



**Soroptimist
International
Edinburgh
news
notes
anecdotes**

Issue 191

June/July 2020

We hope that all members are well, and starting to enjoy a wee bit more fresh air. Now that mid-summer has passed, perhaps we can begin to enjoy the outdoors once again.

One possibility for 'outdoors' might be the delayed visit to Saughton Park which is in colourful display just now. Our shrub, alongside the greenhouse, will be worth that visit!

Regarding our Autumn meetings, we would like to know how members feel about taking public transport to return to the Youth Hostel when that becomes possible.

Please think and pray for our Soroptimist sisters in India during this challenging time. The impact of Covid 19 on the people of India is severe. The country has suffered greatly with, currently, over 14,000 deaths. Maharashtra has the highest mortality rate with 6,000 deaths, nearly two thirds are of women. This is very worrying for everyone not only in that State. SIEdinburgh recognises the stressful times our sisters in India are living through and we hope most sincerely to hear

brighter news in due course.

The SI Nepal project "Empowering girls in Nepal" aims to provide security, rehabilitation, education and training for vulnerable girls. As a fund raiser, do sponsor and write a personal story. You can see more details: www.thebigstory.org

We have heard that the SIGBI conference in Belfast is going ahead through an on-line conference facility. It will be on 30-31 October, with the four speakers, programme awards and the change of insignia. The programme is being worked on at this time and will be published very soon. It's very exciting as it is a first for SIGBI to have a virtual conference!

Another virtual event will be the Scotland South Region Meeting which will be taking place on 27 June. It is hoped that many will attend in this virtual format. Further information can be found on page 7.

Finally, we remember that next year we celebrate 100 years of Soroptimist International. Over the years Human Rights and the education of girls and women have continued to be the focus of our attention and activity. Although the manner of our meetings and events may change, we remain committed to that Mission and Vision.

Anna, Clephane and Lindsey
President team

SIE Business Meeting held on 10th June 2020 on Skype

Present : Lindsey (in the Chair)+ Gari, Pat Black, Christine, Patricia, Nikki, Clephane, Edith, Dorothy, Myint Su, Anna, Kathleen. Marjory joined by audio.

Lindsey welcomed everyone to the 3rd Business meeting to be held on Skype and thanked everyone for making the effort.

Anna read the Soroptimist Vision & Mission

Apologies for absence received from 8 members: Trish, Winifred, Alison, Irene, Carolyn, Isobel, Morag, Mary.

Minutes of the last Meeting – no challenges or comments were received.

News of members:

Lindsey has spoken to Winifred who is well, walking locally and keeping busy connecting with the local Art Club 'virtually' Clephane had spoken with Isobel who is ok, maintaining a professional interest in the virus. Myint Su has spoken with Irene who is doing OK and being well catered for with shopping etc. Anna has picked up with Trish who is good – but desperate for the dentist! Anna spoke with Alison who is still working at the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh and travelling daily on public transport – our very own 'front line hero'. She is fine.

Correspondence: Christine – As in recent email from Christine to all members re SIGBI Resolution to increase our annual contribution by £1 per person, there was unanimous agreement to this and Christine has

responded to SIGBI accordingly. (we expect this to go to conference this year and be introduced April 2021)

Treasurers Report: Myint Su – picked up on actions from last business meeting – Myint Su has reapplied for On-Line Banking and application forms are in circulation to the club signatories to facilitate this. We may still have the issue with the Bank Account Mandate being out of date but Nikki offered to assist Myint Su to resolve that if still an issue. All subscriptions have now been received so there is no need to send around a reminder email.

Donation cheques have been sent to the Trussel Trust and to the Soroptimist Benevolent Fund. Discussion required re Twinning Toilets and Tap& Soap: Set donation of £60 to be sent to Toilet Twinning and toilet to be issued in name of SI Edinburgh however recommendation is that the certificate is sent to Gari in recognition of her exceptional contribution to the club over the past 3 years (!) This would only leave £15 for Tap&Soap- agreement that we should hold fire on this donation until we can determine if we have more funds available (possibly through Easyfunding) to make a larger contribution or consider whether the money could/should be utilised eg for essentials for Cranston Street. Donation from Presidents Fund to be sent to Soroptimist Benevolent Fund (£50).

