



Region President Kathryn Lewis

Thank you to all who attended the Region meeting in February, we achieved a lot in the workshops and had two very interesting and engaging presentations one from Rhyl on their project submitted for last year's Barbara Dixon award, and one from Chester on Baby boxes. Deborah, SIGBI Director for PR & Marketing gave a presentation on navigating the Hub, where you can access tips and advice on using social media and marketing.



I had pleasure in presenting a long service award, 40 yrs, to Associate Member Dorothy Cartwright MBE. It is lovely to present these awards to dedicated members who have contributed so much to Soroptimism and continue to do so.

I have been privileged to attend Llandudno and Anglesey Charter lunches and so inspiring to see many members attend these from the region. Lots of chatting, laughing and of course delicious food. We have a few clubs celebrating Diamond charters this year which is wonderful. I unfortunately missed Rhyl's 60th in May as I was at my youngest Son's wedding in Haymarket. Janet Murfin kindly stood in as Regional Past President.

The wedding was both fabulous and very poignant - my new Daughter-in-Law lost her Dad in January, but they made sure he was represented, and her Mum gave her away. I was pleased to have made both wedding rings from family gold, so they had a mix of great-great and great and grandparent rings that we melted down.

There is a slight change to our meeting in June. We have SIGBI PA Director attending to give a Board update and be present for our afternoon workshop. Our speaker in the morning has cancelled but we have a last-minute speaker step in. I thank our officers and reps for making some great suggestions for speakers and I am hoping to book them for our next meetings. We currently have 41 members attending, our lowest for a long time. Let me know what we could do better for you.

I am looking forward to seeing many of you over the next months and joining you in some of your meetings - please invite me to come along.

Anglesey

President Gillian Parry 2025-2026



On this our 60th Anniversary year I have been given the honour of being President for the fourth time. During my membership of almost 45 years I also served as Treasurer and Luncheon Secretary.

My main Charity is Action for Children supporting Young Carers on Anglesey. There are so very many young children who must support and assist their families to enable general everyday living, thereby missing out on the ability to pursue outside interests or just the opportunity to play.

I would like the Club to support our usual projects but above all to help each other. Life is so hectic we can miss a members needs and sometimes this is more important than outside charities.

Try always to be patient, kind and thoughtful. A very wise lady told me once 'Walk a mile in another man's shoes' - how true.

I am looking forward to a very happy and successful year sharing with joint President and President Elect Rebecca Ode.

Bangor & District

President

Our Executive Committee will undertake Presidential responsibilities for this year.

Fundraising 2024/25

Congratulations President Diane and members for a fantastic amount raised this year for Breast Cancer Care at Ysbyty Gwynedd. A **£7,870** cheque was accepted by Kirsty Thompson, Head of Fundraising at Ysbyty Gwynedd in addition to **£500** cheque for the Colorectal West Fund. Fundraising throughout the year amounted to **over £10,000** with donations to Ty Gobaith, Macmillan Cancer Care, RNLI, N Wales Society of the Blind. Donations/items e.g. foodbanks, and Women's Refuge also benefitted.

Honorary Member

Mavis Evans, longstanding member, Past President and Mothers Union lead was awarded honorary membership for outstanding and exemplary contribution at club meetings during the Covid pandemic.

Cardmaking Project in memory of Julie Lewis

A group of club members came together to design a pack of notelets to sell for club fundraising



events based on the inspiration of recently passed club member Julie Lewis.

Aloha! A fabulous charity evening of fun and friendship was held at Mixopoly Bangor Cricket Club recently. With a Hawaiian theme we were entertained



by Wynne Roberts Chaplain at Ysbyty Gwynedd AKA **Elvis** with his wonderful Elvis favourites! The Big Raffle draw was made by President Diane assisted by Andy - a great evening!

Y Nyth - Wellbeing Room for local vulnerable children

Members donated various essential items for the wellbeing of children at Y Nyth, Bangor. Programme Action Lead Susan Waters coordinated with group leaders to ensure practical items were collected and delivered. Christmas gift boxes were also provided.

Sadly our lovely friend Enid Griffith has passed away at 102 years of age.

