

Shareholders of 63 Bayswater Road know it has many problems, not only financial ones, but it has been for many years important to us and Ann Garvie organised a celebration lunch in the House of Lords on the 2nd May to celebrate. I went along to this with my daughter-in-law, Melanie, and it was a very enjoyable occasion. We walked up from the tube station to the entrance to the House of Lords in the pouring rain and were shown into a very crowded room with everybody in very wet rain coats which we were told not to take off because we were about to be going out again to cross to another building. In fact, when we crossed to the other building the rain had stopped but our wet rain coats and umbrellas were taken off and hung up somewhere and we entered a much bigger room full of Soroptimists and we were all given a glass of champagne. I found Ann descending on me brandishing a chair for me to sit on and I was the only one who had been offered a chair. There are not many advantages in being disabled but certainly getting a chair in this way is one of them!

We then moved into a room looking out onto the river through wide full-length windows and we had a delicious lunch. It was a set menu of gazpacho soup, North Atlantic cod and a strawberry arctic roll and waiters brandishing bottles of wine,

red or white, came round frequently. After the coffee was served Ann welcomed us all briefly again but pointed out that we had to vacate the room by 2.30 and this only left 20 minutes for 2 other speakers, who were, mercifully, brief!

I was so glad I had gone because I met a lot of old friends in the south and I am very glad I am a Soroptimist.

*Morag
Shareholder, 63 Bayswater Road*



*Morag enjoying House of Lords
hospitality*

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Climate Justice Event

Soroptimists were well represented at an event held at Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (part of Edinburgh University) at the end of April.

President Gari Donn, in her role as Director of UNA House, welcomed everyone to the event on Climate Justice, which had been organised by the interns of UNA House.

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The line up of speakers was impressive with the introduction to the sessions by MSP Claudia Beamish who is the spokesperson on this issue for the Labour Party in Holyrood. She spoke of the need to increase our awareness of the impact of climate change especially on those who are vulnerable, which includes in many parts of the world, women and girls. She quoted President Macron “There is no Planet B”. Our first speaker was Teresa Anderson, from Action Aid, who joined us by Skype and spoke passionately about the importance of reaching the 1.5 degree reduction in global warming target set in the Paris Agreement two years ago. Maurice Goulden MSP for the Conservative Party chaired the next session, stressing that it was necessary for Scotland to take decisions which support the changes in, for example, energy consumption. Matthieu Munsch of Strathclyde University presented an array of statistics demonstrating how current policies will not work to enable Scotland to meet the Paris Agreement targets. He reinforced the need for a radical solution if anything is going to help the planet recover. (His presentation is available if anyone would like to see those frightening statistics). At the end of the morning everyone was challenged to come up with ideas and to lobby the Scottish Government on the Climate Bill which is currently under consideration at Holyrood.

Pat

EVOC – 150 years

I attended an event at Holyrood Parliament at the end of April celebrating 150 years of the existence of Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council (EVOC). They started in 1868 as the Edinburgh Association for improving the condition of the poor, going through many changes to reach their current organisation, but always campaigning for Social Justice. I was

interested in a special exhibition on the women who had been instrumental in the development of this organisation. Flora Stevenson set up a Sewing Room in 1871, Dr Elsie Inglis pioneered health visiting in the early part of the twentieth century and Mrs George Kerr supported the development of Edinburgh Council of Social Service.

I have a few of the commemorative booklets which give more details of the history and development over the 150 years of EVOC. They are available if any member wishes to read the history. EVOC will be continuing its celebrations throughout the year so look out for announcements of future events. Many Edinburgh based voluntary organisations are now members of the Council so perhaps SI Edinburgh should consider joining this very active network. If you want to know more a special website has been set up www.evoc150.org.uk

Pat

Editor’s note: 15 years ago we were members of EVOC. Though it was very interesting to meet other organisations much of it was not relevant at the time. In addition it was felt that the membership fee was too much then. However, the membership could be larger now and more relevant to us.

