



Soroptimist International Edinburgh news notes anecdotes

SIEnna 216 April 2023

SIE President's Message

It was with great shock and sadness that earlier this month, we heard of the death of our committed sister Soroptimist and Treasurer, Myint Su. It is still hard to believe but a large number of us were able to experience the joyous celebration of Myint Su's life at the committal service a number of days ago. The chapel was full of people whom Myint Su had inspired, supported, taught and helped grow - a great testimony to a life well lived and the 'optimum' person that she was. We are dedicating part of this and next month's newsletters to remembering Myint Su and recognising the great contribution she made to the organisation and to us as friends.

Spring has definitely sprung and lots of signs of new life and fresh beginnings. And as we approach the start of our new Soroptimist year we look forward to another successful and fulfilling year led by our new President Liz. We are a small but powerfully determined club and I know we will continue to work brilliantly together and face into whatever challenges and opportunities are presented to us to continue our focus on empowering, enabling and educating women and girls. Nikki



Myint Su

She and I both joined the Club in the same year, 1995. At that point, she was working in IT, an area in which she had qualifications, but I cannot remember now in what capacity or where, I am afraid. But I do remember that shortly after she joined, she gave the Club a presentation on the potential that IT had to offer, when the Internet and email were still novelties. I clearly remember her describing how she knew someone who was responsible for directing the flow of ship traffic in Hong Kong Harbour (it was still a British colony then) from his computer in the Orkney Islands, where he had a croft. Working from home taken to the extreme!

She lived in a big beautiful main door maisonette in Bellevue Terrace, right at the eastern edge of the New Town. When I was out of work now many many years ago, she kindly let me come down to her house, where she had a large room with IT equipment, which she let me use, which was invaluable to me at that difficult time. In that room, she did a lot of work for the Club, such as producing and printing the Syllabuses and Members'

addresses' booklets. She and her husband, Clive, used to host Club functions in their magnificent sitting room and served wonderful meals, which they cooked themselves. I remember going there once for a fundraising evening for a Burmese charity and enjoyed their most wonderful Burmese cooking.

Although she fled from Burma in the early 1970s, her interest in the country never waned and it was always interesting to hear her talk about it. Indeed she went back there on quite a few visits, and during one of them, Aung San Suu Kyi was freed from house arrest. In addition, she and Clive set up a charity, the Minghalar Trust with the aim of collecting and sending out books and other educational materials, to help educate women and girls in Burma, especially in Higher education. I think that with the political turmoil over in Burma and the pandemic, it has probably now been wound up.

She held many roles in the Club, including that of Treasurer at the time of her death, where she was not afraid to ask questions, which made many things clearer to those of us who were not intimately acquainted with the Club's finances. She was also an enthusiastic representative of the Club at the Region, which is clearly evident from the many messages, which have come from members all over Southern Scotland. She would have served as Region President, had she not been pre-occupied with setting up the Minghalar Trust.

The Club has lost a very lively, warm and enthusiastic member.

Alison

I remember the support of Myint Su when she was President of SI Edinburgh and I was President of SI Leith and we were working on a smooth transfer of SI Leith members to SI Edinburgh.

We also enjoyed being in the same chain gang.

I also remember when SI Leith had an international evening and Myint Su wore her national dress.

She will be sorely missed.

Chris

I have memories of evenings at her home. Wonderful food and an array of goods that she brought from Burma and generously donated for our fundraising.

Her commitment to education for women in Myanmar was total. Persuading the university to run special language courses for women, organising English readers for adults, and setting up the Mingalar Trust to fund the project.

And likewise her dedication to Soroptimism. Not forgetting her sense of fun!

It must have been heart breaking for her not to be able to return to see family and friends but I never heard her complain.

It looked as though most of the Burmese community in Edinburgh attended the cremation ceremony – an indication of the respect and affection she deserved.