Myint Su also sought clarification re whether 11th March meeting was held at SYH so that she can reconcile the funds paid/owed to SYH – 11/3/20 was confirmed as our last face to face meeting

Membership: Anna – volunteers requested to partner with club members who do not have access to emails and internet so that material can be printed and sent on to them. Edith agreed to carry on supporting Irene, Morag and Mary. Dorothy will partner with Isobel. Trish no longer needs paper copies. Potential new members: local Author (Mary) has expressed an interest in becoming a member so Anna has followed up with email and sent some information to the lady. Also follow up emails sent to potential members (Sue, Ann and Theresa) – no response as yet.

Programme Action:Lindsey – Cranston Street : Lindsey is asking for any donations of small toiletries/hand sanitiser/personal items . Please let her know and she will arrange collection. In meantime Lindsey asked for permission to spend up to £20 of club charity fund to purchase much needed hand sanitiser. AGREED. Any items not collated this month can be retained and sent across at Christmas. SIGBI Day of the Environment: July: Lindsey asked for ideas as to how we could recognise the day. Suggested a club trip to Saughton Park for a 'social distanced' picnic. 5 members supported the idea and indicated an interest in attending. Lindsey will follow up. Gladhouse Beach: it was mentioned that Garis local beach was inundated at the weekend with 1000s of visitors who regrettably left a lot of litter and personal mess. Suggestion made to possibly organise a 'litter pick' but concerns over contamination. Future events: Beach Clean still scheduled for 18-21 September (more information to follow) and Edinburgh Kilt Walk is

still going ahead. Scotland Region have nominated 'Empowering Girls in Nepal' as our charity and Hunter foundation will match any donations made in our name through Just Giving page.

Programme : Trish/Alison – In view of the uncertainty over whether we can be face to face in September, speaker meeting recommendation is to use one of our own club members as speaker at our first meeting. (Gari's presentation to Scotland South Region on UN House Scotland was mentioned!) Alison has also asked for ideas for potential speakers for rest of 2020 and into 2021

Regional Representative: Myint Su – Virtual Meeting scheduled for 27/6/20 – awaiting details and Myint Su will attend.

SIGBI Website: Pat -SIGBI website is looking better. Please let Pat know if you spot any errors/inaccuracies on the SIGBI or the SIE website

SIEnna: Gari & Nikki – Great feedback received for SIEnna 190 (well done Gari!) Gari requested that we have 'name the plant' as a regular feature to add a bit of colour and fun – AGREED.

Distribution List : we are aware of a number of non SIE members wishing to have copies of SIEnna (eg Ann and Eva who are Soroptimists but not SIE, Gari's colleagues at UNHouse Scotland) – discussion took place regarding availability of/accessibility to the distribution lists (and risk of inappropriate sharing of Soroptimist email addresses) ACTION : Gari, Nikki and Edith to discuss possible split of

distribution lists to cover GDPR requirements

AOCB

Lindsey : requested the production of a one-pager information sheet to be sent to SIE members to clarify the situation re COVID19 and impact on club/club meetings eg when we will start Face to face meetings again, details of possible summer trip to Saughton Park,. Scotland rules re easing lockdown and how they impact our club members and any required protocol for our meetings, thoughts on possible Programme activity. **ACTION** : content to be sent to Gari& Nikki by end July for compilation and distribution early August **ACTION** Myint Su will speak to SYH and understand when they believe we will have access to the meeting room again and understand any possible restrictions/protocols.

Reminder re requests from last meeting :

Christine is looking for a 'shadow' secretary specifically to help with submitting certain forms (which Christine does not have the technology to do) Any volunteers please contact Christine.

