

President Maggie's Musings



The Club has had a busy time since I took over in April, and I want to thank all members for their support and hard work over the past months. I had two themes in mind at the A.G.M.: *"A Push for Projects"* and *"Money for Manuscripts"* and we've tackled both with gusto. My thanks go to Sue Dennis and her Project leaders for their development of Nikki Pawsey's research and to members, especially the newer ones, who have joined in to make things happen.

We gave Cirencester a great Sunday afternoon out at our Vintage Tea Party, didn't we? This event showed the club in full swing and I am relieved that we made £600 towards sponsoring the Medieval Manuscripts. The same spirit was evident at our stall at the South Cerney Fair, when, led by Anne Croft, we battled the elements for the sake of our charities. Thank you all!



I have enjoyed representing the Club at the S.I. Durham's 70th Anniversary weekend in

London, and at the Regional Conference in Tiverton – one of the best I have attended, with some inspirational speakers. I also enjoyed hosting the Club at the fun evening at the Bowls Club, my other great interest. Perhaps we shall produce some new bowlers as a result!

Now it is time to look forward to the Summer. The meal at Raj Doot was a great idea for a fund-raising (cheerfully pinched from Inner Wheel by Anne Croft!) in aid of the *Meru Women's Garden Project* <http://meruwomen.org/>, and we have Jackie Gloyn's summer outing in August to look forward to before Barbara Bank's leadership in the Autumn.

So, thank you for my time as your President, and enjoy the rest of the year.

Yours in friendship,
Maggie



Projects/Programme Action

Meru Garden Project

Research Project

Abbey 900

Literacy Competition

WHO

GRASAC

UN/SI Days

Development of Group(s) for
Companionship/Meeting up

Nature Quiz

Medieval Manuscripts

Young Carers
Project

Sanitary product for
girls in local schools:

Awareness Raising (the following are extracts from Soroptimist International website)



MARIET VERHOEF-COHEN, inaugurated as the Soroptimist International President 2017-2019

On Saturday 29 July 2017 Mariet Verhoef-Cohen, from the Federation of SI Europe, was inaugurated as the Soroptimist International President, for the 2017 – 2019 biennium, at the official change of insignia ceremony held in Rotterdam. The first Dutch President in the organisation's almost 100 years of existence. Mariet Verhoef-Cohen succeeds New Zealand's Yvonne Simpson as International President of the worldwide organisation whose membership includes some 75,000 women in over 130 countries.

President's Appeal

Every SI President proposes a 'President's Appeal': a project to which Soroptimists worldwide are called to raise funds during the President's two-year tenure. Recognised as an expert on the topic of water and how it impacts the lives of women and girls globally, Mariet's **President's Appeal for the 2017 – 2019** biennium will focus on **Women, Water and Leadership**.

At least five projects will be supported in five continents with a view to enabling women to become active leaders in water management. More specifically, these projects will connect to *three* of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals*:

- 4 – Quality Education,
- 5 – Gender Equality and
- 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation, for all purposes.

*<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

NB Yvonne Simpson The International President' for 2015 – 2017 had as her appeal "Educate to Lead: Nepal" <https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/campaigns/educate-lead-nepal/> which supported projects in Nepal with a focus on improving the lives of women and girls through education, empowerment and enabling opportunities.

Why Nepal?

"Nepal is a small country. In the hills and valleys of Nepal, in small isolated villages, live 30 million of the poorest people in the world.

'With half the population under 23 years of age and around 40% under 18, many women and girls face a future largely dominated by caring for their families. The cost of tuition, uniforms and books means that education is often unaffordable and if a family has the means to send a child to school, a son is given this opportunity before a daughter.'

'On April 25, 2015, a devastating earthquake followed by aftershocks displaced millions of people. Despite the huge amount of funds raised, disaster aid often fails to reach these areas where 80% of the population are located.'

