sadly not all the sessions achieved their purpose and I was disheartened to see that a great number of delegates participating in the morning sessions did not arrive back in the afternoon.

That evening we attended the formal opening at the amazing Millennium Centre. It was a truly awesome experience seeing the flags of each country being greeted by the President, but I think it would have been much more meaningful and inclusive of members if they had been carried by Soroptimist flag bearers accompanied by a representative from each of the countries being greeted by the President and perhaps the conference chair? Receiving greetings from Her Majesty the Queen, the Prime Minister and other distinguished individuals gave credence to the organisation and just shows how powerful and potentially influential we as a global organisation can be. We were entertained by the fantastic voice of baritone Aaron Pryce-Lewis and the wonderful Bristol Military Wives Choir.

The following days were a combination of speakers, General Meeting, Club project presentations, awards and the closing ceremony. The keynote speakers could not fail to inspire us to action and say "wow". Michael Kaufman was the first of the inspiring keynote speakers, a promoter of gender equality and positive ideals of manhood striving to end violence amongst women and co-founder of the White Ribbon Campaign. It was a lovely idea to include a white ribbon pin in our welcome pack to promote awareness of his campaign and a great sense of pride in seeing so many Soroptimists wearing them during the conference. His powerful speech was thought provoking and entertaining – encouraging us all to speak out against violence against women.

Rebecca Lewin's talk later that first morning was also quite emotive. I was quite touched by her involvement in Plan International. She sensitively reminded us all how girls in particular are most affected by poverty, violence, exclusion and discrimination and how by working together with children, young people, supporters and partners Plan strives for a just world, tackling the causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. A gentle reminder for

all Soroptimists of how together with our Programme action we can make change.

Saturday morning was for me one of the highlights of the conference. Mandy Hickson (flight name 'Big Bird') gave a superb motivational talk 'Dream it, Believe it, Do it' fully deserving her standing ovation at the end of it. She had an energy and passion which positively enthused us all. She was honest, frank, with a wonderful sense of humour and purpose, believing that anyone can achieve their goals - you just have to believe in yourself and others, being prepared to step up and lead the way. She was followed by another outstanding woman Dame Katherine Grainger DBE, an example of 'Dream it Believe it Do it' who shared her amazing and compelling journey to success.

Ann Hodgson reminded us that the inscription along the front of the Millennium Centre says 'ffwmais awen' - 'Furnace of Inspiration'. Well, together with your team Ann, you certainly delivered...the conference was inspirational.

I was also impressed with the Best Practice Awards - the content and variety of projects was amazing and how a winner was determined must have been extremely challenging - everyone, in their way, was a deserving winner. The rap and the humorous poem just reminded us all how creative some of our Soroptimist members are, as well as advancing the cause of young girls and women so that they may be enabled, educated and empowered.

The exhibition of charity, commercial and Club stalls was interesting but the space was limited. I was disappointed with the Friendship Link stand. It wasn't clear at all if one had to write a message for the board or place in the folder (I did both to be safe) but I think its very position prohibited some members from searching for links, especially as I had been led to believe there was to be more of a lounge area where one could meet and greet friendship links.

Overall this was a wonderful first time experience for me...my first conference. I had the pleasure of speaking to many wonderful women and hope to stay in touch with them in the future. There were highs and lows...the lows mainly being missed opportunities and organisational hassles (eg tea/coffee queues). I was also concerned about our disabled members - little provision had been made for their needs.

I think too that Soroptimists coming from overseas could be invited, at their own expense, to join others for a meal. I was upset to learn on the final day that one of the overseas members had not been invited out in the evening and had met few people...fortunately for me I was able to meet up with one of our Friendship Link Clubs, but others were not so fortunate. Given that the centre closed early perhaps this could be a consideration another time.

I returned to my Club inspired and invigorated. My discussions with other Soroptimists have enabled me to remember that we all have a wide range of skills and experience. I have been reminded that Programme Action is not ON the agenda it IS the agenda. I am keen to 'step up,' sell the brand of Soroptimism, raise our profile at all opportunities, keep our website updated and most importantly remember what a Soroptimist is without having ideas of grandeur. We need to reaffirm our need to get back to basics and remember that together we have the power to change international policies making the future for our girls and young women much brighter.

