



**Soroptimist
International
Edinburgh
news
notes
anecdotes**

Issue 183

October 2019

**Note temporary change of venue
for both November meetings –
see foot of page 6**

SI Edinburgh Membership

I would like to challenge members to mention Soroptimist International to one person per week for the next year. Please let women know about our programme of speakers. Here are some suggestions on what we are doing and supporting women and girls.

- One member goes to the UN Commission on the Status of Women every year in New York and campaigns for the rights of women and girls.
- Two members attended the Soroptimist International Convention in Kuala Lumpur.
- Two members collected money for Marie Curie.
- Three members did a beach clean on Cramond Beach for Marine Conservation Society.
- One member has sent four items of news to the Community Section of the Edinburgh Evening News.
- Five members sorted school uniforms for Kids Love Clothes.

- Two members organised and five members attended a conference on Women's Mental Health.
- Six members have knitted and decorated Twiddlemuffs for Dementia patients.
- 20 young women from Scotland South were given grants from the 3 S Fund to go on overseas' projects for the benefit of women and girls.
- 20 Christmas presents were given to a women's hostel.
- 98 jars of jam and sauces sold on behalf of Meru Women's Garden Project in Kenya.
- Money collected for the International President's Appeal for Women, Water and Leadership.
- Many members have met visiting Soroptimists from around the world.
- Members have communicated with friendship links around the world.
- We now have different membership options: -
Club membership.
Linked membership to a club, (For women who cannot commit to attending regular meetings).
Associate membership - online only.
Reduced cost for Young women's membership 16-24 years old.

Anna
SI Edinburgh
Membership Convener
October 2019

With Anna's permission I ask, 'How much has been left out?' Have you done something that could add to this list – and yet you have not mentioned it? My view is that this is an impressive list, but I feel we should ensure it is complete.

Ed.

MENTAL HEALTH CONFERENCE IN GLASGOW

Organised by UN House Scotland and SSSRegion.

Edith, Anna and I made our way to Glasgow on Wednesday 9th October (and joined others from Edinburgh) – the day before Mental Health Day on the 10th – to attend this well organised and interesting event. We had several good speakers and then broke into ‘conversation’ groups so we could air our own views and discuss the problems of this sometimes difficult subject.

I particularly liked the SAMH – Scottish Association for Mental Health - and from their small, but very well designed leaflet, I have picked out what I feel might be the best advice for everyone, especially those of us of a certain age and now living on our own.

CONNECT

Staying in touch with loved ones can make us feel happier and more secure; and often just having a chat can help lift our mood.

BE ACTIVE

Being active isn't just good for our physical health, it's also proven to have a positive effect on our mental health and wellbeing.

LEARN

Learning enhances your self-esteem and confidence and can be a great way to meet new people.

GIVE

It feels great to give – in fact those who report a greater interest in helping others are more likely to rate themselves as happy.

TAKE NOTICE

Be aware of the present and stop to take notice of friends and family and take a moment for yourself.

This last one is perhaps more difficult to evaluate – but rather neatly ties in with our speaker at our Wednesday night club meeting – learning to listen! Have we almost ‘lost’ that ability? This is an abbreviated version of the leaflet but might give our members something to think about – the giving paragraph perhaps sums up our reasons for being a Soroptimist!

Lindsey

Programme Action, SI Edinburgh

MENTAL HEALTH

WHO definition

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental (spiritual) and social well-being, not merely an absence of disease or infirmity.

Cont. over/

Characteristics of mental health

- able to cope – self-esteem, confidence, self-assurance
- able to express feelings - emotions and anger, to be assertive
- sense of self as an individual
- being content - able to cope with ups and downs, to enjoy life
- feeling secure and loved, receiving support
- at ease with others and self
- able to form and maintain relationships
- realistic about abilities, valuing self but recognising own limitations and strengths
- well-motivated - goals, purpose
- sense of fulfilment / achievement
- having a sense of humour

What impacts on mental health? stress in multiple forms.

- Not being in a position to make choices or feeling in control
- Interpersonal relationships – Loss of family or friends through bereavement, divorce or migration
- Abuse, loneliness, bullying, lack of affection or affirmation
- Significant life events, some of which are positive
- Environment – buildings, threat of war, nuclear disaster
- Extinction rebellion – climate fears for the future
- Pollution and toxins
- Work – load, expectations, type of work. Zero hours contracts, fear of redundancy
- Overambition. Burnout. Role conflict
- Pressure to succeed, demands of ‘tiger’ parents
- Refugee status
- Racism, anti-religious behaviour
- Poverty or extreme wealth (lottery winners)
- Homelessness, unemployment.....
- Illness – pain, addiction, being a carer
- Social media - trolling
- Tendency to undermine past experiences (Trudeau) almost vindictive
- Fraudulent scams
- Social pressures – colonial guilt
- Gender identity issues - Pornography.
- Speed of modern life, rapid communication. Need for instant gratification
- Uncertainty - Brexit!