Bebington

It has been another busy time for the club. Our major fundraisers are our Christmas Fayre and Wirral Singers concert, totalling nearly £2,500 to support our charities, below.



Our president Laurel is currently at OAKS school in Sierra Leone, with supplies, including the second phonetic reading book designed by a local Grammar school on the Wirral, and produced by members Laurel and Penni.

We continue to support Neo natal babies through our local hospital, Incubabies and 4Louis. We supply comfort bags for families, sanitary products for mothers and we help with bereavement services.

At our local RASA, we regularly supply shopping vouchers, toiletries, toys, books and crayons, and sweets (including Easter Eggs).

We support Lend with Care and have helped 58 women entrepreneurs and their families, in places such as South America, Vietnam and Africa, with projects including farming, retail and manufacturing. We have made 18 loans, totalling £1,065, 6 of which have been fully repaid. These loans have helped create 73 jobs, involving 203 people.

We are proud that one of our members, Cherry, is currently Mayor of Wirral, and she recently invited us for an Afternoon Tea in the Town Hall, to thank our club for their support to her and her charities this year. This was one of our many fun, social events.



We are also proud to have Gillie O'Rourke as one of our members, who is due to become Federation President at Conference in November this year.

Chester

SI Chester were very proud to receive the following email and certificate for the work that they do with TWC.

On behalf of Soroptimist International, I am pleased to inform you that your Club's outstanding project 'Sewing Classes with Tomorrow's Women Chester' has been selected as an exemplary initiative and included in SI's International Day of Education. Joseph Mason, Advocacy and Communications Coordinator, Soroptimist International



Susan Haywood and Wendy Thompson have provided classes for about two years on a regular monthly basis which facilitates women to machine sew and cut. They have made such items as tote bags, aprons, lavender bags and cushion covers. However, it is not all about the sewing as the women chat about their conditions and life choices.

Close to our hearts is Helping Hands for Ukraine. President Penny, and her husband Danny, frequently make deliveries to Hampshire with collections and, in fact, took a van on a 4000 mile round trip to Lublin, Poland. The Club has collected fridges, washing machines, bicycles, school books, wheelchairs and walking aids etc. We also collected knickers for the SIGBI 90 for 90. Fundraising has been a priority to help Gerrie Bayley (HHU) set up a new therapy centre in Horchuck in NW Ukraine near Boradyanka.



We continue to support a Cambodian student, Chantra Savy, who will now complete her final year at University. Fundraising for the four years has been a challenge but we wish her well with her final exams.

Heswall & District

It was celebrations all round at the recent AGM of Heswall, as President Iris Batman completed her year by presenting long service awards to two members of the club, Norma Beaumont and Pam Dowell, who had both completed 40 years as members of SI Heswall.

Congratulations also went to Marjorie Wood-Griffiths who has been a member of Heswall for 56 years. Photographed here with Membership officer Cynthia Duggan.



Following a very successful 75th Charter year, President Iris thanked the club for their support and help in raising money for her charities, the NEO Community in Rock Ferry, a centre that works within the community tackling food insecurity at grass roots and Helping Hands for Ukraine, who deliver vital aid and medical supplies to those impacted by the war.

This year the club's chosen charities are Merseyside Dementia Friendly Radio and Neema Children's Home, Kenya. The club will continue to support the Food Bank with donations, volunteering at Hoylake Cottage Care Home with gardening, Mary's meals and raising awareness of Domestic Violence by manning stalls in local supermarkets.

Members were fortunate to have received an invitation from the Mayor of Wirral Cherry Povall, a member of SI Bebington to attend an Afternoon Tea at Wallasey Town Hall, which was enjoyed by all.



It will be a challenging year for Heswall who will be working on Flexible Management so with the help of the clubs planning committee, a varied and interesting programme of Speakers and social events has been arranged for 2025/2026.

With no elected President this year the club will be sharing the running of meetings and events.

Llandudno & District

Member Joanne organised a jewellery cleaning and good, better, best friendship evening where attendees guessed the value of pearls with informative explanations.