Obituaries

Laura Thomas, SI Pembroke

died on 1st August 2017.

A former Club President and committed Soroptimist from 1961 until the Club closed in 2012.

Jillian (Jill) Dickinson, SI Swansea,

died on 31st October 2017 aged 77. Jill was a Soroptimist since 1989, Club President in 2016 and Secretary for many years. She was also a Committee Member and Social Secretary and was renowned for her efficiency, hospitality and support for Programme Action.

Barbara Bradford, SI Tunbridge Wells & District

died on 17th September aged 73. She was Member for 25 years and actively fostered the Club's international links as the Club Friendship Link Co-ordinator.

Joan Alexander, SI Falkirk, died on 20th November, 2017 aged 77. Joan joined the Falkirk Club in 1988 and was a loyal, active and committed Member for almost 30 years.

Jane Williams, SI Paisley died on 5th December 2017. Jane became a Member of the Club in 1982. In 1984 she was in a motor accident which left her housebound but she remained a committed and interested Member of the Club until she died.

Anna Slack, SI Paisley died on 4th January 2018. Anna became a Member of the Club in 1977 and was Club President in 1986-87. She was a loyal, gentle Member, liked by all, who carried out all tasks asked of her for the Club with enthusiasm and good humour.

Brenda Lynton-Escreet, SI Morecambe and Heysham, died on 24th November 2017. Brenda was a loyal and committed Soroptimist who joined the Club in 1998. She was President in 2002-2003 and joint President in 2014-2015. Brenda was a founder, trustee and latterly patron of the charity PIES - Partners in Education Swaziland.

Evelyn Allan, SI Dundee, died on 23rd December in her 91st year. She was a Soroptimist for 42 years and SI Dundee Club President 1983-85. Evelyn was absolutely delighted that her 90th birthday photo was published in the December issue of Soroptimist News and she showed it to all her visitors.

TO SUBMIT AN OBITUARY

Please send obituaries to Soroptimist@written-image.com, putting OBITUARY in the subject box.

It should be written following the above format, including ONLY the Member's name, Club(s), age, time as a Soroptimist and offices held.

Please do not send full descriptive obituaries.

There is no fee.

Longer obituaries may be submitted for the website.

Please send to hq@sigbi.org

Sheila King, Honorary Member of

past Morpeth and District Club, died on 27th December 2017 aged 97. Sheila joined in 1971 and was Club President, DU President and Extension Officer. She also chaired the Conference Committee for 1988 Glasgow Federation Conference.

Denise Alcock, Honorary Member of past Morpeth and District, died on 26th December 2017 aged 74. Denise joined in 1992 and was twice Club President, Programme Action Officer and also twice Club Secretary.

Marina Monios, SI Cardiff & District,

died on 4th January 2018. Aged 80, Marina was an active and valued Member of the Club for 15 years and served on several Club Committees.

Emmanuella Kallon, SI Freetown, died on 28th August 2017 aged 30. Best Sister Emmanuella joined the Club in 2015.

Cassandra Cole, SI Freetown, died on 28th December 2017 aged 50. Best Sister Cassandra joined the Club in 2015 and was Publicity Secretary until the time of her death.

Yvonne Wilson, SI Edinburgh, died on 27th January, aged 90. Yvonne joined in 1975, a quietly dignified lady really committed to all Club activities and a very dependable committee member. She read SI Enna (SI Edinburgh's newsletter) to keep up with activities when unable to attend meetings.

Jean Knight, SI Blackburn, died on the 18th January 2018 after a short illness aged 82. A former Speech Therapist, Jean was a very proud Member of the Club for over 40 years and was President in 1982-83.

Pamela Robotham SI Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead, died suddenly on 11th January 2018 aged 89. A Founder Member in 1961, she was made an Honorary Member in 2008. Pamela was Club President in 1968/9 and 2012/13 - she was an active member to the end.

Maevis Stewart died in Donegal Hospice on December 19th 2017. A Soroptimist for 29 years, Maevis was President of Seven Oaks, Londonderry and Letterkenny Clubs. Maevis brought humour and enthusiasm to Club meetings and to PAC.