'As Soroptimists, we know that in a disaster, women and girls suffer disproportionately. We also know that education for women and girls is key to economic empowerment. The world community has set a deadline of 2030 for inclusive and equitable quality education for all. Educating women and girls in rural Nepal gives this and the next generation the tools and the opportunity to fight against continued poverty'.

Further updates of some of the Projects/Programme Action

Research Project

Local people; local action

You avid readers of Signal may recall from our last edition (Signal Number 4 Spring 2017) that, thanks to Research led by Club Member Nikki during last year, we aimed to identify where the needs were greatest for women and girls in our local community. Having identified where there were gaps, the Project Team, supported by Club Members, made two decisions:

To approach the Young Carers organisation in Gloucestershire and see if any help is needed, and also

To talk about plans for putting together a social companionship group for those aged 50 and over.

Plus, continuing with other programmes of volunteering with which the Club is already involved, more details below. The Club is encouraging different members to take a lead on different Projects and for all Members to actively become involved in at least one.

Young Carers Project

Kathy, as lead, is continuing to seek a date when the interested Soroptimists can meet with various section heads from the Gloucestershire Young Carers, to discuss the key areas where support is needed. Kathy

Development of Group(s) for Companionship/Meeting up

Following on from Research to date re loneliness, by Nikki, a review is to be undertaken of the extension, possible new venue and wider publicity of groups that presently meet at 'The Plough' (Tuesday and Thursday). Judy to lead with a team of interested members.

Judy

Literacy Competition

The invitations to join in this years' Literacy Competition were sent out in May. The competition subject headings were selected, after consultation with teachers in the local community, and are curriculum based.

All entries have been collected and are presently being marked. A marking regime, based on five different criteria is adhered to, to ensure fair marking throughout the competition. Once the papers have been reduced down to 18 in each year group (nine potential winners and nine highly commended), they will be sent off to the external adjudicator for final marking. Winners will be announced at the Awards ceremony in November which will take place on:

Friday 17th November at the Royal Agricultural University.

Judy and Anne B

Nature Quiz



The County Final for the Wildlife Quiz was arranged for 4th July, at Harnhill RAU Farm Centre. Muriel and Annie attended, along with other members of the Club, as Powells School were one of the three final teams competing, out of ninety schools across the county.

It was a good contest, and because of gifts from our Club, every team had an owl trophy to take back to their school at the end. Muriel and Annie had always thought it was hard on the second and third contestants to go away with nothing after all their hard work! As Muriel says '*...so often it is the way the questions fall, not the Team's knowledge that affects the final result*'

This year was to be the final one for Muriel and Annie. They have been in charge of running the South Gloucestershire area, for 20 years! Where has the time gone? Muriel and Annie have thoroughly enjoyed doing it, but this year, without the many club members who have stepped in to help they say that they could not have completed it. Very many thanks to you all.

Annie and Muriel.

***All Club members 'Congratulate' Muriel and Annie
for such dedication and hard work over the last 20 years!***

This is a Festival being held in Cirencester, throughout 2017, which
SI Cirencester is very happy to be supporting
<http://abbey900ciren.org.uk>

This is a celebration of the 900th anniversary of the founding of the Augustinian Abbey of St Mary, in Cirencester, by King Henry 1 in 1117. We have learnt that although *'relations between Abbey and townspeople were sometimes difficult as the Abbey was powerful and held sway over everyone's life, the wealth it brought to the town became the foundation of the economy we enjoy today'* (extract from website).



Those of you who read our Spring Version of Signal 4 will recall that
*SI Cirencester was proud to be one of the Sponsors that enabled the return of four
Medieval Manuscripts
to Cirencester for the first time in nearly 500 years.*

Sadly, and all too quickly, the manuscripts, originally housed in the Abbey library from 1117 until its demise in 1539, had to be returned to Jesus College Oxford and the Bodleian library where they are still housed.

Lego Build



A computer generated model of the Abbey has been designed and a LEGO brick model of the Abbey Church is now being built inside Cirencester Parish Church, using 70,000 Lego bricks.

