

President Pat's Patter



Hellooo....!

We have had such positive feedback from so many people, about Signal, I really appreciate the involvement of our club members, all making comments and ideas, and sending photographs, especial thanks to Barbara and Sue for making it possible. We have all had quite a year!

Since the last publication a friendship trip to Itzehoe was a huge success, then the SIGBI Conference in Malta allowed some of us to enjoy the sunshine, and deliver our Literacy award presentation, also to meet up with old friends, including Gail from South Africa, and meet with new friends.

The combined charities sale in the Corn Hall allowed us to add to our funds for local charities, the theme was Christmas Puddings.

The Literacy awards at the RAU, were a resounding success, the children were delightful and the Mayor and John Dougherty (The Children's author) were a hilarious double act. Congratulations to Anne and Judith for picking up the Literacy baton from Margaret and Marietta and arriving at the winner's post!!



One of our members joined "The Railing against abuse" Train to Bristol to mark UN day for zero tolerance of violence against women, all dressed in orange! They marched through Bristol to the Women's aid HQ where the National and Domestic Abuse helpline is manned.

An information stand at the Cirencester 6th Form Innovation and Enterprise networking day, was a real opportunity to meet with young people in our town and hear hopes and aspirations for their future.

So many of our members knitted the Christmas pudding chocolate holders ready for the sale at the Parish church on Saturday 10th December, we do hope that you were able to come and say hello and maybe buy a pudding.



Our Christmas Party at the Thames Head Inn on the 7th December, was our fund raising event for local charities, and our "Joyful giving" for the international Meru Gardens charity in Kenya. It was a fun evening, including a visit from Father Christmas!

At this festive time, we remember our members who are sick, and need a compassionate ear, and those members who have sadly lost family, our hearts go out to you.

Happy Christmas, to our AMAZING team.
Yours in friendship

Pat

The Literacy Awards 2016



Cirencester Soroptimists were delighted to welcome children from local primary schools to their Annual Literacy Competition Awards Evening on 18th November 2016 at the Royal Agricultural University. The children with their families and teachers were welcomed by Pat Wright, President of SI Cirencester and District and enjoyed an entertaining reading by the children's author John Dougherty. Awards were presented by Councillor Mark Harris, Mayor of Cirencester after which refreshments were served and books were signed.



The Literacy Competition was established by members of Soroptimist International of Cirencester and District seven years ago in pursuit of its objective to "Educate, Empower and Enable" women and children worldwide. All primary schools in the Cirencester District are welcome to enter as many children as they wish in age categories from Year 1-6. It has grown in popularity each year and this year attracted over 1,000 entries, all of which were read and assessed by four club members with final adjudication by an experienced English teacher

Nature Quiz

This Barn Owl trophy has been especially sculpted for the Nature and Wildlife Quiz by Peter Walwin a renowned local wildlife sculptor. He has waived his fee as it is for the Wildlife Trust which is very generous of him. It is the new trophy for the third placed school in the County Final and replaces the picture previously awarded which has been around for a long time and is very tired! The plinth on which the owl sits is about 6 inches by 5 inches with enough space for schools to add their names and a plaque denoting the Award.



The first and second placed schools in the County Final also receive sculptures of Barn owls but in oak, much larger and of different sizes.

Our grateful thanks go to Peter Walwin for the presentation of this beautiful gift to the Nature Quiz. Peter Walwin is involved with the Nature in Art museum at Twigworth, Gloucestershire.

Annie

Malta Conference (Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI))

Six members of the Club attended the Federation Conference in Malta in November. Soroptimist International of Malta put on a happy, well-organised event for us all and the island provided warm, sunny weather to encourage us to see the sights outside.



The highlight for us all, of course was the presentation about our *Literacy Competition* by President Pat and Club member Marietta (one of the organisers of the competition) to Conference delegates. This project had won the SIGBI overall best practice award last year, and our two members were able to explain more about it. Well done to them both – and for coping calmly with the faulty technology!

SIGBI President, Margaret Emsley's theme was "*Engineering the Future*" and she had invited a range of interesting speakers to stimulate all present. Our members particularly enjoyed hearing Helen Sharman, the first British Astronaut, Dave Coplin on how to use technology in modern life, and Bandana Rana, one of the leaders of the women's movement in Nepal, an inspiring speaker who is still working at a local, national and global level for the rights of women and girls, especially against violence.



We let our hair down as well! Pink wigs, gloves and accessories had been pushed into cases, and brought out for the "*Pink by the Pool*" event at the Hilton to publicise the need for Breast Cancer research. A collection was taken as we left for Cancer Research in Malta. On the final night, after the



Change of Insignia ceremony, we were entertained by a local band, Red Electrick, who stirred us up from our seats to do a bit of jigging. Then we joined our new Regional President Daphne at a splendid buffet dinner in the Hilton.



We saw the island too. The bus tour of the island from the top of the bus went well until it poured with rain, and everyone crammed into the bottom floor soaking wet.! Some took a boat trip around Valetta Harbour, others saw Fort St. Elmo, and we all enjoyed the peace and history of Medina. Some of their displays there are somewhat gruesome, but we did enjoy the cakes!