SIGBI Christmas



Members of Brixham Soroptimists having a lovely afternoon making Christmas wreaths at the Berry Head Hotel, with tutor Tracy Johnson at the helm!



SI Dewsbury and Father Christmas held a Christmas party for the residents at Tentercroft Court, complete with The 12 days of Christmas panto-style!



SI Buxton Members joined Buxton Town Team to brighten up their town with Christmas bows, to make the festive season special for everyone, before meeting at the Cavendish Golf Club for their Christmas Dinner. Greetings from Hamburg and Stockport Soroptimists were read out, as well as "thank you's" from Charities helped by the organisation.



SI Chelmsford collected over 1000 bras for The Purple Teardrop Campaign, so when they submitted a Christmas Tree entry at the Writtle Christmas Tree Festival, the tree had to be decorated with 'brables' and a beautiful two bra angel called Brabara! This gave an opportunity to raise awareness of The Purple Teardrop Campaign and Members also had fun making the brables!



SI Medway Towns collected Christmas food, crackers, gifts, toys and toiletries to bring a little festive cheer to the women and children who are far from home and living in Medway's women's refuges. Women who have been victims of domestic abuse are offered sanctuary in women's refuges as far from their homes as possible and they arrive, often with their children, with nothing but the clothes on their backs. Christmas, therefore, could be rather a bleak occasion. They are offered protection and care in the refuges but with funding being reduced all the time, some festive food, a few treats and presents to make Christmas special, are very welcome.



SI Wolverhampton showed their support for the 'Orange Wolverhampton' campaign by turning their Christmas festivities orange at their December dinner meeting. They all wore orange sashes, ribbons or clothing and even their Christmas gifts followed this theme as they all received a chocolate orange. 'Orange Wolverhampton' is a local awareness-raising campaign that is part of the United Nations' international 16 Days of Action to end violence against women and girls. Club members also wore orange ribbons during the 16 days which ran from 25th November to 10th December, 2017 which is Human Rights Day.



SI Cannock supported the Pathway Project by providing Christmas gifts such as clothing, beauty packs, toys and games for women and children spending Christmas in the refuge run by the Pathway Project for victims of domestic violence. The donated gifts filled two cars and the gifts, together with wrapping paper and all the trimmings, were gratefully accepted by staff from Pathway. Cannock & District Soroptimists also had their usual stall at Norton Canes on Sunday 3rd December when the Community Centre held their annual Winter Fair. Club members sold reindeer food – helping children to fill bags with food for Rudolph and his friends - as well as showcasing issues and organisations supported by Soroptimist International.



SI Crosby supplied a beautiful Christmas tree at St. Faith's Church, Waterloo. Members went along to dress the tree on 2nd December. Their theme was "Soroptimists, who we are and what we do." The tree, dressed in Soroptimist colours raised funds for charities.

SI Edinburgh members took part in sorting and filling shoe boxes for the Blythswood Appeal. They made order out of the chaos of masses of gifts, some for the shoe boxes and some for other charities associated with Blythswood at Craigmillar Park Church Edinburgh in November. Many of the filled Shoe Boxes were heading to Romania where they will bring a smile to the faces of many families who have very little at Christmas.



SI Swindon presented Christmas gift shoe boxes to the Swindon Nelson Trust Women's Centre. The boxes are for the vulnerable women who use the Centre, who are unlikely to get Christmas gifts. Items were collected by Club Members with donations from Marlborough Ladies Who Latte and Live Laugh Love groups, – 25 boxes were wrapped and filled at Member Gillian Reed's house. Lydia Cardew, Project Coordinator for the Club, said, "These women have tough challenges. We wanted to ensure that they knew someone was thinking of them. We make the boxes useful and fun, with gloves, soap and shampoo as well as a Christmas gift, crackers and chocolate."

Club News



SI Bangor Northern Ireland
Members were gratified to hear from Brighter Communities Worldwide that the "Girls for Girls" project that the Club supports has benefitted 2500 girls in 52 schools in rural Kenya and is now being adopted by schools in Uganda.