The Club is very pleased to be supporting this amazing project by providing volunteers every Friday between 10.00am and 1.00pm.

if you are in Cirencester during those times on a Friday please come and say 'hello', sponsor a brick (or two!) and view progress of this build.



Sanitary Products for Girls in Schools

Action was agreed after an article that:

'Freedom4Girls was contacted by a school in Leeds after it became concerned about teenage girls' attendance. The group provides sanitary products to women in Kenya – but is now doing the same in West Yorkshire.'

Club Members that visit and help in schools are presently, and sensitively, asking if this is an issue in our area. Depending on the outcome further action/awareness raising may be required.

NB if you are reading this or are concerned about this issue please contact the Publicity Chairman, Barbara Banks in confidence: Barbara@banks31.myzen.co.uk

GRASAC

Gloucestershire Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre

Kathy is now one of the Trustees with an oversight for the delivery of education and awareness programme to young people in schools, colleges, clubs etc. (a position funded by the Police Commissioner). Future plans, when the Trainer is in place could provide opportunities for some Club members to help facilitate group discussions in schools.

WHO

World Health Organisation

Past President Pat will be monitoring the World Health Organisation site and reporting back to members, or raise awareness, on any subject of interest and relevance.

UN/SI Days

It has been agreed that action/awareness/fund raising should be undertaken for certain UN/SI Days during the year and this will be co-ordinated by Shirley and Barbara. In the next few months, it is hoped to raise awareness of the following:

- a) 21st September - World Peace Day
- b) 18th October Anti-Slavery Day - not a UN day but will be celebrated by the club on 18th October at Soroptimists Corner outside Cirencester Parish Church.
- c) 25th November 2017 "Railing Against Abuse" - will be a Regional awareness event which was originally initiated by SI Weston-Super-Mare and will be supported by members from our Club

In addition, the Club, along with all Clubs in the Region and Federation, is being encouraged to obtain information, through surveys, about 'Trafficking'-
Shirley and Barbara

Continuing support of Refuge

Home Starter packs provided by Cirencester.



for local Refuge, members SI

All "Cisterns" Go!

The Club continues to receive update about the work and funding at [St Joseph's School for the Hearing Impaired Makeni Sierra Leone](http://stjosephshischool.com/) which went through a very difficult time caused by the Ebola crisis. Presently there is a toilet twinning project underway. If anyone is interested in supporting this venture they will, in time, receive a photo of their 'twinned' toilet.

<http://stjosephshischool.com/>

Fund Raising

South Cerney Street Fayre

29th May - Bank Holiday Monday

Once again time to have our bric-a-brac stall as our fund-raising event for local charities. Fingers were crossed for a sunny day but by 12.30 the heavens opened! Still, although feeling damp our sales ladies continued, their reward being to take £271.64 profit for all their hard work.

Anne C



Vintage Tea party – 25th June

The Club held a Vintage Tea Party in the Abbey Grounds on Sunday 25th June as part of the Abbey 900 Festival, and thanks to the support of the public we raised over £600 towards the recent display of Medieval Manuscripts in the Corinium Museum (ref. page 4). A special thank-you should go to the group who picnicked in the Abbey Grounds on the same day, organised by David Gardner. They took a separate collection for us which added over £50 to our total. With the music of the Gloucester Band, everything contributed to a great Sunday afternoon in Cirencester.

Maggie

Purple Community Fund (PCF)



At the Vintage Tea Party, the Club also had a stall selling beautiful hand-crafted handbags made from recycled ring pulls, ties and even glossy magazines. These talented ladies are disadvantaged women from the Philippines, Asia, Tanzania and now even now some in the UK.

This gives them independence, education and training projects and above all renewed confidence, self-esteem and opportunities for their families. Many items were sold and £192 was raised for this worthwhile charity. Further details can be found at <http://www.p-c-f.org/>.

