

Immediate Past President Janet Murfin

Report - January 2025

A Happy New Year to you all. I hope you all had a lovely Christmas and are ready for the year ahead. Due to feeling so well, I was able to enjoy Christmas Day helping at the Salvation Army with the Christmas lunches which was lovely. I also did some collecting with the army band in Llandudno during the run up to Christmas which I love doing. That really is a joy. I was also pleased to join Rhyl Club and the Rhyl Salvation Army Band, at Glan Clwyd Hospital, in Rhyl's garden. This was to sing carols by the café for the patients and staff. I personally was very moved at how well this was received, with visitors, staff and patients joining in. I noticed some people were overcome with emotion. I think carols and the army band does make one feel emotional about Christmas time and perhaps, patients missing their families. Rhyl's garden looked lovely even though it was winter and so well established now. A testament to Rhyl's hard work, to bring joy to the patients and staff of the hospital.

I have started this new year with a new age – 70! Can't quite believe it but very blessed that I've reached it. Had a lovely celebration with my family and friends and I give thanks to my soroptimist club for all their best wishes too. We also celebrated another Llandudno member's 90th birthday. Jane Lloyd-Hughes whose birthday was the end of December. Club members made an afternoon tea at Jane's home to celebrate this special occasion. Best wishes to Jane who has been a committed Soroptimist for many years.

But now to business! You may recall at the last regional meeting, I mentioned Llandudno club were having a plaque erected on our Town Hall, dedicated to a lady called Martha Hughes-Cannon, who originally was from Llandudno. This lady and her family went to America when she was a small child and settled in Utah. The family were Mormons. Briefly, she went onto become a Doctor of Medicine and she also had a degree in chemistry. She fought hard for women's rights and issues surrounding public health and children's health. She married and became the 4th wife of Angus Cannon as he was a mormon. She supported women's suffrage and spoke at many congresses. She taught nursing courses, and then she stood for senator in Salt Lake, standing against her husband. She defeated her husband and was the first woman elected as a senator in the US. She went on to do many other things for women and girls. On the day her plaque was unveiled on the



Town Hall in Llandudno (11th Dec), a statue was unveiled in Washington in the Emancipation Hall. We were able to watch this live. Martha's great grand daughter spoke as did many other people. They referred to her as "Maddie". Please do look her up on google as her life story is very interesting. She is a local lady who did a lot for women and girls. Her plaque is a short distance from the plaque Llandudno club had placed on the Coco House, to commemorate where the first Suffragists met in North Wales. The sculptor Andy Edwards, who made our plaque, was also at the unveiling. He is well known for the Beatles sculpture in Liverpool.

I attended the South Caernarfon Carol service and their charter lunch. This is such a wonderful event which I was unable to attend in my Presidents year. It was a joy to attend. Fortunately the weather was quite good too.

Llandudno club held our annual mince pies, mulled wine and presents for the Conwy Women's Refuge just before Christmas. We ask them for a list of the things they need eg babies clothes, ages of the children in the refuge so we can buy the appropriate toys etc. Fiona and Janet come along and update us on their work over the past year in the Conwy Domestic Abuse Service. We have done this for some years now and have a very good relationship with them. We are invited to their AGMs aswell. Now we have our clothing bank, we can provide clothes if required for the women or baby clothes etc.

They are very dedicated women who love the work they do. They care so much about their clients and the children to of course. Having seen their work over the years, was one of the reasons I wanted some of my Wingwalk money to go to the domestic abuse services in our region. And the clothing banks and food banks that our Soroptimists run/support. They all link in together. I am just waiting for good weather so I can book my Wingwalk flight which I am so looking forward to.

On Monday 13th January, I have a meeting with our Regional President Kath, Regional Secretary Pat, Regional Finance Director at the Holiday Inn in Ellesmere Port. I am looking forward to getting back to work after the "party" season.

I hope this year will be a good year for our region and for you personally.

In friendship

Janet Murfin IPP