SI Barnstaple has organised the annual petal scattering in the 16 Days of Activism for the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Children for some years. The latest gathering was the largest ever with Members joining the Mayor, Town Clerk, Councillors, staff of North Devon Against Domestic Abuse and some of their clients.



SI Blackburn Members gathered at the home of Joint Programme Action Officer, Siobhan Grimshaw, to collate and pack sponge bags filled with quality toiletries to donate to Humraaz, the Blackburn Women's Refuge. They filled 14 bags, which Salma and Firoza at Humraaz were delighted to accept for the women.



SI Bombay members visited girls at the Varavane Shasakiya Ashram, a residential school for tribal children in Pen, Raigad District, Maharashtra, India, in January 2017 and found that there were 415 students, out of which 184 were girls and they had only two toilets in a very bad condition. The Club worked with Mahatma Education Society's Pillai Group to construct five toilets and five bathrooms for these girls so that they would be encouraged to continue education and also reduce menstrual absenteeism.



SI Bromley sent out an SOS about a Member in hospital waiting for two operations after a fall and feeling lonely. SI Preston rose magnificently to the call, visiting on a rota, taking fruit, flowers, magazines and great goodwill. Members from both Clubs met up at the Cardiff conference to celebrate the true spirit of Soroptimism and to cement a bond between the two Clubs.



SI Buxton Joint President Elaine McDonald visited the High Peak Homestart group to present £224 to Neil Bent, on behalf of the group. Neil thanked Elaine saying, "The children will benefit from this donation, which will be wisely spent."



SI Calcutta Members visited Ghatal in Pashchim Medinipur District (following the severe flooding in July/August 2017, to help the local people. They took 350 packets of dry food, water and clothes, for the inhabitants of the most badly affected villages of Gopiganj and Chaipat of Daspur 2 Block.



SI Canterbury Members raised public awareness of modern slavery on the High Street on Anti Slavery Day. Members shared stories and statistics about the frequency and the effects of slavery in all communities. Locally there have been prosecutions of slaves forced to work in car washes and fruit farms. Kent is a transit hub and local police have made Slavery their highest priority.



SI Cirencester President Jackie Gloyd, at a recent Club meeting, had the pleasure of presenting cheques to four local charities to support their community work. Representatives from the Churn project, Cirencester Housing for Young People (CHYP), Gloucestershire Young Carers and Scrubditch Care Farm each received money from fundraising activities organised by the Club during 2017.



A Member of **SI Colchester & District** is part of a knitting group in the retirement village where she lives. The group of 12 ladies knit blankets and baby clothes for the Kori Project in Sierra Leone and three large parcels have already been sent to SI Thames Valley for shipping. The other ladies in the knitting group are not Soroptimists but they know about SI and are enthusiastic about the work we do.



SI Crieff Member Maureen Sturrock organised a soup, cheese and biscuits fundraiser in aid of a programme in Uganda to help ladies with Obstetric Fistulas. Obstetric Fistulas can be caused by poor health care during the labour and birthing process. An injury which used to be very common worldwide, it is still prevalent in some areas where access to good healthcare is challenging. Each surgery costs £250, and Maureen was delighted to be able to raise over £500. Di McNab is the mother of one of the doctors, Kate Darlow who is a Consultant Obstetrician/Gynaecologist at Borders General Hospital. Di was in attendance at the fundraiser and was able to speak to a number of attendees explaining the work her daughter does in Uganda working with Mhairi Collie, a Colorectal Surgeon based in Edinburgh.



SI Crosby brought Fawley Towers to town when their fundraising lead, Jill Boggan (or Manuel as she is now known) suggested this as an event – what a success it turned out to be. Other Members took on the roles of Sybil and Polly and sketches from the show were interspersed with a general knowledge quiz. Members did not disappoint when it came to supper but the most important thing is that approximately £1,000 was raised for local charities.



SI Dundee marked the Soroptimist Day of Service with a fundraising walk round Forfar Loch raising £225 for Handicap International. This money could go towards providing two children with their artificial limbs or 29 sets of crutches. SI Dundee has raised funds for Handicap International over many years since working to eliminate the manufacture, distribution and use of landmines and is a recognised partner organisation.



