

**Soroptimist  
International  
Edinburgh  
news  
notes  
anecdotes**

**SIEnna 207 April 2022**



participation of many club members at the AGM. It was lovely to be able to take some commemorative photos of the presentations in the room and for those on Zoom we will have to take better pictures when we next see them in real life than just a screen shot! This marks so many years (375 years!) of energy and commitment to the work of the club. It was very interesting to note that the vast majority of club members moved from other clubs when they joined the Edinburgh group. As I said, for us newbies, the bar is set high! Liz

5 years : Trish M, Alison, Myint Su, Anna, Lindsey and Christine  
30 years : Sally, Pat Black, Hilary, Winifred, Kathleen and Nikki  
45 Years Marjory. Marjory was also presented with the pendant that was gifted to SI Leith by SI Turku and is presented to commemorate the longest serving Soroptimist who is a member of SI Edinburgh

**Presentation of Recognition of Service**

**It was an absolute privilege to be able to celebrate and acknowledge with the club the very many years of**

**SIEnna 207 Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Ltd Company**

**SIE Business Meeting held on 13 April 2022 (at ECYH and on Zoom)**

**Present: President Nikki(in the Chair, on Zoom due to Covid) +Liz, Anna, Lindsey, Myint Su, Marjory, Edith and Marianne (at ECYH), and Pat, Kathleen, Winifred, Christine, Clephane and Dorothy (on Zoom)**

**Soroptimist Vision & Mission – read by President Nikki.**

**Apologies for absence were received from 6 members: Irene, Morag, Trish (P), Alison, Patricia and Gari and from Eva M (SI Dunfermline).**

**News of members: Anna reported that Trish (M) has become an associate member (for personal reasons), Trish (P) has become a linked member (looking after her mother) and Patricia's membership will also change as she is to be spending more time in Spain.**

**President Nikki reported that Eva M had asked if she may continue to attend some SIE meetings, while remaining a member of SI Dunfermline. It was agreed that Eva was very welcome to attend any meetings.**

**Christine noted that Karen Y, a former member, had been mentioned in an article in the Evening News in connection with her work at Braidburn Valley Park and Saughton.**

**Minutes of last Meeting 9 March 2022 – Accepted (proposed by Clephane and seconded by Myint Su). There were no matters arising.**

**Actions: Myint Su has sent a donation to SI Europe for Ukraine.**

**Anna has contacted Margaret M re a Scotsman article. Nothing further to report.**

**President Nikki has not yet received the No 63 video.**

**President Nikki has circulated the links re refugees and responded to Scotland South about fees.**

**Liz has agreed to be SIE's Safeguarding Representative. She suggested showing SIGBI's short video on safeguarding at a future meeting.**

**Saughton: no progress as Marjory's contact was temporarily unavailable due to her duties at the spring show. AGM first notices were issued.**

**Correspondence: Christine**  
**Everything has already been circulated to members by email. Christine mentioned a scam email that she had received, purporting to be from Morag R (whom some members will know from Scotland South). Clephane offered to email members with an address to which they could report phishing scams.(ACTION: Clephane to email members re phishing scams)**

**Treasurer's Report: Myint Su**

**Myint Su reported that the accounts had been passed by Taru, the independent examiner. She suggested inviting Taru to a club social event, as a thank-you.**

**The subscription for a full member for 2022/23 is £120 and for a linked member is £60. Members were asked to make payment as soon as possible. (ACTION: Members to pay subscriptions)**

**Programme Action: Lindsey**

**Lindsey has signed up, as an individual, to do a beach clean at Portobello on 24 April. Other members may wish to be involved.**

**At the AGM there will be collections of: stamps, blue or green bottle tops, items for "Smalls for All" (new pants, nearly-new bras), old mobile phones and pens. Members were asked to let Lindsey or Nikki know if they had**

items for collection but would not be at the AGM. (ACTION: Members to note collections at AGM)

**Scottish Refugee Council:** Liz's contact at SRC has set up some women-only meetings for Afghan refugee women at the end of May. Liz hopes that after that we might have more information on how SIE could be involved.

**Membership:** Anna

Anna has sent membership information to Cat M but has heard nothing further from her.

Anna reported on the SIGBI membership webinar that she had attended. She highlighted the focus on e-clubs as a way of growing SIGBI, and noted the key words: Flexible, Leadership, Communications and Commitment. The webinar is available to view on the members' area of the SIGBI website.

President Nikki suggested that UN House Scotland interns might possibly form an e-club. This is something to be considered for the future.

