



## Region President Yvonne Johns



As we learn to live with Covid we continue our good work, and the New Members lunch was no exception. Everyone enjoyed the day and I think we all learnt something and made a new friend. The Lottery recipients have been chosen and we had the opportunity to listen to representatives from, "*Mind in the Wirral*," "*Cais*" and "*Flynn's Port in the Storm*" and how they intend to use the funds.

The Regional meeting on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May took "Climate Change" to a different level with two excellent speakers. What happened to our rubbish prompted many questions, as did the presentation about the changes in the weather.

As regards membership, some of the teams are working on new ways of engaging members and at ways of communicating to enable them to join our Region. It was nice to see 6 new members at the Regional meeting. Succession planning and new ways of working is on the agenda with officers preparing a short Guidance Booklet. Clubs are being asked to put together a story board for future use.

In two years' time we will be celebrating 50yrs so a Golden Celebration is surely on the cards. Let's see if we can recruit at least 20 new members within Region and ensure its continuing success. We are a strong well motivated Region with an excellent team of officers working together to do the best they can to support members. Please support them and make use of the Regional Calendar and diary of events.

Please read emails and kindly respond promptly. For those members unable to access please can a club member be delegated to keep them in the loop. Communication is key to a successful Club and Region. Please contact me if you would like me to attend any of your meetings or have suggestions you would like the Region team to consider, we are here for your benefit.

I hope you enjoy the summer break, and the Jubilee celebration bank holiday. Hopefully, I will see you at the River Cruise for a fun filled afternoon in June and at Deeside College in September.

## Anglesey

### Mal Blackburn President SI Anglesey

I have been a member of SI Anglesey for 13 years, 6 of which were as Secretary.

I retired here after over forty years of working in the health and social care sector.

My sister influenced my application for membership. I am an

active volunteer for National Coastwatch (Point Lynas), in our community café (Café Mechell), as a monthly driver for Re-engage (RAF Valley) and a Board member of a homeless charity (Digartref) on Anglesey.

It is a privilege to take the reins for SI Anglesey this year, the last 2 years were difficult for everyone, more so for some of us. We need to find our strength as a Club – we have made a difference to many women and girls across our own communities and further afield through providing equipment, funds, recycling and activities.

Now we have a chance to build on our strengths, become more confident in what we do, expand our friendships and concerns for ourselves as well as the communities we live in and contribute to the Soroptimist pledge to educate, enable and empower women and girls.

Together I hope we can plan activities for the year that we can all contribute to and get satisfaction as well as enjoyment from. We are living in a difficult and strained time but we can continue to make a difference. We need to spread the word about our Club, welcome new members but most importantly, look out for each other.

We can do it!



## Bangor & District

Unfortunately, we do not have a President for this coming year but a rota of Past Presidents will arrange to cover our meetings. A very warm welcome to our two new members Rhian and Ama.

Another busy start to the year. A Cheque was donated to Gorwel, local Women's Refuge supporting over 90 families in the community - this including a kind donation from Waitrose in the sum of £333 total donation £1,622. Donation of £150 to India Covid Appeal and £350 to Ukraine Appeal.

*Vicki Williams, in the absence of President Gudrun presenting cheque to Eirwen from Gorwel.*



We lobbied the Senedd for funding for the Children's Hospices in North Wales.

We continued with our swaps of bottle tops, to be repurposed into plastic furniture; warm clothing and bedding to CEFN refugees; items donated to NW Society for the Blind; jewellery for Alzheimer's Society; Maggie supplied flower baskets for Abbey Road Centre; toiletries to mothers at local Refuge; Foodbank at Bangor Cathedral; and bedding to Penrhyn House.



Marianne organised litter pickers, gloves etc. from Anglesey Sea Zoo for members to collect litter on walks and this coincided with Marianne's Walk the Walk Get Going January event raising over £300 for Breast Cancer Research.

Gudrun and Andrew recently completed the Welsh Slate Trail and raised £440 for the Women's Refuge. Well done!

Looking forward to the coming year and meeting up face to face - so proud that the Club has achieved so much in difficult times. Thank you all.