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KIDS LOVE CLOTHES

We were invited recently to visit Ratho Mains Farm and see how ‘Kids Love Clothes’, a charity we supported during my time as President in 2009/2010, has progressed over the last eight years. I follow them now on Facebook so I do know they have been very busy – where there is a need for good quality used

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children's clothing, it does seem to fill a gap in our city. Out at their premises at Ratho Mains, they have moved into a larger unit – view Facebook if you can for a virtual tour – they now have two large ‘barns’ and a loft!! Large tables covered in ‘oilcloth’ and clearly marked with age groups – note they take up to age twelve – makes sorting very much easier! My guide helped me use a chair on which to balance a large carrier bag of clothing, and we managed during my morning visit, to shift a couple of dozen of them!!

Donations are stacked in large open containers, worked on when they have volunteers and then sorted into a ‘wardrobe’ of clothing which is sent for ironing. They ask that the goods be washed and fully clean on donation. Checks are made along this process, anything deemed totally unusable (not clean enough or in good repair) is sent for rags. Anything usable, but considered unsuitable for KLC as tops with ‘Daddy’ on them or anything too sporty, gets sent to a charity in Glasgow where they are available free of charge to parents i.e. immigrants in need and those experiencing hard times etc.

Toys are now collected but must be clean and in good order – nothing damaged!! They have just received some lovely toddler goodies, and donors had very carefully put in new batteries to the spinning top, supplied instructions to a little toy piano and made the selection of goods, totally reusable!! This charity really does tick all the boxes for recycling!!

Teams of volunteers often come from banks, supermarkets and the like and a blitz took place recently at Ratho Hall. But keeping up with sorting, then the ironing and bag packing – remember the cute paper carrier bag – does take its toll. More volunteers for a few hours sorting, are always very welcome. Our contact Christine says she is always out at Ratho on a Tuesday morning but other days are available.

As before, it is the Social Services who normally ask for a ‘wardrobe’ of clothes and some bags are already made up in case of emergencies – these are all free of charge.

It is a ‘hands-on’ service project and worth looking at again!!

Lindsey

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News of Members

Ishbel has resigned from the club due to family and work commitments. We thank her for all she has contributed to our activities – liaison with the 3S Trust and the applicants, and latterly in the position of treasurer.

Margaret is out of hospital and enjoying being back home.

Dates for Your Diary

2018

- June 2 SISSR, Polmont
- 13 Business Meeting
- Sept 12 Business Meeting
- 26 Speaker Meeting
- Oct 5-7 SI Kiev, 25th anniversary
- 10 Business Meeting
- 24 Speaker Meeting
- 25-27 SIGBI Federation Conf. Liverpool
- Nov 14 Business Meeting
- 28 tbc
- Dec 12 Social

SIE Business Meeting held on 9 May 2018 at Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel

Present President Gari (in Chair) plus 15 members

Apologies for absence were received from Alison and Dorothea (UN House).

SI Vision and Mission statement

This was read by Christine.

Matters arising from previous minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 11 April 2018 were agreed.

It was noted that it had been agreed that a maximum of 1 person per annum could have part of her subscription paid from the Legacy Fund. Dorothea will, when she joins, pay a reduced subscription of £20 per annum while she remains a student, with the balance up to the full subscription taken from the Legacy Fund.

Correspondence (Christine)

SI Falkirk function on 27 May.

SIGBI re data protection changes. (Pat advised that SI Scotland South will discuss this at its executive meeting next week, and that she hoped that they would produce a pro forma that could be used by clubs). In this connection, there was a discussion about the need for email addresses for certain club officers, rather than using personal email addresses. Edith and Lindsey will speak to Tina at SI Dunfermline, as it is understood that she resolved the issue for her club.

SIGBI voting for 2 positions, Vice President and Assistant Programme Director – this will be discussed at the June meeting. (Members are requested to read the candidates' information in the Soroptimist magazine).

Christine also advised that she had press cuttings re the women's suffrage march on 10 June, and on Girlguiding activities.

Treasurer (Myint Su)

Myint Su requested confirmation of the meeting dates for next session, so that she could make the necessary bookings (noting that the subscription calculation had been based on an assumed 13 meetings at ECYH). She will not be at the meeting on 13 June but will make arrangements to pay ECYH for that evening.

It was agreed that Myint Su and Isabel should be added to the list of signatories for the RBS account (Carolyn and Dorothy are current signatories).

Myint Su noted that there was over £4,000 in the Legacy Fund and asked why it was maintained at that level. Isabel gave a brief history of the fund. It was noted that some clubs have used legacy money to fund recruitment activities, eg printing leaflets etc. It was agreed to keep the Legacy Fund in mind.