SI Dunfermline were invited to attend the Official Opening of the new Queensferry Crossing by HRH The Queen. The delighted Members received a picnic lunch and a souvenir bag including the essential rain poncho! The whole event was brilliantly organised, presenters, musicians and films were great. We watched the Queen and the First Minister on the big screens undertaking the ceremony on the new bridge while the Red Arrows flew overhead. What a great day!



SI Eastbourne Members took part in a Charity Bowls Tournament in Hamden Park organised by the Mayor of Eastbourne, Councillor Pat Hearn. Despite coming last they had a very enjoyable day!



SI Glasgow City welcomed (then) SIGBI President Ann Hodgson and six Presidents and Past Presidents to their Vintage Fashion Show. Club President Madeleine and Members organised the event using Madeleine's extensive collection of vintage outfits and accessories to fundraise for Mercy Ships.



SI Harrogate President, Nicola Harding, presented the Gill Smith Memorial Trophy to Niamh Owens saying, "It is a pleasure to award Niamh. The trophy is a fitting tribute to one of our Members who loved tennis. I am sure she would be proud that this is being awarded for the Best Girl Improver." Matt McTurk, Head Coach at the Harrogate Spa Tennis Centre, said "Niamh has shown a real love and enthusiasm for tennis since she started being coached and playing tennis here over a year ago."



SI Haverfordwest were delighted to receive photos of toilets in poor rural areas of the Ivory Coast, Pakistan and Uganda which have been completed by money donated by Members towards the Toilet Twinning Fund, a Regional project supported by the Club over the past two years. This is their effort to help to flush away poverty at a time when 2.3 million people do not have access to somewhere safe to go to the toilet.



SI Johannesburg celebrated "Day of the Girl Child" which marks the start of exam time in South Africa. Each girl was given sanitary towels, two bras, a pencil case full of goodies and a water bottle.



SI Kenilworth sponsored Catherine Rowe, a guider from Leamington, to go on a course to improve the education and leadership of women and girls, through guiding in Oman. Member Carol Nicholson raised the sponsorship money by organising canal trips on her narrowboat. Catherine's weeks in Oman were demanding, she worked with women and teenagers, spoke to senior leaders, headteachers, local officials and the education minister. SI Kenilworth Members were so impressed by her enthusiasm that she was nominated for – and won – the Midland Arden Region Inspirational Achievement Award.



SI Lancaster Members Janie Kirkman and Deirdre Jacks were joined by the Mayor and Mayoress of Lancaster to distribute White Ribbon stickers and talk to shoppers about the project.



SI Leicester provided cakes, jams and chutney for a produce stall to support Rainbows hospice for young people. Members Mel, Hilary, Josephine and Brenda spent the day selling cakes and making gallons of tea!



SI Durham won the SI Northern England Reach for the Skies Programme Action Award 2017, Runners up were SI Stockton on Tees and SI Tynemouth & Whitley Bay. The Holiday Inn at Scotch Corner was the venue for the Regional Council Meeting on 16th September. Regional President Jane Inman presented the award for the Reach for Skies Programme Action Award 2017 and the certificates for the nominated Clubs: SI Durham – www.princebishopalpacas.co.uk www.girlguiding.org.uk SI Stockton on Tees – Mesarani Project <http://mesaraniproject.co.uk> SI Tynemouth & Whitley Bay – New Start bags for victims of trafficking.



SI Northern England Members took their @STOPTHETRAFFIK Global Blanket to 10 Downing Street on Anti Slavery Day, 18th November 2017. It was presented by Regional Officers Shirley Hallam and Jane Katsambis, APD for Advocacy Margaret Clark, Chair of UKPAC Kay Richmond and MPs Alan Campbell (Tynemouth) and Mary Glindon (North Tyneside). The Blanket was also displayed at Federation Conference in Cardiff and at The Exchange, an arts centre in North Tyneside.



SI Paisley Members joined Renfrewshire Rising, local Councillors and many others to march through Paisley Town Centre on Tuesday 28th November. The annual march raises awareness of the 16 days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence Campaign. Following the very well supported march, a wreath was laid to remember those who have lost their lives to domestic violence.