17th July 2017 Curry Evening at Rajdoot Restaurant Cirencester In aid of the Meru Women's Garden Project

A collaboration has been set up between Child.org, Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) and the women of Meru, the Project will run for three years, with SIGBI Clubs joining forces to raise funds in support of some the poorest women-led households in Kenya.

For more information, go to:

<https://www.soroptimistinternational.org/campaigns/meru-garden-project/>

To this end, an evening of Indian cuisine where guests enjoyed a three-course meal, auction, quiz and a raffle with all the profits from the event going towards supporting the MERU Garden Project in Kenya, as the SIGBI Federation Project for 2016-2019



Anne C, our Fund Raiser Co-ordinator writes:

*'A very big thanks to all helpers, sellers of tickets, and friends who came along to this charity event at The Rajdoot Restaurant last night. It was a great evening not only with hot flavoured food, but also one of the hottest venues for the evening! The staff were amazing and so very generous. **The final donation to Meru Garden International Charity will be £401.** Fantastic and No Washing Up at the end of the evening!!! A great way to raise money !!!!!'*

Anne C

'Brighter Futures' Project

Marietta has been following up on the 'Brighter Futures' Project to raise funds for a Radiotherapy Unit at Great Western Hospital (GWH) in Swindon, <https://www.brighterfuturesgwh.nhs.uk/appeals/current-appeals/radiotherapy-appeal/>. GWH are already looking at companies in Swindon for sponsorship but would be grateful for any fund raising Soroptimists could do for them. Marietta has now received a Fund Raising pack and is hoping to run an event in October.

Marietta

Friendship Links/visits to other Clubs

Anne C tells us about members from SI Cirencester joining in a Friendship Week visit to Iceland Soroptimists (SI Hafnarfjordur and Gardaboer) 24th June – 2nd July

"For me this friendship weekend was to be a challenge; a week away with a sleeping bag and an eye mask to aid my sleeping, rumour was darkness did not fall until 11.30pm! Sleeping quarters were a school room, wooden hut in the mountains and a chalet. We were to be hosted by the club of Hafnarfjordur and Gardaboer, near to the capital Reykjavik. The result was a holiday full of wonderful memories, great hospitality and scenery; every day seeing a different aspect of their wonderful country. No need to worry about English being spoken the ladies were as fluent as us. We were shown hot geysers, volcanic terrain, snow-capped mountains and lush green valleys full of wonderful flora. So many memories but one of the best was to walk behind a cascading waterfall and to feel its power as it came crashing down. The last day we visited their rehabilitation centre for people suffering from alcoholism, depression and drugs misuse witnessing the wonderful hard work of this club over the last 20 years, what a project to be so proud of. We shall never forget our week, our new friends it was 5 star".

Anne Croft



Note from Jackie Gloyn

"Iceland was excellent. Club members should consider this if they do it again in two years time. All trips with guides, eight nights accommodation, great food all included so once paid for almost nothing to pay apart from the one free day when we decided to go to The Blue Lagoon - others did different things. It was well organised, very friendly and altogether pretty fabulous. We are still in touch with several of our new friends who tell us that they will be coming for our Friendship weekend".

For further details of the programme for the week see:

http://www.soroptimist.is/images/Ytri_vefur/English/Week2017/Soropt-week-2017-program.pdf

SI Durham, England



SI Durham invited members of SI Cirencester to a Friendship Weekend in London.

Maggie, our President, Judith and Jackie went to London by train on Friday 9th June, staying at '63'*. We met members of SI Durham first for tea in the park opposite 63, and later joined them for an excellent meal in an Italian restaurant. On Saturday a small group visited the Shard and four of us then went on to experience the new cable car with its great views over Canary Wharf - looking out on the Docks, the Gherkin, the Shard, the London Eye and Wembley Stadium amongst other sights. We all later enjoyed a concert at St Martin in the Fields at Trafalgar Square.

On Sunday, a group including Maggie went to the Robotics exhibition, whilst Judith and Jackie decided to look at the Princess Diana water feature in the park and pictures on the Hyde Park railings on Bayswater Road. After a light lunch we all headed home. It was good to be included in Durham's celebrations, and we hope to see some of their members again next year when we in turn celebrate our 70th.