## Bebington

S.I. Bebington has once again had a busy and enjoyable time, raising funds to support our Presidents' charity, O.A.K.S school in Bo (Overseas Aid for Kids of Sierra Leone)...continuing with our virtual walk to Bo and back and holding charity fairs and concerts.



Forwarding of cheque from charity concert to Laurel O.A.K.S and excerpt of phonic book |



We were able to raise enough money for the salary of three teachers for a year, which was a pleasing outcome. Two of our members have also produced phonic books for the pupils at the school.

As part of S.I.'s 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year, S.I. Bebington has provided comfort bags for parents at our local NeoNatal unit and has now well surpassed our 100 bag target for the year.

We also donated £100 for tree planting at our local church grounds and we support our local R.A.S.A centre (Rape and Sexual Abuse) and Women's Refuge by supplying toiletries, underwear, toys and gifts and essential food supplies.

S.I. Bebington continues to have two presidents. At our recent AGM we had a change of insignia from President Helen to President Barbara. With President Debbie continuing for another year. We had a lovely evening rounded off in true Soroptimist fashion with fizz and cakes and we are all looking forward to another fun and productive year.

### Change of Insignia at AGM 2022



## Birkenhead



Long-standing member Marion Boden has been awarded honorary membership of SI Birkenhead. Members and ex-members gathered at the Hilton hotel in Liverpool to celebrate Marion's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday, enjoying an afternoon tea with prosecco, and then surprised her with her honorary membership certificate.

*(Marion wearing the president's chain – taken in February 2022 at the Williamson Art Gallery and Museum where the club regalia is stored)*

SI Birkenhead has supported the local (Wrexham) charity Teams4U for many years, filling shoe boxes at Christmas and donating to their Develop with Dignity programme supporting girls in Uganda to stay in education by providing washable sanitary pads and providing menstrual health education.

When we discussed what we could do to help with the crisis in Ukraine, we contacted Teams4U as we knew they had worked in Romania for over 15 years and were aware that some Ukrainian refugees were crossing the border into Romania. Program Head, Ziz York, provided a list of items they were accepting and we were able to hand over several bags of goods when she came to speak at our April dinner meeting.

Ziz had just returned from visiting Teams4U projects in Sierra Leone and spoke eloquently about her experience there before updating us on the recent trip to Romania and Ukraine by founder, Dave Cook, which included visits to an orphanage and a displaced women's shelter, both in Ukraine. They had also transported 46 donated hospital beds to a hospital in Kyiv.



*(Ziz's car with items for Ukraine donated to Teams4U)*

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## Chester

### President Gillie O'Rourke

This month Chester Soroptimists welcomed Gillie O'Rourke as their new President. At a private dinner she thanked Geraldine Gars, the outgoing President.



Unfortunately, the Insignia could not be handed over as it is currently away for repair.



Geraldine, pictured with IPP, Deborah Hagan, was given a voucher for £100 from members for her chosen charity Kiva loans.

Gillie said "It has been an extremely difficult year (indeed 2 years) for everyone. Due to ongoing lockdowns and restrictions meant that the Club was not able to meet properly until November and, even then, there was (and remains) an understandable hesitancy to attend these face to face meetings. Our Immediate Past President (now new Club Secretary) Geraldine was instrumental in establishing the hybrid meetings which have meant that members who could not attend in person are (were) able to at least listen to proceedings."

Gillie went on to outline her priorities and focus for the coming year saying "We need to raise our profile both locally and within Region so that people know who we are and what we, in Chester, are about. To do this we need look for realistic opportunities to establish contacts and working partnerships with businesses, the hospital, hospices, other Women's organisations and the Police. We have a new team of Officers who have some excellent ideas about how we progress and I am looking forward very much to working with them."

Reporting on just one activity, we began sewing bags for life and distributing them with food donated by members to local food banks. The Sewing Bee will continue to make items for sale to raise club funds such as quilted casserole carriers and reusable sanitary wear.

# Denbigh, Ruthin & District

Meet the Chair / Presidents



As we are a small band of ladies, only 10 in number, it has been decided that we shall share the honour, each one in turn will chair a monthly meeting, thus spreading the load but still continuing with the usual lively debates.

One of our main focuses this year is to support Ukrainian families who come into our area. Rather than send a large amount to the main charity we intend to give out bespoke parcels to meet each family's needs.