Myint Su: Mentioned archiving of SIE papers (as several club members have been clearing out during lockdown!) SIGBI have provided guidance on (legal) retention of documents but we also recognise that the Club may wish to retain items for posterity. Edith has commenced the archiving review. **Action** : everyone review papers they have and bring anything they feel is significant/is of Club interest, to next face to face meeting when

consideration be given to what needs to be retained

Date of next Business Meeting:

9th September. Planned as Skype meeting at 7.30. Attendees to join at 7.20pm – please let Gari know if you are 'new to Skype' so she can add you to the invite list. Members will be informed if we are able to meet face to face in SYH.

Conference Resolution

Members of SI Edinburgh have voted overwhelmingly for the proposed resolution for an increase in Members' contributions by £1.00 per annum, to be divided equally between the Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) and the Diamond Education Grant (DEG). The Benevolent Fund donation would remain the same at £2.00 per member.

Our member in Romania

Sally Wood-Lamont joined SIE in 1992 while she was a librarian at Edinburgh University. She was involved in a charity sending books to Romania, and through that work spent a two-year sabbatical in Cluj-Napoca. She subsequently made the decision to move there permanently and took up a position in the Medical University Library in Cluj.

When she first moved to Romania she was moved by the plight of disabled people and felt that there was a need to help integrate young disabled people into society. She believed the best way to do this was through sport, and set up the Lamont Centre in late 1999. This centre offers a variety of facilities to

its members. Sally funds the centre, with the assistance of donations and grants that she works hard to obtain. Some members are helped with accommodation and education costs through sponsorship arrangements.

Teams from the Lamont Centre have competed in Romania and abroad and, through her involvement in sport for the disabled, Sally was appointed Chair of the Romanian Paralympic Association in 2009 and still holds that position.

In 2019 Lamont Centre athletes competed in 3 World Championships and 3 European Championships, achieving a number of successes.

Sally's achievements in the integration of disabled people into Romanian society have been recognised in Romania and the UK – she was awarded an MBE in 2002. There have been significant changes in Romania since she first went there, but her work goes on!

Dorothy

Friendship Links

As noted in our last SIEnna, there are a number of FLs:

SI Caldwell, Idaho, USA: Irene

SI Cockermouth, England: Pat Black

SI Kiev, Ukraine: Winifred

SI Madurai, India: Myint Su

SI Riverside, California, USA: Trish

SI Sioux Falls, South Dakota, USA: Irene

Irene notes that we received a lovely card and comments from SICaldwell. She reports that the following:

Our friendship link club in Caldwell has sent us a beautiful greeting card thanking us for our Club's news. Marlene, our correspondent, has completed a year as District Director, a busy but inspiring time for her. A new club has been started in the area but it seems generally membership is decreasing as younger women are too busy to join Soroptimist Clubs although they applaud our aims.

The card is signed by members of the club

Some of the comments

'Thank you for keeping us up to date on your club. We enjoy your letters and look forward to hearing from you.' Renee

'Thank you for your interesting and detailed letters. I hope someday to visit Scotland' Debbie

'Good to hear from you! Have a great Spring.' Chantele

'God Bless. Have a good year' Ruth



scrutiny@parliament.uk

01 June 2020

Dear Committee Members

Domestic Abuse Bill – legal protection for women who offend as a result of abuse

We the Soroptimist UK Programme Action Committee hope the Public Bill Committee will join us in supporting the Prison Reform Trust's proposals to amend the Bill to improve legal protection for victims/survivors who offend due to their experience of domestic abuse.

Official figures show that nearly 60% of women in prison are victims/survivors of domestic abuse and this is likely to be an underestimate. Many have been driven to offend by their experience of abuse, yet they have no effective defence. Parliament now has an opportunity to modernise the law through the Domestic Abuse Bill, by introducing legal defences that reflect improved public understanding of domestic abuse. The proposed legislation and surrounding policy framework would encourage earlier disclosure of abuse and access to support.

Soroptimists are committed to improving the lives of girls and women locally, nationally and internationally. Many of our members are involved in delivering local women's services, supporting women's refuges and engaging with women's prisons and can bear witness to the need for better legal protection. We commend the evidence gathered by the Prison Reform Trust Transforming Lives

programme and note the wide range of endorsements that their proposals have garnered: <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/WhatWeDo/Projectsresearch/Women/DomesticAbuse>.