Preserving mental health

NB anxiety is a normal appropriate response in many situations. And grief is also normal.

Lifestyle review

There are various ways of doing this.

Use headings for different areas of life – work, leisure / social, domestic tasks, rest, and list the activities you carry out during a typical week.

Code these (use colour) to indicate how you feel about the activities – enjoy, dislike, find boring, do automatically.

Cont. over/

Input and output arrows – divide a circle, or create a pie chart

List the activities that you have chosen to do, feel are imposed on you by others, feel you ought to do, don't fit into the other categories.

Sharing relaxation strategies – self-preservation!

Stress reduction challenge - Goals for the month

What have you done as an act of self-care today?

Music, Walking Holidays ++++++

Summary

6 Cs -

- **Contribution** – being able to give to others, the smile you give out returns to you
- **Comfort** with change in life – being able to adapt, not railing against your situation
- **Contact / companionship** – social networks instead of isolation / loneliness
- **Choice** – being in control. **Being able to say no!!!**
- **Competency** – promotes self-esteem, feeling of being able to cope
- **Commitment** - sense of purpose

Finally

Take it seriously

You owe it to yourself. And others.

And carpe diem.

Submitted by Clephane following conference on 9th October, in Glasgow.

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SI Winterthur visit to Edinburgh.

Members and friends (17) from Winterthur visited Edinburgh in September and with Edinburgh and Dunfermline members (10) were pleased to meet at the Balmoral Hotel for afternoon tea. Presidents of both clubs brought greetings and all present enjoyed the time exchanging stories of our activities. Our guests had a very busy day – the Royal Yacht Britannia in the morning, tea with us, a tour of the city in the early evening and then the journey back to Peebles that evening. And that was only one day!

Post meeting note: SI Edinburgh members have been able to enjoy the delicious “HÜPPEN” (filled wafer rolls, that are part of Switzerland’s culinary inheritance) that we each received. And I repeat delicious. Ed.

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Scotland and its Links with the Slavery Trade – Sir Geoffrey Palmer will explore Scotland’s links, Monday 11th November, 6.30pm - 9.00 pm. @ Edinburgh Napier University. If you are interested please see Lindsey’s email 18/10/19 or contact the editor

SIE Business Meeting held on 9th October 2019 at Edinburgh Central Youth Hostel

Present: Gari (in the Chair), 12 members, and a visitor Pat, who had recently completed her PhD in association with UN House. Gari welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Dorothy, Trish, Carolyn, Nikki and Morag.

SI Vision and Mission statement: was read by Pat Black.

President Gari welcomed our speaker, **Marie Ogilvie**, from *'Listen Well'*. Marie told us of the listening scheme that had been aimed at adults. In 2014, following requests from two high schools, this had been extended to schools. The listeners at the schools were either external volunteers or trained S4 and S5 pupils. Training is an important feature of 'Listen Well' who run courses both for their own volunteers and other interested organisations - (listenwellscotland.org.uk). While continuing to work with high school pupils they are now planning to set up a scheme for primary school pupils.

Gari thanked Marie for her presentation and remarked that it had complimented what they had heard at the Glasgow conference on Mental Health that day.

President Gari chaired the business section of the meeting

News of Members:

Christine reported that Hilary-Kay had indicated that she would be unlikely to attend meetings in the immediate future.

Treasurer's Report:

Myint Su has set up the 'easyfunding' scheme and will include instructions for its use in this SIEnna. (Post meeting note: see page 9)

Programme Action:

Lindsey reported that we had been allocated a Christmas Tree at the cost of £47 for the Festival at St Andrew's and St George's West Church. The theme is *Let there be Light* and we have to supply our plans and comments for a descriptive booklet by 4th November. Clephane and Lindsey to do this. The tree has to be dressed on 6th December from 10.00 am – 5.00 pm. Various suggestions were put forward but it was remitted to Lindsey's Friendship Group meeting on 23rd October. Their plans are to be brought to the Business Meeting on 13th November.