**Key updates:** Nikki

**Programme Action:** There have been no volunteers so far to take on the role of Programme Action Officer. President Nikki reported that she and Liz had thought about this and had the following proposal to make: Promoting **ADVOCACY** and continuing **ACTION** : SIE focus should be on advocacy by means of campaigning, lobbying etc on the refugee project, Afghanistan etc. Liz has agreed to take the lead on this, working with a group of members. As regards practical action, SIE should focus on projects we already have in place, eg Cranston Street, Kids Love Clothes, Marie Curie. Other members could be leaders on

these projects. Anything else can be considered as and when a need is identified. As no-one objected to this proposal, President Nikki will put it forward at the AGM.

**AGM:** Alison has made arrangements for refreshments to be provided by the Syrian lady who visited SIE recently. Members are encouraged to attend in person. Myint Su will ask ECYH if they will provide teas/coffees.(ACTION: Myint Su to ask ECYH re teas/coffees)

The club charter will be on display, along with regalia items. Any members with regalia items were asked to bring these to the AGM for display. Edith mentioned also gifts that had been received from other clubs to mark special occasions. She also noted that she had received from Morag a chain, originally gifted by SI Turku to SI Leith, that Morag had been given (as the club's longest serving Soroptimist?). Edith will bring this to the AGM.

Myint Su offered to bring the treasurer's ledger which dates back to the club's beginning. (ACTION: Members to bring regalia items, etc)

Vacancies to be filled are: Programme Action Officer (but see above proposal), Minute Secretary (for 12 months), Scotland South representative, UNAE representative. Members who have to complete reports for the AGM were asked to get them to Alison by 19 April. (ACTION: President, Programme Action, Treasurer, Membership, Attendance, 3S, UNAE)

Obituary for Mary B. Clephane volunteered to write an obituary of Mary, for inclusion on SIGBI website. (ACTION: Clephane to write obituary)

Communication: SIEnna - Items for inclusion to Gari by 29 April 2022, please.

**AOCB:**

SI Dnipro and SI Kiev: Winifred reported that she had received emails from friends in these clubs in Ukraine. Life is difficult for them. She mentioned that a donation from Italy had been used to buy items for wounded Ukrainian soldiers. Winifred was unsure whether the orphans who had recently arrived in Scotland from Dnipro were from the school that had been supported by SI Dnipro. Pat will try to find out.

Sally: Dorothy reported that Sally had recently been honoured with the Blue Cross medal, acknowledging her work with disabled people and paralympic sports in Romania. She was asked to pass on the club's congratulations. There will be more information in SIEnna.

(ACTION: Dorothy to send SIE congratulations to Sally)

Zoom: Thanks were expressed to those who had worked on the technology for the meeting. The sound etc had worked well.

Date of next meeting : AGM on 27 April 2022 at 7:30pm face-to-face at ECYH and on Zoom.

Date of next Business Meeting: 11 May 2022 face-to-face at ECYH and on Zoom.

**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF PAISLEY**  
**75th ANNIVERSARY CIVIC RECEPTION LUNCH**  
Soroptimist International of Paisley invite the president and one member of your club to our 75th Anniversary Lunch to be held on Sunday 12th June 2022 in the Barony Suite of the Glynhill Hotel, Paisley Road , Renfrew, at 1.30pm for 2.00pm.

Other members of your club may attend at a cost of £26.00 per person. This cost includes a welcome drink on arrival, a three course lunch plus coffee and one glass of wine or soft drink during the meal.

**SIE in the People's Friend Magazine!**

Issue no 7925 dated 30th April 2022 has a page about Sara Thomson who works for the Leith Collective gift shops which sell upcycled and recycled products and are completely free of single use plastics.

Sara has won a Points of Light Award and addressed delegates and government representatives at COP26. She studied photography; Ocean Terminal shopping Centre gave her an exhibition space with which she enabled artists to display their work without high commission costs. Leith Collective shops evolved from this venture.

I have visited the shops at Ocean Terminal and at the St Enoch Centre in Glasgow.

I would recommend a visit if you are looking for an interesting purchase.

Chris

**St Peter's & Building Bridges presents:**

A Syrian Community Meal

Saturday 14 May, 5pm

14 Luton place, Edinburgh Eh8 9PE

Telephone: 0131 563 8198

Join us for this unique event, hosted by a local Syrian family! We will share a main meal, dessert and delicious Arabic coffee.

Vegetarian options will be available. BYOB. Places are very limited, so please book fast! Cost is £12 per person. All money raised will go directly to support this family.