Our other longstanding charities will not miss out, they will still receive our continued support. Like most organisations we see and feel the pressure of fundraising. We are almost becoming a cashless society which alters the way in which the general public make donations. The global economic crisis is already taking its toll on the balance of a family's disposable income thus causing major concerns for all.

As always, we will continue to do what we can, when we can, where we can, using as many old creaky bones that will have the ability to obey the willing mind. Another tough year ahead for us all.

Good wishes to all our sister clubs in their endeavours in this our first year of strange and uncertain freedom.

# Ellesmere Port

**President Lisa** now takes up the reins at SI Ellesmere Port from IPP Dorothy Cartwright MBE.



Lisa was previously a member of SI Widnes before joining our club where she has had various club roles in membership / communications.

In her professional life she is an environmental sustainability manager in the legal sector having recently moved from Vauxhall. She has a 2yr old daughter (future Soroptimist) and lives in Ellesmere Port. Lisa will continue to support Maggie's as her charity this year, as well as looking to get involved in local causes and continue to maintain the good links we have with Flynn's.

## PORT IN THE STORM



We have recently donated a further thousand pounds to "Maggie's" which is very close to our hearts.

Members volunteer at Flynn's Port in the Storm Mental Health Centre an amazing charity which has recently been awarded Charitable Status and some of us

have become trustees. We were delighted to win the Regions Mental Health competition for Cheshire with our project on Flynn's.

We have sent our final consignment of Back Packs to Mary Meals who we will continue to support by having our annual Porridge morning.

## Heswall & District

Since the last newsletter, the club have been continually active with a mixture of zoom and face to face meetings. A club Development Newsletter has kept members in touch, and the club has continued to support the Foodbank, Mary's Meals, and Breast Cancer Research. Also, thanks to a scheme run by Wirral Borough Council, we planted five fruit trees on Gayton field.

Recently at our Charity Dinner, we were delighted to present cheques to representatives from Tomorrow's Women, Wirral Parkinson's Association and Help Health International, this year's Presidents chosen charities.



At our recent AGM and Change of Insignia, Retiring Joint Presidents Cynthia Duggan and Jenny Wilson welcomed new Joint Presidents Sandra Morris and Iris Batman.



Sandra and Iris's theme for the year is "Fun, Friendship and Service" and have planned a remarkably interesting and exciting programme for the year ahead, including a Jubilee event and Charity Garden Party.

Chosen Presidents Charities for this year are Bees for Development and Wirral Fund for Children with Special needs.

We wish Sandra and Iris a very happy and successful year in office.

## Llandudno & District

The club has three Presidents taking a four month term each this year.

**Pam Farr, Cynthia Poyser and Mary Longworth**



They have organised a varied and interesting programme during which we will be celebrating the club's 60<sup>th</sup> charter anniversary in October.

Several members along with representatives of Haven of Light CIC helped North Wales Police visiting hotels in Llandudno to raise awareness and asking them to be vigilant for signs of modern slavery.

We had a speaker from Wales Blood Bikes who told us about their valuable work transporting blood products, test samples, drugs and baby milk.

Via Zoom in January, we were updated on families being supported by Chernobyl Children's Lifeline. This was before Russia invaded Ukraine and the charity now helps families in crisis due to the war; several members helped on a jewellery stall at the Llandudno Christmas market and at the Extravaganza, fundraising for them. We held another cake sale, raising £400 for Mary's Meals which was match funded, doubling the amount.

Three new members have been enrolled, Liz, Sue and Melynda. Several members have joined the Friends of Happy Valley, helping with gardening and litter picking. We were asked to help with a local clothes bank, ran as part of Conwy Food Bank so volunteers have been sorting, washing and ironing clothes.

President Janet finished her year with a Welsh themed friendship evening with Welsh themed food and decorations. We had a speaker who told us about inspirational Welsh women in history.

# Nantwich & District

## SPRING NEWS 2022

Members are all delighted to be getting back to normal with our bi-monthly meetings in our new venue, which we are all delighted with, and which was brought about by the closure of the Hotel we used over many years.

The picture below is of a bench in Nantwich Square which we have 'yarn bombed' as part of Dementia Action Week.