Sue Evans was a speaker who collects miniatures at her home and came to demonstrate the intricacies of the very small items. Later in the year, we viewed the collection and had a delicious afternoon tea, with proceeds to Ty Gobaith.

We had an excellent outing to the 1950s museum in Denbigh, where members recognised exhibits from their younger days, followed by lunch at Tweedmill. Members ran an open day for Conwy Clothing Bank at the newly opened Church Hall which was very successful.

We had two Christmas Craft sessions, organised by Melynda, to make items to sell at the Regional Meeting and our Coffee morning. Knitted poppies were sold in aid of the Royal British Legion raising £949, well done to Sandy and her team.

Christmas activities included a get-together with staff from the local domestic abuse centre to give gifts and collecting pyjamas for children in hospital. Our Christmas party was held at Llandudno's Magic Bar and the club hosted the ceremony to unveil a plaque to Martha Hughes Cannon who was born in Llandudno and became the first female US Senator.

Our Annual lunch was a very pleasant occasion and we had a walk on Llandudno promenade for International Women's Day. We recently had an excellent guided heritage walk of Llandudno organised by the Museum.

Photos are of our four pairs of two Presidents who will do 3 months each and of the afternoon tea at the home of Sue Evans.



Nantwich & District

Over Christmas 2 decorated trees were displayed in churches of Nantwich & Acton, to raise awareness of Soroptimism. £100 was donated towards the Christmas lunch scheme for people alone on Christmas Day; a donation of £200 towards Cheshire Without Abuse; members also gave private donations to several charities.

On IWD several members supported Crewe Charity 'Motherwell' exhibiting at our Local Higher Education College, which was open to the public, with several interesting speakers on various aspects of women's lives.



Annually we collect Easter eggs and 78 were donated to the YMCA for children they support; we support CLASP whose aim is to reach out offering specialist support and friendly encouragement to single parent families, with progression from crisis to wholeness and a positive future for the whole family.

We have monthly dinner meetings - recently 2 members of the 'Blood Bikes' organisation, with the 'exemplar' bike! gave a talk on their demanding and voluntary work; a donation of £195 was made. Other speakers have included 'THE TECH MAN' about safe 'on-line' shopping; various charities describing their work; A Nantwich Museum talk on Helen MacFarlane, feminist, Chartist and Philosopher, who first translated the Community Manifesto into English!

On Monday 9th June at 7.00 pm Our Charter Dinner will be held at Richmond Village; all members in the Region are invited. Our guest speaker Gary Fear, local humanitarian hero, will make a presentation on his experiences providing aid in Ukraine over the last three years which the Club has been supporting.

Vi Pritchard It is with great sadness that we report her sudden death, a long-standing and most valued member of the Nantwich Club. Dr Vi had been involved with Soroptimism for many years, having been both Club and Regional President, and many will have known her as a personal friend. Vi continued to be an involved member attending her last business meeting on 10th March when by happy coincidence Vi was able to witness her daughter Sue accept a cheque from the Soroptimist Club in support of the local food bank. Vi remained interested and aware of all matters 'Soroptimism' to the end - a cause clearly very dear to her. She will be sorely missed.



Vi's funeral at St James the Great Church in Audlem was uplifting and was very well attended. Much of the ceremony, had been chosen by Vi herself! There was a strong emphasis on service to others: a true Soroptimist to the end! The Nantwich and District Club hopes to undertake some commemorative activity to acknowledge Vi's long involvement with, and contribution to, Soroptimism.

Northwich

Over the last year we have concentrated on things to celebrate the 75 anniversary of the club.

These have included – planting 300 daffodil bulbs outside our meeting venue, as well as making



donations of 75 Christmas bags to Northwich Community Support for hampers; 75 items to the Foodbank; 75 books x 2 to charity; 75 items to the Dogs Trust; 75 items to charity shops x 4; 75 lessons to Riding for the disabled and 75 volunteer hours; 75 items to charity shops x 4 and knitting 75 hats for the Salvation Army.

In addition, 75 bags of soft plastics and coffee pods have been recycled, and 75 cards made to sell for charity.

2 members also sampled 75 gins and planted 75 pots with flowers to improve wellbeing.