SI Plymouth gave £3000 to support victims of domestic violence and sexual assault in Nepal. 50 per cent of girls suffer from mental health issues and discrimination. Kopila Nepal, the partner organisation, helps girls to access education by providing uniforms, books, stationery and personal hygiene items. Vulnerable women have been helped to set up goat farms to develop a sustainable income to send their children to school. Through the support of Soroptimists and Kopila, their problems have been reduced by 25 per cent. Jason Snuggs, Humanitarian Aid Manager, is pictured with President Margaret Parkinson.



SI Port Talbot attended a county show raising awareness of Soroptimist International and promoting our aims and objectives. There was great interest in our displays and President Judith was confident that our profile made an impact with the general public. A bottle stall was a great success and raised over £100. President Judith Morgan and Members were very proud to wear their new sashes!



SI Preston Member Maggie Rey (centre) retired and decided to do voluntary work overseas. Her travels took her to Nepal, Ecuador, Senegal, Cambodia and Myanmar – each for three months, where she taught children to speak English. She recently left for Laos saying "I'm going to Dong Khong near the borders with Cambodia and Vietnam, staying on an island in the Mekong river. I've committed to five weeks teaching the local kids. They are desperate to learn English." Karen Rainford, SI Preston said, "We are all so proud of Maggie and the work she does. She is an inspirational woman."



Salisbury Soroptimists held a summer sizzler on August Bank Holiday weekend at the Salisbury Alabaré Mother and Baby House to treat them to a barbecue. Members of the local group had been busy shopping and baking to lay on a super spread for mums and their toddlers. Group convenor, Soroptimist Liz Batten said, "It was a wonderful day, we enjoyed the chance to meet and chat to current and former residents and some of their youngsters." Maxine Moore, senior support worker for Alabaré said, "The event was just the positive lift the mothers needed on such a beautiful day. We are so grateful for the continued support Salisbury Soroptimists give us."



SI Sheffield welcomed Amy from Breast Cancer Care as a speaker. Club Members and Members of their daughter Club SI Hallamshire - marked the 25th anniversary of the Pink Ribbon by wearing pink and the Golf Club provided a wonderful pink themed meal. Members and guests gave generously to raise funds for this unique charity.



SI Port Elizabeth supported a silent Anti Human Trafficking march held in cities around the world in October, organised by A21 Walk for Freedom – a global awareness event in more than 50 countries, to bring awareness to millions of men, women, and children who are trapped in slavery across the world. You do the walk in silence listening to a podcast as you walk. SI Port Elizabeth thought it would be a good start to get involved in the advocacy of human trafficking and this was the first time it was being held in their city.



SI Poona conducted a health awareness/medical camp in the village of Ambadvet, a small village on the outskirts of Pune, inhabited by a gypsy community. With the help of the Family Planning Association of India, a session on personal hygiene and nutrition and a health camp was conducted for the school children and adults. 29 children aged 1-12 and 13 adults attended. Blood tests and HB counts showed anaemia in a number of children who were given medication. SI Pune Members also interacted with the women and advised them on health, hygiene and nutrition.



SI St Austell supported the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, holding a collection at Tesco, St Austell, inviting the public to donate non perishable items for our local Refuges. The public were generous and grateful for the Refuges' work.

SI St Helen's reported in Soroptimist News May 2017 that they had resolved the issues they had with a lack of a President and how they overcame them. Called 'A new approach to an old problem' the article was printed in the South Lancashire Leader newspaper. Doreen Todd from SO Sydney, NSW, Australia, contacted the Club to ask if she could use it. Of course the Club agreed and were thrilled that she did. This has had a very positive effect in the St Helen's Club, at Region and now in Australia.

SI Selby Members were delighted to meet Anna Foster from Selby and Craven IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service) at their recent meeting. IDAS is the largest specialist charity in Yorkshire supporting people affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. SI Selby has been awarded an IDAS Ambassador Club Certificate in recognition of their support for tackling domestic abuse and are raising awareness of the work of IDAS and working with other Soroptimist Clubs in Yorkshire to support initiatives tackling abuse.