Jackie

*'63' Bayswater Road is a Boutique Hotel in London, purchased as an investment in 1946 by Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland. <http://www.number63.co.uk>

This and That

President Elect Barbara's Briefing

A welcome from our next incoming President. Oh yes! We have taken job sharing to a whole new level at SI Cirencester and District, see if you can spot how it is working over this year!



It is a privilege to take over as your next President for this year, the support and friendship I have received from all our members continues to be wonderful. It has been a busy and successful summer so far, under President Maggie's expert leadership. An outing to Chastleton House later in August, organised by Jackie, will be a sunny summer event to enjoy with members and friends. (Yes, Jackie has arranged the weather too!)

I look forward to our Autumn activities after President Maggie hands over the Presidential chain of office to me on 6th September. In October our friends in Inner Wheel will host us at a dinner in the RAU and the following weekend will see several of our members in Cardiff for the SIGBI conference. I am especially pleased to lead our Literacy Awards Evening in November; this is always a joyful and inspiring event for the children and families as well as for our members as it supports the key objectives of Soroptimism; to '*Educate, Empower and Enable*'. President Elect Jackie will host our Christmas Dinner on December 6th when I shall hand over the Presidential "baton" to her.

Yours in Friendship

Barbara

Our incoming President asks '*Is this where Soroptimists hold their meetings?*'



Birthdays and Future Club Events

Birthdays

August

1st AC
7th KK-R
8th SC
16th JB
28th RT



September

4th LH
14th MP
16th GW

October

7th NP
9th JD

November

5th JN
18th LM
19th AG

December

14th AB

Dates for Diary

Judith is preparing for her Presidential year in 2017/2018 which will be special for the Club as it will be 70 years since it was Chartered. Judith's key project for 2018 will be concentrating on Trafficking and Slavery (sadly very topical as Signal goes to press). She is hoping that we will have a *Gift Box* in the Market Place, which was previously done by the Club in 2013. Watch this space!

SI Cirencester and District Friendship Weekend 25th-27th May 2018

Initial outline includes a:

- Possible Civic Reception, with the Mayor for the evening of Friday 25th May.
- An informal casual evening to be held at the Fleece Hotel on Saturday 26th May
- Sunday 27th May 2018 Club's 70th Anniversary and President's Lunch to be held at Rendcomb College with Baroness Janet Fookes MP, House of Lords and Deputy Speaker.

SI Cirencester is hoping that visitors from Clubs in the Region, and Bury, Durham Latvia, Iceland, Australia, and New Zealand will be able to join them for this special occasion.

Future Club and Regional Meetings

Wednesday 6th September 7.00 for 7.30pm: President Handover, Business and Project meeting - The Thames Head

Wednesday 20th September 7.00 for 7.30pm: Dinner meeting at Cirencester Golf Club

Saturday 23rd September – Regional Meeting, Taunton

Wednesday 4th October 7.00 for 7.30pm: Business and Project meeting - The Thames Head

Wednesday 25th October 7.00 for 7.30pm: Inner Wheel hosting Soroptimists – RAU (**NB** this is the 4th Wednesday)

26th – 28th October – SIGBI Federation Conference - Cardiff

Wednesday 1st November 7.00 for 7.30pm: Business and Project meeting - RAU

Friday 17th November 7.00pm – Club Literacy Awards - RAU

Website Links

- SI Cirencester web link: <http://sigbi.org/cirencester/>
- Global Voice SIGBI newsletter: <http://sigbi.org/category/news/>
- Soroptimist International: <http://www.soroptimistinternational.org>

Feedback We hope that you have enjoyed reading this edition of SIGNAL, and thank you for all those who have contributed. We would appreciate any feedback and suggestions to improve further editions.

Please send to: Publicity Chairman: Barbara Banks – Barbara@banks31.myzen.co.uk