Tree at Saughton Park:

Marjory has seen the tree, the gardener is very proud of it and a plaque is to be prepared in conjunction with the Park. The suggested wording is "This tree was planted to commemorate the 90th anniversary (2017) of Soroptimist International Club of Edinburgh." It is hoped that a small celebration will take place in the Conservatory, possibly at a week-end. Further details to follow.

SIGBI Conference and Voting:

Anna is the club's official delegate. Pat and Anna would check, on 10th October, that her registration had been received.

Resolutions: Pat, Anna and Nikki took part in the Teleconference which aimed to answer questions. Pat brought up Irene's questions about the inconsistencies in clauses 9 and 17.2 of the Club Constitution. This concerns Resignation/Termination of membership and

unsatisfactory performance of Post Holders. The questions could not be answered on air but Pat subsequently has received a letter from Maureen to say that they had not noted these inconsistencies, so will deal with them and sent her thanks to Irene.

Voting: *Club ballot 6* - The club unanimously supported (13 votes for, none against) the nominee for the post of Diamond Education Grant Committee Member 2019-2021. Christine to return the ballot paper by 15th November.

Club ballot 7 – This to be discussed by the club at the Business Meeting on 13th November. It concerns the nomination for Assistant Programme Director Food Security and Healthcare 2019-2021. Again, ballot paper to be returned by 15th November by Christine.

Scotland South Region:

The next meeting will be held on Saturday 2nd November at Polmont. Pat, Lindsey, Anna, Myint Su and possibly Edith hope to attend. Lindsey said she would be willing to take any books, jewellery, spectacles and underwear for the clubs who collect such items.

Membership:

Anna reported that she had given Wendy details of our meetings and Wendy indicated she might drop in. We will be ready to welcome a visitor.

Friendship Groups:

Kathleen has been having trouble in organising her group due to the travels of some of her members. However, those present on 9th October were to gather at the end of the meeting to try to find a date and venue.

AOCB:

Clephane intimated that a film ‘In the name of your daughter’ will be shown at St John’s Church, Princes Street on Thursday 7th November. This will show how FGM is being dealt with in Tanzania. The event is free but ticketed. As there is a limit on numbers contact Clephane to secure a ticket.

Isabel thanked members for the £160 sent for the 3S Fund, recently banked.

Christine asked if it would be possible for our 3S recipients to include a reference to SI Edinburgh in their reports. Gari suggested that recipients might consider becoming Associate Members.

Lindsey reminded members that the Christmas gifts for Cranston Street should be brought to the November meetings. Gifts of hats, scarves, gloves and umbrellas would be welcome.

Date of Next Meeting:

23rd October or alternative. Friendship Groups could each decide their own date.

Next Club Business Meeting. 13th November at St Peter’s Scottish Episcopal Church, Lutton Place (see details below) - to include reports from Conference and 3S Fund reports.

Lutton Place, EH8 9PE

Going south from the Bridges: Lothian Buses nos. 3, 5, 8, 29, 30 and 49 stop opposite the Queen’s Hall. Continue walking south, cross Bernard Terrace and Lutton Place is the next street on the left. Lothian Buses nos. 7, 31, 37 and 47 stop between Bernard Terrace and Lutton Place.

Buses coming from Newington direction all stop almost opposite Lutton Place.

Approaching Lutton Place from St Leonard’s Street – Lothian Bus 14.

There is limited parking at St Peter’s Church.

Needless to say – Google the church and you will find a map. You will get a choice between St **Peters** Church and St **Peter’s** Church. (no wonder editing is difficult! *Ed.*)

MARGARET THOMSON OBE
8 June 1927 – 23 August 2019

With the death of Margaret Thomson on 23 August 2019 SI Edinburgh lost one of its most distinguished members.

She was born and brought up in Edinburgh and from an early age she dreamt of becoming a nurse. Her nurse training took place at the Royal Hospital for Sick Children in Edinburgh and the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and she then studied midwifery in London. During her career in nursing she was greatly involved in the development of education and training in the profession. After returning to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh she was appointed a ward sister at the exceptionally young age of 25 and later became a nurse tutor. She then spent three years in Nigeria teaching at a University Compound School of Nursing. After Nigeria she spent two years as a principal tutor in Belfast before returning to Edinburgh for the rest of her career.

She was appointed Inspector of Nursing at the General Nursing Council, then subsequently Education Officer, Deputy Registrar, Registrar and finally Chief Executive of the National Board for Nursing, Midwifery and Health Visiting for Scotland. The high esteem in which she was held was shown by the award to her of an OBE for services to nursing in the New Year honours of 1986.