SI Stafford organised and hosted an evening event to highlight The White Ribbon Campaign. 80 people from various organisations, attended the very successful meeting. The speakers were Ikram Butt, White Ribbon Campaign Sports Co-ordinator, Detective Chief Inspector Brownsword from Staffordshire Police, Dickie James Chief Executive Staffordshire Women's Aid and Ann Garvie, Past International President who is also Trustee of The White Ribbon Campaign Scotland.



SI South West and Channel Islands held a very successful "Soroptimists Railing Against Abuse" event in November – the first day of the 16 Days of Activism. 60 Soroptimists and friends travelled by train to Bristol Temple Meads station then walked through Bristol to the Lord Mayor's Chapel, distributing 'Loves me, Loves me not' bookmarks to passers-by (the 10,000 bookmarks were paid for with a grant from the Avon & Somerset PCC's Community Action Fund – for which they were extremely grateful.) At the chapel, they were addressed by the Lord Mayor, a representative of Victim Support and very powerfully, by the Avon and Somerset PCC, Sue Mountstevens, Dame Joan Collins and her daughter, Tara Newley Arkle. South West and Channel Islands Regional President Daphne Dowsing is pictured here at their Regional Meeting presenting Rowan Miller CEO of the Somerset Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre with a gift.



SI Tenby was proud to take part in a 'Safer Pembrokeshire' Exhibition in the Dyfed Powys Police Tent at the Pembrokeshire County Show. Many statutory agencies, such as Border Force, Bawso, Victim Support, Women's Aid and Anti-Drug Abuse were also present. Dr. Anne Kelly, SI Tenby Programme Action Officer for Modern Slavery, showcased the Club's ongoing programme to raise awareness of this heinous crime. SI Tenby was recently mentioned in a report given at the United Nations, for their pioneering work on increasing awareness of modern slavery since 2007. Club Member, Mary Fleming assisted Dr. Kelly in setting up the display prior to the show and throughout Tuesday, with support from three fellow Soroptimists for part of the day.



SI St. Vincent and the Grenadines hosted their annual tea for the elderly at the Methodist Church Hall in Kingstown, on the International Day of Older Persons, with the theme "Stepping into the future: tapping the talents, contributions and participation of the older persons in society." The day celebrates the contributions that older people make to society. President Elect, Josie-Anne Small said that Soroptimists set aside this special time to show respect and appreciation to the elderly and to celebrate their long standing contribution. The 50 guests were entertained by The La Gracia Dance Company, Avenue Dance Company, Ken Isles On Steel Pan and Andre Jackson.

In the MAY issue: STEM Special! Send us your reports on any STEM activities for this special section.

Send us your News!

Please send your Club News to Soroptimist@written-image.com, putting either **Club News** or **Celebrations** in the subject box.

Keep your report concise so that we can include as many as possible – follow the way these reports have been written.

Your photos are very important and we aim to include a photo with every report. However, we can only use high resolution, good quality photos – small photos taken on a standard mobile phone may be too small – iPhone and Samsung phones are usually fine if they are set to a high quality photo. There is no fee.

Celebrations



SI Barry celebrated its 50th anniversary with a Charter Tea, joined by local dignitaries and representatives of organisations they have worked with over the past 50 years. Two original Club Members, Mary Edmunds, Vivien Liles and Diane Dixon were present. Unfortunately a third member with 50 years' membership, Diane Dixon, couldn't be present.



SI Crosby President Elect, Sheila, was delighted to award Shirley Smith with her 25 year long service award at Crosby's business meeting in October. Shirley is a past President and also Captain of SI Crosby's successful bowling team.



SI Croydon was 'born' when a group of women met for lunch at Grant's, a department store, in 1927. Their lunch with drinks cost three shillings (15p). 90 years on the Club they established is thriving, albeit under a different name, since the Association of Venture Clubs amalgamated with Soroptimist International – making SI Croydon and District one of the oldest Clubs.