We urge you to amend the Domestic Abuse Bill to include the proposed statutory defence. This would send out a clear signal of support to women in very vulnerable situations and significantly improve the legal framework for those who have been victims of more serious offences than those of which they are accused.

Yours faithfully

Lindsay Green

Liz Dominey

Notes from SIE Club Member:

Rape

I, a member of SIEinburgh Club, was disturbed to read that in rape trials the defendant can still mention the victim's sexual history; Rape Crisis Scotland and others are campaigning that the victim should have legal aid for a lawyer if this happens.

I remember SI Scotland South campaigning about this years ago - can anyone remember this?

I have asked Scotland North and South if any clubs remember.

I have contacted my MSP and Lothians regional MSPs and kept Rape Crisis Scotland informed.

I can send members a copy of the email if they wish to also contact their MSPs.

Domestic Abuse

I have written to my MP Ms Cherry to say that as a Soroptimist I am looking for parity within the UK as Scotland's Domestic Abuse Act became law in 2018.

Ms Cherry replied in March that she and her SNP colleagues have urged the UK Government to follow the lead of the Scottish Government, which has a strong record on this important issue.

I wrote again on 8th June citing an article in the current SIGBI online magazine p4-5, which expresses concern that the Bill may be hurried through without due consideration of points outlined in the article.

Lindsey has also written to her MP Ian Murray and received a reply.

I can also send members a copy of my emails if they wish to also contact their MPs.

Clothes at Loststock

Loststock A project for Regional clubs??

Maureen Maguire, UKPAC Secretary
ukpacsecretary@gmail.com

EstherRoberts
<mail@plasnewyddbach.force9.co.uk

You have probably heard about the problems that the lockdown is causing for clothing manufacturers in Bangladesh and India as a lot of the big brands have cancelled orders and many are delaying or refusing full payment for stock received but which they are unable to sell. According to one news report, in their survey of big UK retailers, only Primark reported that they are going to pay for all they have ordered.

Loststock is a company based in Edinburgh. They have bought some of this unwanted stock and are selling it in boxes of 3 tops for £35 (+£3.99 postage). You give them your size, age and colour preference and they send you a 'lucky dip' of 3 tops. The full retail price would have been around £70, but because Loststock have much lower overheads than conventional retailers, they can pay the manufacturers, cover their own costs and make a substantial donation to the charity SAJIDA from the £35. Have a look at their website. Even if you don't want to buy, it is encouraging and informative to see what they are doing. The link below is for Loststock.

https://loststock.com/?fbclid=IwAR1nOtVLjPUSK9IGuvhweoQo2x_Hm22RdUfCPaFWGTIFDxJpoRGw2Wjjevs0

ScotlandSouth Region 27.June 2pm

Through WebEx, the virtual meeting will have opportunity for a club to give a 10 min presentation on how they are doing during these times. To download the app please go to www.webex.com

SIGBI News Briefing 5 June 2020

Appeal for funds for statue at SIGBI plot at the National Arboretum

SI Vacancies for Treasurer and Director of Advocacy

SIGBI News Briefing 12.6.2020

Day of Action 18 July

SIGBI Club Mailing 19 June

Advice on PA Database

Website Training Video

A Message from British Red Cross

Hi SI Edinburgh, from British Red Cross Fundraising Events (via website)

I hope you and members of the group are all safe and well during this challenging time.

I'm Esme Smithson, Community Fundraising, at the British Red Cross; I'm reaching out to ask if SI Edinburgh could support the British Red Cross and our response to the Covid-19 crisis by getting involved in some of the fun activities we are doing online?

We're currently supporting the most vulnerable people within the community; we're delivering food parcels and helping people financially impacted by the crisis through our Hardship Fund. Many people have needed our support over the past few weeks and we know this need will only increase in the coming weeks and months.

Why we need your support:

It just isn't safe to run our face to face fundraising activities right now so like many other charities, we are working hard to raise vital funds through online fundraising activities so we can meet the need for support at this time.

We would love to have your support with our online fundraising activities. Could you get involved with an activity below?