The week aims to raise awareness and offer support to people and their families who are living with dementia. This is being organised by a committee aiming to make Nantwich dementia friendly and Soroptimists are members of this committee. Members also help out at the highly successful Thursday club which provides social activities and a cafe to people living with dementia and their carers. Recently the cafe was presented with a 'Salt of the Earth' award by the Mayor.

We supported International Women's Day event organised by a local organisation called Motherwell at South Cheshire College.

We are also working with Motherwell to find places in Nantwich who will stock free period products for women who find themselves suffering period poverty.

We have continued to support the Crewe YMCA, and pleased to be able to supply Easter Eggs again for the children of some local single parent families suffering in these harsh economic times.

Pleased to say our membership is increasing! We have recently enrolled 2 new members and are also welcoming others who we hope will become members of SI.

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# Northwich

Following the start of our new club year, we are continuing to run the club on flexible management, with the help of club members.

During the last few months as a club we have worked with other organisations in a local churchyard – helping to clear the same, working with the environment and promoting SI.

We also supported Northwich Community Support, a local charity, by providing over 50 selection boxes at Christmas and 50 Easter Eggs for children in local schools.

We have provided crockery for CWA (a charity that works with victims of Domestic Violence in our area) for 2 new houses, that they are furnishing, and had a very interesting talk from them about the changes in the organization moving forward.

We held a Fair Trade Evening, during Fairtrade Fortnight providing information about the work of Fairtrade, fairtrade products to buy and a raffle with the proceeds for Traidcraft – the charity associated with Fair Trade.

Our major project for the Federation Year to October 2022 is Recycle and Reuse. This is an ongoing project to save items from landfill or incineration to benefit the environment.



We started in October 2021 collecting items to include crisp packets, (which are made into bags which homeless people can use) and blister packs, soft plastics, plastic bottle tops, printer cartridges, and spectacles which are sent to organisations who can reuse them.

We are looking for suggestions for any other items that can be included in our project – any suggestions welcome.

## Rhyl & District



### President Barbara Roberts

It is an honour and privilege to be President of S. I. Rhyl & District for 2022/2023 and I hope that it will be as successful as previous years (a hard act to follow).

My background was working in the NHS and Victim Support. I have been involved in the voluntary sector, having served on a County Council for many

years; part of the time I was Chair of Social Services, hence my choice for my nominated charity North Wales Superkids.

I feel that by supporting these disadvantaged children we will be helping many women who are bringing children up in very difficult circumstances, my other charity is one that we have supported for six years in Masaka. The dormitory for girls is finished but there are several things needed to complete the project and we want to see it through to completion.

Recycling and the environment is something we all feel very passionate about. Rhyl club has been very busy throughout the year collecting blister packs and bottle tops to be recycled to make garden furniture by Plastecowood. Beach cleans have been undertaken and will continue once a month at various sites.

Upgrading an overgrown hospital garden is still ongoing. This is something that earned us the Barbara Dixon award and we all feel immensely proud of this as it involved all club members in the planning etc.

**Now cleared we have a large area to plant – 14 m x 14 m**



Last year we worked hard to fundraise for IPP Sylvia's project which was the local hospice St Kentigern and raised £1,500.

Club continues to promote activities both on Facebook and by getting articles printed in the local paper.

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## Runcorn, Frodsham & District

### Great to be together again.

Our Christmas party was a great evening - Christmas dinner and fun and games! Our annual quiz is always a huge success and raises a good amount for our projects and charities so it was wonderful to be able to organise the event again this year.



As you can see from the photo it was well attended and we were delighted to welcome Walter Yule as our Quizmaster. A great evening enjoyed by all our clever quiz teams.



100 for 100 – We did it! Our Mastectomy Comfort Cushion programme is our stand out project and to celebrate the Soroptimist centenary we made and delivered one hundred cushions to Halton and the Countess of Chester hospitals. This is ongoing and we are now onto our next hundred.

Other events have included a very enjoyable 74<sup>th</sup> Charter Lunch to which we welcomed family and friends. Members also enjoyed a walk and presentation about 'Unlock Runcorn' – around the canals and old locks of the town.