Thank you, Marietta, for arranging our stay at such a comfortable and friendly hotel, and for all our travel arrangements.

We are now looking forward to the SIGBI Conference in Cardiff in 2017!

Maggie

Combined Charities Fayre, Corn Hall: Monday 18th November

We had our normal space in the Corn Hall for the Fayre, and were able to set up our tables from 8 am. This year our main theme was Christmas Puddings. We had two different types - plum pudding and sticky toffee - tea towels showing a pudding recipe, and small knitted covers for Ferrero Rocher chocolates, these proved particularly popular, and we sold over 100.



Alongside these we had a selection of items for sale: handbags, toiletries, puzzles etc. and a large polar bear which we raffled.



There was a steady stream of people throughout the day and the grand total raised was £338.20. This will be shared out between chosen local charities and at our Christmas Dinner on 7th December it was decided that the recipients this year are to be:

Churn Project, CHYP, Fly2Help, Open Air Swimming Pool Signpost and South Cotswold Memory Cafe.

Jennie

Awareness Raising



The Innovation, Enterprise and Networking Event at Cirencester College on 24th November was a busy and lively morning attracting a wide range of local businesses and organisations offering information and ideas to students. Soroptimist International of Cirencester and District had a large display of information about the varied projects undertaken locally, nationally and internationally including the club's involvement in Abbey 900. President Pat, along with members of the club enjoyed meeting and talking to students, staff and visitors. It was an excellent opportunity to raise the profile of the club and generate interest in membership.

Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (GRASAC)

CONGRATULATIONS!

From over 1,500 applications Comic Relief have approved a grant to "*Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre: Income Generation Plan*" of £39,951.00, over 24 months, starting on 7th January 2017. This grant is funded from the Tampon Tax Fund through a partnership between HM Government and Comic Relief.

Every Comic Relief grant holder is assigned a Grant Owner who will work with them over the lifetime of the grant. At the end of January GRASAC will learn more about the programme and will have an opportunity to meet some of the team and their fellow grantees.

This and That

Blankets

SI Cirencester and the Inner Wheel Club of Cirencester have been working together when Mary Sheppard, an Inner Wheel member, collected 130 blankets and pillows from Cotswold Airport where a Saudi Arabian 747 aircraft was being decommissioned. These she passed on to Jackie Gloyn to be donated to suitable charities. To date, 50 blankets have gone to the Jumbalance, a converted bus which takes the sick to Lourdes, and another 50 to Gloucester Outdoor church. This is a non-denominational group helping the homeless and will help keep vulnerable homeless people warm this winter.





SI Cirencester President Pat, left, presented Regional President Diane Steele with blankets for the " Across " charity, to use on their Jumbulance.

Christmas Stockings



Some of the 120 Christmas stockings, or rather bags, filled by Soroptimists and friends. They were distributed to The Stroud Refuge, the Deaf Children's Club and 71 to Gloucester Family Haven where they give love and support to immigrant families. They have a crèche, English language and literacy classes as well as nutrition and cookery tuition.

Win a week in Normandy

Once again Jackie is organising a draw for a week in a friend's holiday home in the small town of Lessay, Normandy which is near the 'Landing Beaches'. The house sleeps 6 with 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and small garden for BBQs. The proceeds of the draw are in aid of Gloucestershire Deaf Association, a small local charity struggling with funding. Last year 126 people entered the draw which this year will take place at the end of February. Second prize is six bottles of wine.

To enter place a £5 note, or a cheque made out to GDA, in an envelope with your contact details and post to:
French Draw, GDA, Colin Road, Barnwood, Gloucester, GL4 3JL

NB This is open to any reader of this Newsletter

New Year Resolution to improve your body and mind?

Who says exercise has to hurt? With NIA the phrase "no pain, no gain does not exist". Classes are being held at North Cerney Village Hall and are unlike many forms of exercise in that they are based on the principle of having FUN!

Interested?

There is no need to initially sign up for the whole six sessions. If you would prefer to try a class before committing you are welcome to **join us at the first session on Thursday 12th January at 11.30am in North Cerney Village Hall**. Cost £8.00. To sign on for the six sessions costs £36.00, but a grant may be available.

To find out more and reserve a place please contact Jane or Sam Wilkinson Tel 01285 831342 or to discuss finance in confidence please call Kathy on 01285 831518. <http://www.inwardboundadventures.com/NIA.html>

Birthdays and Dates for Diary

Birthdays

December
14th AB

January
2nd Jacky S



February
22nd MM

March
7th EW
23rd Jo S
25th PW

Future Club Events

Wednesday 4th January, 7.00 for 7.30pm: Business Meeting at The Thames Head, Tetbury Road,

Wednesday 25th January, 7.00 for 7.30pm: Burns Night Dinner meeting at Cirencester Golf Club

Wednesday 8th February, 7.00 for 7.30pm: Joint meeting hosted by the Rotary Club of Cirencester at the Royal Agricultural University (RAU)