The 90th celebrations culminated in events over the weekend of the 22nd – 24th September, a more lavish celebration than the Club's 21st birthday when members baked a cake with fruit saved from American food parcels. The weekend's events included a "Hats and Gloves" trip on the Bluebell Railway and a Gala Dinner attended by Cllr. Toni Letts, the Mayor of Croydon, and Federation President, Ann Hodgson. Grace Onions, SI Croydon's President, said that they had entertained 100 guests during the weekend. "There was a great atmosphere throughout the weekend and plaudits have been coming in from many attendees."



SI Edinburgh President, Anna Gordon, President, SI Edinburgh, presented a cheque for the One City Trust, the City Of Edinburgh's charity, to Lord Provost Frank Ross at a recent Civic Reception to celebrate 90 years of the Club's service.



SI Glasgow City President Madeleine presented members Ann Garvie, Heather Thomas and Aileen Martin with their Long Service certificates. The members accrued a total of 113 years of service to SIGBI with all of them having held office at Club level and Ann all the way to President, Soroptimist International.



SI Greater London member, Sandra Donald, invited her fellow Club Members to the launch of her book of poetry, It's Your Time and an album of her songs which she performed. Straight from the heart, Sandra's wonderful poems and songs share the ups and downs of life that anybody might experience, written in the language of today.



SI Harrogate's Honorary Member and Immediate Past President, Pat Shore, was awarded an MBE for Service to the Community, in the Queen's New Year's Honours list, in recognition of 41 years nursing service for the NHS, 11 years as a Trustee for the Citizens Advice Bureau and 23 years of service for SI Harrogate & District. President Nicola said, "Congratulations Pat, you really have helped make a difference to the lives of others."



SI Harrogate held their 84th Annual Lunch at the Spa Hotel, Ripon. 70 guests included the Mayor of Harrogate, Councillor Anne Jones, the Deputy Mayor of Ripon, Councillor Charlie Powell, SI Yorkshire Regional President, Jennie Levick and Thelma de Leeuw, Past International President and member of SI Bingley. President Nicola said, "It has been a lovely day, in stunning surroundings. Thank you to everyone who has come along today to share in the celebrations of the 84th year of our Club and to all those who helped in making this event such a success."



SI Jamaica Kingston's Ellen Campbell Grizzle was invested with the Order of Distinction, Commander Class by the Government of Jamaica on the country's National Heroes Day, October 16, 2017. It was conferred for her contribution to the Profession of Pharmacy in Jamaica and the Caribbean. Ellen, the first Jamaican pharmacist to receive this honour, was President of SIUK 2015-17 and a member since 2011.



SI Mansfield and friends enjoyed a Black Tie and Gorgeous Gowns dinner at the Hostess Restaurant to celebrate their 60th year. The Candle Lighting Ceremony was led by President Diane Milner, lighting the first, for Soroptimist International. Candles were also lit by Region President Sandra Angood, for SIGBI, Sue Goodley representing their Mother Club, SI Nottingham, Janet Spence, SI Kettering, Margaret Bingham, the Club's longest serving member, and Caroline Mason, Joint President of their daughter Club, SI Dukeries.



SI Newcastle upon Tyne arranged several events to commemorate 80 years of their Charter, including an 80 mile walk by Member Chris Young, snapping 80 images of the North East, raising money for victims of the Caribbean hurricanes. Freda Thompson, an historian, delivered a talk titled: 1930s Hopes, Dreams and Reality. President Jill Smith said, "I'm so proud that our Club is celebrating its 80th year. We have a distinguished history, in the service we have undertaken and in the formidable women we have had as members. I hope the Club continues to prosper and that I'm here to celebrate its centenary!"



SI Poole celebrated their 65th Anniversary with a Charter Dinner and welcomed Lady Mayor Lindsay Wilson as an honoured guest. Jane Walker from the Purple Community Fund was the guest speaker, telling of their achievements in the slums of the Philippines and breaking the cycle of poverty through education and welfare programmes.



SI Skipton in Craven celebrated its 50th Anniversary on International Friendship Day. The special guest was Chris Clark, Yorkshire Region's incoming President, who was presented with bags and toiletries for trafficked victims in the Yorkshire Region. Founder Members, in 1956, built a Club Room and two first floor residential flats. The first meeting in this room was on 3rd October 1967 – exactly 18 years after the first Club meeting.