She enjoyed travelling all over the world and had numerous interests and hobbies. She attended concerts, particularly those of the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, book and art festivals, lectures of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, went on National Trust for Scotland tours etc. She was ordained an elder in Palmerston Pl. Church in 1979 and was a conscientious and active elder until she stepped down in 2011.

Margaret joined Soroptimist International of Edinburgh in 1976 and was presented

with her certificate for 40 years' service by President-Elect Anna in 2016 at a Friendship Group coffee morning. She was President in 1985-1986, edited the history of the club for 1977-1987 and was a joint editor for 1987-2007.

During the last few years she had a number of episodes of ill-health leading to hospital admissions, but after each one she returned home and continued to follow as much as she could her interests which were so many and varied. Her diary was always full. She attended many of the Edinburgh club meetings, latterly if transport could be provided to and from them, and also Friendship Group coffee mornings. With her 3-wheeled Zimmer she would still go out to the shops or catch a bus into town and on occasion had to hurry back home "because my carer is due to arrive".

It was typical of Margaret that she was at the Book Festival on Sunday 18th August when she felt unwell, with what turned out to be a TIA and this was followed by a series of strokes. It was providential that she did not suffer a prolonged period of incapacity which would have been anathema to someone so determined and independent.



In 2016 Margaret celebrated 40 years as a Soroptimist. Anna, then President-Elect, presented her with her certificate.

(see SIEnna 156, Sept 2016)

Please Shop Early for Cranston Street

Cranston Street Hostel

would be happy to receive gifts
of
Winter hats and gloves
Scarves
Umbrellas

Gifts should be wrapped in seasonal paper
with card or gift tag saying
it is from a Soroptimist of Edinburgh

Some new knitted hats from KLCs were
donated in September
and we could also send any other nearly new
warm jumpers, cardies
scarves etc.

Any little toiletries that you have from the
summer, could be delivered
at the same time

Please bring your gifts to the November
meetings at
St. Peter's Church, Lutton Place

I can deliver in the first two weeks of
December in good time for Christmas

Thank you



Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Membership Convenor's message | page 1 |
| Mental Health reports | 2, 3, 4 |
| SI Winterthur visit | 4 |
| Business Meeting Minutes | 5,6 |
| Margaret Thomson obituary | 7 |
| Cranston Street gifts | 8 |
| Easyfundraising info. | 9 |

Scottish Women's Convention International Women's Day Event Saturday 7th March 2020

Place: Scottish Parliament

Time: 12.30 pm. – 6.00 pm.

12.30 – lunch and registration

Evening reception in Garden Lobby

Register Your interest: email

info@scottishwomensconvention.org

or phone 0141 339 4797

Provide (this is essential)

- Your name
- Your postal address
- Your telephone number
- Your email address, if available

Places are not guaranteed until you receive
written confirmation from SWC, early in
the New Year.

Closing Date for registration:

31st December 2019

Dates for Your Diary

2019

Nov 2 SISSR, Polmont
13 Business Meeting
27 Speaker Meeting

See page 5 for directions to St Peter's Church
Lutton Place for both November meetings.

Dec 11 Details to come

2020

Jan 8 Business Meeting – **note, venue not
yet confirmed.**

22 Friendship Group Meeting

Feb 12 Business Meeting +
Catherine Booth speaking on
Women in STEMM

Items for SIEnna 184 should be sent to the
editor by 22nd November 2019

SI Edinburgh web address:

www.sigbi.org/edinburgh

Received from Myint Su – see Treasurer’s report of the minutes on page 5.

“Hello everyone, The following is a ready-made email you get from Easyfundraising which we’re encouraged to send to friends and relatives.

“As I mentioned at our meeting, if you do on-line shopping, as many of us do, it’s an effortless way of raising money – SIGBI has already got over £800 I think. Every little helps, as Tesco says! Do try it.

“In friendship,
“Myint Su”

Sample email to your friends:

“Dear xxxx,

If you shop online, please could you sign up to Easyfundraising to support Soroptimist International of Edinburgh?

It’s a really easy way to raise money for us – you just use the easyfundraising site to shop online with more than 4,000 well known online stores like Amazon, Argos, John Lewis, ASOS, Booking.com, eBay, Boden, and M&S and when you make a purchase, the retailer sends us a free donation, at no extra cost to you.

We want to raise as much as possible, so please visit our new easyfundraising page at <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/siedinburgh/> and click ‘support us’.

Thank you!

Signed,
Xxxxx”

At the time of putting this information (17th October) into SIEnna two supporters had raised £1.35 for Soroptimist International of Edinburgh.

Ed.