Finally £210 was raised at a coffee morning to donate to MyCWA, working with women affected by Domestic Abuse. We also collected stamps to donate to Motherwell and bottle tops to donate to region for the regional project.



Over the year members joined with SI Nantwich to mark The UN day for elimination of violence against women by handing out leaflets and information at the book shop in Nantwich and also at an event on International Women's Day hosted by Her-Place (formerly Motherwell) in Crewe.

We are now continuing without a President, with all members considering Programme Action for the year ahead.

Rhyl & District

President Barbara Roberts



I feel honoured once again to accept the role as President and to represent the club during our 60th Anniversary Celebrations. Ruth Healey SIGBI President attended our Charter Lunch which gave members a chance to meet with her.

One of my chosen charities is Maggie's the new unit based at Ysbyty Glan Clwyd. Maggie's centres are a place where people who are diagnosed with cancer can come and meet others experiencing the same issues, find support groups specific to their needs and get advice and information from their professional staff. It is anticipated to organise a joint North Wales event to raise funds for this project.

My other charity is continuing with the Masaka School Girls Dormitory in Uganda. To complete the project we hope to raise sufficient funds to help provide washroom facilities for the girls and female staff. SI Masaka regularly visit the project on our behalf. Pearl Roberts continues to raise funds through the sale of her knitting.

Ysbyty Glan Clwyd Garden Project - Plastecowood, recycled plastic wood products, has donated a bench to SI Rhyl & District for the garden. In recognition of our on-going work the area will, in future be known as **"The Soroptimist Garden"**

We received a certificate from Soroptimist International, for our Club's outstanding project delivering a "One-Pot Cookery Course" at the NW Women's Centre which has been selected as an exemplary initiative and included in SI's work on the International Day of Education.

Three members have been awarded certificates for service, Joyce Evans 45 years, Doreen Jones, Shirley Jones and Esther Roberts have each accomplished 25 years.

Runcorn, Frodsham & District

As we begin the new year of our flexibly managed Club, we reflect on our past year and things that went well or that we could do better and look forward to the year ahead.

We were very pleased with the outcomes of the Mayoress's visit in the Autumn, when we heard about the Halton Foundation Charity which provides bursary opportunities for the young people of our Borough.



We gave a generous donation to this charity and have been invited by the Mayor and Mayoress to several prestigious events which has helped to raise our profile.

Flexible management of our Club means having three key officers - Secretary, Treasurer and Programme Action Officer. Every other member of the club takes a turn at chairing meetings and leading events.

Programme Action is very important to us, and again every member of the Club is involved. We have a PA officer and a small PA team to steer project work.

We continue with our very successful Mastectomy Comfort Cushion project always receiving huge thanks from the hospitals, and recently received via our Facebook page this lovely comment from the recipient of a cushion -

'I am benefitting greatly from my cushion known as my lucky horseshoe cushion or my bosom buddy. Perfect for keeping my arm away from the scars. Thank you for caring and having the needlecraft skills.'



South Caernarfonshire

Unfortunately, once again we have no President to lead us through the year 2025/2026. We have very resilient members who will each take a month as a pair to chair and organise both business and speaker events. Each pair will also organise the catering for that month.

We have a pending new member which will eventually put our numbers up!

We have experienced another amazing year, and we extend our gratitude to all members for their unwavering support of events and for their contributions in raising funds for numerous charitable causes.

We are continuing to support CYFLE, an initiative that supports individuals aged 16 to 24 to live independently. Whenever they are in need of bedding or household goods we try to supply it for them.

Throughout the year, numerous Business, Executive, and Regional Meetings have been well attended. We had another successful Christmas Carol service and charter lunch in Portmerion in December which was also well attended as usual.

We've sung in nursing homes in spring, summer and carols at Christmas. We have a full programme to enjoy and have some exciting speakers in the coming year so we are all looking forward to the months ahead. We are a friendship club and we cherish the opportunity to get together with friends and new friends around the Region.

Our charities this year are Cyfle, the local food bank, Guide Dogs for the Blind and Water Aid.

Part of our Easter egg collection for the Pwllheli Foodbank.