We were pleased that again we were able to organise floodlighting of the Mersey Gateway Bridge in Suffragette colours to mark International Women's Day.

The first event of the new Club year was our annual 'Fair Trade Picnic' at our meeting venue - Castle Park Arts Centre in Frodsham, we were pleased that Region Vice President Gillie O' Rourke joined us for the evening.

# South Caernarfonshire

The lead up to 2022 has had it's challenges for our Club after the covid pandemic. Restrictions have impacted our ability to hold meetings and events face to face apart from a few that we have managed to hold outside in between lockdowns. But still we have kept going through the wonders of the internet.

We are meeting for our AGM this year for the first time since 2019 and enjoy our end of year dinner, always a highlight at the end of the Soroptimist year. Another year with no President, so each month is put together by 2 members.

Fundraising has been put on the back burner for 2 years but we were able to donate £379 to the SANDS charity and for the Regional Project through our cake stall in July.

Through the Club we raised £224 from members to buy trees to plant for the SIGBI centenary. We planted local heritage fruit trees in four schools on the Lley and in Criccieth Community Garden Project in the hope of preserving our heritage trees for future generations.



In February we had a talk from Pwllheli Food Bank and just before Christmas we gave them basic supplies and a donation of £130.

An appeal went out from our cottage hospital for jigsaws for dementia patients so we donated £68 for jigsaws and a diffuser for the ward. We have also donated £100 to the DEC and £100 via the Polish Soroptimists for the Ukraine appeal and £100 for the starving children of Afghanistan.

The newsletter also includes:

Page 9

Article on SI Wallasey

1946—2022

Page 10

Details of Jubilee River Cruise

11th June 2022

## SI Wallasey 1946—2022

Despite the last 2 years of Covid restrictions, Members celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Club's chartering in October with a much enjoyed quiet afternoon tea.



However, viability of the Club had begun to be in doubt as it was evident that filling essential roles in coming years was unlikely.

Following much discussion at an EGM in March, regrettably and sadly, the vote was unanimous for Club closure.



As with many organisations, membership had declined over the years despite valiant efforts at recruitment and retention.

Even with a small membership, Programme Action remained our main focus – caring for the environment and commitment to the wellbeing of women and girls.

Friendship has been an important factor and we hope to continue those friendships by meeting socially from time to time.

Work is still on-going tying up finances and organising archiving of memorabilia and regalia.

Our final Programme Action will be donations - £100 has gone to Water Aid; and the remaining will be shared between Tomorrows Women Wirral and the local Foodbank as need for both are likely to increase due to the current rapidly rising cost of living.

Adding to our sadness was the death of Member Elizabeth Kerr Munslow on 18<sup>th</sup> March. A retired senior scrub nurse in the theatre at Arrowe Park Hospital, she celebrated her 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in December. Elizabeth had been a member for 15 years diligently taking on the role of Dinner Secretary, rarely missing a Club or Region meeting, and attending Federation Conferences. An avid knitter (she could even knit travelling in the back of the car), she was part of the Club's Craft Group making quality items for sale on the stalls which she enjoyed staffing.

What of the other 11 members? At the time of writing, three have transferred to Heswall and District with a potential fourth, and one will join a Soroptimists' e-club. The remaining six have resigned.

We salute all those members who, over the last 75 years, have worked tirelessly to improve the lives of women and girls locally, nationally, and internationally.

*Stella McKay-Moffat*

# Jubilee River Cruise



**Full Steam Ahead to Celebrate Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's  
Platinum Jubilee**

**Saturday 11 June 2022, 2.30 - 5.30pm, £26.00.**

**A lovely afternoon cruising along the River Dee with friends, family and fellow  
Soroptimists – what could be nicer?**

**Plus a chance to win some lovely prizes *if* you decide to**

**Dress like a Royal – or wear your best jubilee hat or crown**

**Take part in the quiz or buy some raffle tickets**

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**Buffet with unlimited cups of tea and coffee. Licenced Bar.  
(Special dietary requests are served separately.)**

**For those with mobility issues assisted access *to the main deck* is available.  
Stairs to access top and lower decks.**

**(Toilets are *on the main deck.*)**

Booking form available by email from [wendythompson@uwclub.net](mailto:wendythompson@uwclub.net) 07848838133