Eventbrite

Booking:

[www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/syrian-community-meal-tickets-331350918517](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/syrian-community-meal-tickets-331350918517)

Questions? Email Kristee:  
communitydevelopment@stpetersedinbur  
gh.org

Hadil, Mouaz and their handsome son! – with love from Syria

Do you recall the event last year when Kristee (St Peters Church Community Development Officer) came and educated us at our speaker meeting on the challenges and experience of being a refugee arriving in Edinburgh? No-one could forget the outstanding presentation from Mouaz, a Syrian refugee who arrived in Edinburgh a few years ago with his family, who was so grateful for the welcome but shared with us the challenges of the bureaucracy which has prevented him from being able to work, to give back, to earn, to support his family and to set an example to his son. It was heart breaking to hear but beautifully and honestly delivered in amazing English and with such dignity. It was also lovely to hear his son talk positively and with pride, about his enjoyment of school and with a great Scottish twang! What an amazing family.

The story moves on! With the unstinting support of St Peters Church, Hadil's parents have finally arrived to join the family in Edinburgh. Hadil, Mouaz and Hadil's mum Huda have agreed to host and cater for a **'Syrian Community Meal'** to be held at St Peters Church (Lutton Place) , Edinburgh on **Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May @5pm**. A unique experience – two courses and coffee for £12!!! (vegetarian option available) Please see box alongside for a link to book your place to meet Hadil and Mouaz again and to support fundraising towards Hadil's parents sponsorship by St Peters Church.

*I think it will be an event to be treasured and never forgotten. Book soon – its first come first served!*

Nikki



Peace Please is the message captured by Anna

**Date of next meetings:**

**25 May 2022 Speaker**  
**May East. UN House Scotland Cities, Gender and Climate**

**8 June 2022 Business**  
**22 June 2022 Social Evening**

**President's Message: Focus for 2022/2023**

In the midst of searching for ideas for a theme and focus for us for the next 12 months I was diverted into re-reading our 2 excellent 'history' booklets as I was also conscious, we were about to achieve a further milestone at the end of this year – the 95th Anniversary of our Club being chartered on 6th December 2022.

The story of the inception of SI Edinburgh, the subsequent chartering of SI Leith and then the coming together of members of the 2 clubs in 2002 was eye opening and inspirational. And it was a timely reminder of the legacy we have a responsibility to perpetuate – both from 95 years of SI Edinburgh but also 100 years of Soroptimism.

My inspiration came from the front cover and the title of our club history – **LOOKING FORWARD** - a phrase embraced by our founder members in 1927. So in looking **BACK**, I had found our focus for the next 12 months '**LOOKING FORWARD**' It was a pertinent link to our past but a great approach for our future.

The entry in Chambers Thesaurus for **FORWARD LOOKING** encompasses 'enterprising, reforming, progressive, modern, innovative, dynamic and enlightened' and with the experiences of the last 2 years (when we have been forced to show a number of these skills) and the steer from our SIGBI leaders that to survive and to grow, we must major on flexibility, leadership, commitment and communication I thought what a great mantra for us to embrace and put our energies into.

So in **LOOKING FORWARD** I hope we can show even greater initiative, flexibility and progression in the way we approach all aspects of our club agenda – Programme Action, Membership, Press & Publicity and our Programme. I am sure a few years ago we didn't expect us all to be Zoom literate, tech savvy and promoting our activities on social media – so we know we can adapt!!!! Even if we were a bit wide eyed initially!!

Thoughts on how we can maintain our core activities as well as evolve our existing ways of working over the next 12 months, are to

- Focus more on our role in Advocacy – develop our lobbying capability and maximise our connections- there seems to be no greater need for this than now!
- Build powerful Partnerships – optimise our relationship with UN House Scotland and develop connections with eg clubs within the Region, other local NGOs and charities – in the hope that our combined efforts generate even greater output.
- Continue to promote our organisation and encourage new members through supporting the set-up of an e'club

We will continue to promote environmental issues with raising awareness, recycling and educating ourselves. We will continue to fight against 'violence against women' through our 'Orange the World' activities. We will continue to give practical support to our local charities – such as Kids Love

Clothes and Cranston Street Women's Hostel. And we will continue to raise what funds we can, to respond to any financial needs we become aware of.

We will also continue to learn, serve and have fun – not least to celebrate our own 95 years of serving in the name of developing and empowering women and girls, locally, nationally and internationally.

So in the next 12 months I hope we can continue to work well together to celebrate our past, maintain the momentum of the present and focus on strengthening our future. **AND LOOK FORWARD** Nikki