•2.6challenge Can you take part by doing an activity 26 times, for 2.6

minutes or 26 minutes? Ideas include baking 26 cupcakes, walking 2.6 miles or dancing for 26 minutes. (You can do anything!) Complete your challenge and make a donation (any amount will make a big difference).

- Virtual bucket shake -set up a fundraising page (we can help!) and ask your friends and family to donate whatever they can to support our response. We can't shake our buckets outside, so we're shaking them online!

It would be fantastic if you could help in some way, whether that's taking part in an activity or simply by sharing this message with friends, family or across your social media sites and website. It would really help.

Please let me know what you think - I'd love to hear back from you. esmesmithson@redcross.org.uk.



Clephane's mystery plant...???

SIGBI News Briefing 12.6.2020 SIGBI Vote Ballot No 106

Club Ballot 12 – Director of Governance – one nomination – closing date 31 July 2020 Sylvia Watson

Club Ballot 13 – Director of Membership – two nominations – closing date 31 July 2020 Chevonne Agana Rita Beaumont



BALLOT NO: 106

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND
2nd Floor, Beckwith House, 1 Wellington Road North, Stockport
Company No: 07058666

ELECTION OF SIGBI DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP 2020-2022

Two nominations have been received for the post of SIGBI Director of Membership 2020-2022 – Chevonne Agana and Rita Beaumont. The ballot is being circulated without nomination forms, as full details of the candidates are available on the SIGBI Website, together with the Role Specification for this post.

Chevonne Agana <https://sigbi.org/members/files/Federation-Elections-2020-Director-of-Membership-Chevonne-Agana.pdf>

Rita Beaumont <https://sigbi.org/members/files/Federation-Elections-2020-Director-of-Membership-Rita-Beaumont-22-May-2020.pdf>

If you would prefer to receive an email copy of the nomination form, please contact SIGBI HQ.

In compliance with the Federation’s policy and using the information provided, rather than any personal knowledge you may have of the candidate, indicate your vote by marking a cross in the box next to your decision.

Please return the completed ballot paper to:

SIGBI HQ
2nd Floor, Beckwith House
1 Wellington Road North
Stockport SK4 1AF
Fax Number (00 44) 0161 477 6152 Email: hq@sigbi.org

**TO REACH THE OFFICE BY 16.00 HRS ON FRIDAY, 31 JULY 2020
FAXED AND EMAILED BALLOTS WILL BE ACCEPTED**

CHEVONNE AGANA	
RITA BEAUMONT	
ABSTAIN	



BALLOT NO: 106

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND (SIGBI) LIMITED
2nd Floor, Beckwith House, 1 Wellington Road North, Stockport, SK4 1AF
Company No: 07058666

ELECTION OF SIGBI DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE 2020-2022

One nomination has been received for the post of SIGBI Director of Governance 2020-2022 – Sylvia Watson. The ballot is being circulated without a nomination form, as full details of the candidate are available on the SIGBI Website, together with the Role Specification for this post.

Sylvia Watson <https://sigbi.org/members/files/Federation-Elections-2020-Director-of-Governance-Sylvia-Watson-27-May-2020.pdf>

If you would prefer to receive an email copy of the nomination form, please contact SIGBI HQ.

In compliance with the Federation’s policy and using the information provided, rather than any personal knowledge you may have of the candidate, indicate your vote by marking a cross in the box next to your decision.

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TO REACH THE OFFICE BY 16.00 HRS ON FRIDAY, 31 JULY 2020
NO VOTES WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER THAT DATE
FAXED AND EMAILED BALLOTS WILL BE ACCEPTED

FOR	
AGAINST	
ABSTAIN	

Chris has sent information on the votes to Club members earlier this month. She welcomes members’ votes by 24th July so she can send the results to SIGBI in good time. So there is no need to send your vote and confirmation to SIGBI.

Our next SIE meeting will be on 9 September at 7.30 and almost certainly by skype. If that should change, Friendship Groups and the Summer Newsletter will let you know. Meanwhile, keep safe indoors as much as possible. With best wishes from the President Team and SIEnna Editors