Finally, Myint Su reminded those members who have not already paid their subscriptions of £130 that they should post them to her as soon as possible.

Meeting dates for 2018/19

Meetings will be held in ECYH on:

2018 September 12th and 26th; October 10th and 24th; November 14th; 2019 January 9th; February 13th; March 13th and 27th; April 10th and 24th; May 8th; June 12th.

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It is hoped to arrange a PA activity on November 28th. The Christmas social evening for 2018 will be held on December 12th and the summer social 2019 will be held on 26th June. Where there are 2 dates set in a month, the first will usually be a business meeting and the second a speaker meeting, except for April when the second meeting is the AGM. We shall discuss later whether to combine a speaker and business in one of the single meeting months.

Programme Action

Lindsey is visiting Kids Love Clothes on 22 May. She is hoping to arrange a sorting event for members to participate in autumn 2018.

Lindsey asked if members might be interested in collecting for another organisation, eg Edinburgh Direct Aid. Isabel offered to find out when EDA is planning its next delivery. Lindsey reported that a survey on women's health issues organised by Scottish Women's Convention would be available online from mid-May.

Pat reported that she had attended a celebration organised by EVOC. She asked whether SIE should join. Clephane indicated that SIE had been members of EVOC some years ago but had decided that membership was no longer appropriate. At that time there had been a financial commitment. Pat advised that membership now would be free. It was agreed that this should be considered at a future meeting, once members had had an opportunity to look at EVOC website etc, to determine whether or not membership would be beneficial for SIE.

Club leaflet and poster

Isabel indicated that the draft for the leaflet had been finalised and was now with Myint Su for typing up. Marjory reported that there had been no progress on the poster.

Membership

Pat advised that she would be dealing with forms re the transferring member and the application for proposed new member, Dorothea.

Myint Su agreed to send Clephane details of the different membership scales, for information.

3S Fund (Marjory)

Marjory reported that there had been 1 new enquiry, which she was following up. It was noted that the 3S Trustees would set the level of any award taking into account the length of the project.

Friendship Groups

The membership of the groups was set out in the latest SIENNA. However, Kathleen should have been included in the Edinburgh North group. The co-ordinators are: Kathleen (North), Marjory (West) and Lindsey (South). It was suggested that the co-ordinators could share details of group meeting dates.

Raffle

Irene has circulated a list and now has volunteers for each month. She will confirm the dates for which members are responsible and advise the process for swapping dates.

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Scotland South meeting on 2 June in Polmont

A number of members will be attending the meeting, including, of course, Pat who is Scotland South President. Pat confirmed that items that would be welcomed are: books – in any condition (for Better World Books); clothing suitable for wearing to job interviews; MP3 players, iPhones or iPods (for Playlist for Life); ring-pulls; jewellery; and spectacles.

Summer Social at President Gari’s on 27 June

More details will follow at the meeting on 13 June. It was agreed that Gari should invite UN interns to join us.

Miscellaneous

Isabel asked if SIE still planned to donate an item to Saughton Garden Project as part of the 90th anniversary celebration. It was noted that it would be some time before they would be ready to accept anything but agreed that we would need to take a decision in due course as to what would be appropriate.

Anna reported that she would be meeting with a group of visiting Soroptimists, from SI Cambridge and SI Calcutta South, on 22 May, and that she had recently met briefly with a member from SI Capetown and her husband.

Anna advised that Frances Lynch had invited members to an event on Friday 11 May at which a recording of her music would be played.

Anna also advised of an invitation to attend a concert at St Cecilia’s Hall on 5 June @ 6pm, in connection with funding for young musicians. Anna will provide details.

Anna also reported that she had been contacted by Alan Fisher via the SIGBI website, requesting a meeting. She had been given no details other than that it was about a ”resolution”. Anna did not respond and has heard nothing more since. It was agreed that she should take no action meantime and that if he does come back she should not agree to meet him on her own.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be on 13 June 2018 at Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel, at 7:30pm.

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Items for SIEnna 171 should be sent, by Fri 22nd June 2018, to Edith Elliot, tel 0131 337 3313 or email edith.elliott37@gmail.com

SI Edinburgh web address: www.sigbi.org/edinburgh