Clephane

We are invited by Myint Su's family to join the Buddhist Ceremony on Sunday 28 May in Northumberland

Club Dates 2023-2024

All hybrid meetings (Central Youth Hostel and Zoom) unless it specifies otherwise:

2023

April 26th AGM

May 17th (Zoom only) & 24th

June 14th and Summer outing 24th tbc

Sept 13th & 27th

Oct 11th & 25th

Nov 8th & 22nd

Dec 13th business meeting or possible Christmas do tbc

2024

Jan 10th and 24th (Zoom only)

Feb 14th & 28th

March 13th & 27th

Edinburgh Business Meeting April 12th 2023 (at ECYH and on Zoom)

Present: President Nikki (in the chair); Anna; Marjory; Lindsey; Christine; Winifred, Clephane, Gari, Alison; Pat, Liz.

Apologies: Irene, Edith, Dorothy

A minute of reflection for Myint Su

Soroptimist Vision and Mission: Gari
Minutes of last meeting (March 8th 2023)

Minutes: proposed by Alison
 seconded by Lindsey

Matters arising covered by agenda items

Correspondence: All sent on

Note – all encouraged to sign up to the “hub” as that is where most information is likely to be provided/requested from now on. Annual return will be via the hub but also email at the moment.

Treasurer’s Report: Dorothy has taken on the role following the passing of Myint Su. Thanks extended to Dorothy.

Agreed fees should be kept at £120 just now – but income kept under review during the year. Options to reduce outgoings may include reviewing the location for meetings and whether speaker meeting might all be on Zoom. Balance of accounts thought to be in good shape but Nikki to confirm with Dorothy.

Proposed purchase of SIE Zoom account to enable anyone to access and run a meeting. Nikki agreed to investigate purchase. Pat to send on club email address.

Programme Action:

1. Afghan Women’s conversational groups. The focus of this involvement has changed! Liz and Nikki met with Gosia from the Welcoming where it was clear SIE were being asked to be a “speaker” at a meeting of migrant women rather than to take part in the group chat and think about promoting their English

language skills. A meeting was set for April 11th but had to be rescheduled. We agreed to wait to hear back from Gosia and then decide how best to take his forwards.

2. Orange cafes

Still gathering interest and momentum across the country. Region agreed to use May membership Month to have a media campaign around the week of the 22nd May to further raise awareness and publicise action by SIS. Liz has drafted a press release which will be run past UKPAC next week.

Proposed making of orange hearts as “comforters” for women attending Court whilst at the cafes not thought to be a helpful idea. Possibly create orange hearts at another time once region have confirmed that they are still appreciated.

SIE next café visit will be Holyrood on Tuesday 25th April. (post meeting note: Suggest we meet outside at 1100 before going into the Café)

3. Misogyny Bill consultation

Agreed to circulate the “explainer” doc to all – Liz. (see p5 of this edition)

[Misogyny Consultation Overview](#)

Move May business meeting to the 17th to enable discussion of a SIE response following the SWC event on May 12th.

This will be on **Zoom only**.

Region are awaiting a response from a solicitor in Glasgow to help inform the nature of their response.

4. Survivors of Human Trafficking in Scotland (SOHTIS) weaving 1000 scarves project

Agreed first step to purchase a weaving pack – Liz.

5. Target ovarian cancer

To note positive progress being made in the research, the treatment and the early identification of ovarian cancer.

Anna invited to event at Parliament
Fundraiser 16th June
Webinar attended

6. Collections. Agreed to collection of items (previously suggested – Pens, Spectacles, iPhones, used postage stamps etc!) at **AGM** that will be forwarded to appropriate beneficiaries. (Post meeting Note : our recipient for used medicine blister packs is no longer able to dispose of the packs.)

Membership: In addition to region campaign through Orange cafes:

IT help may be available for clubs from students

Continue to consider and progress idea of e – club

Women involved in STEM subjects keen to meet others involved professionally
SIGBI suggests May 3, 2, 1 approach to membership - meet 3 people; follow up with 2 in person, invite 1 new person to a meeting

SIE AGM – preparation:

The following vacancies exist:

PAO, Membership Secretary, Region Representative.

First notice circulated. **Reports to be sent to Alison by April 22nd.**

Summer Outing – general consensus to arrange a visit to Tapestry of Scotland on Saturday 24th June. Details to be confirmed at May meeting.

Programme: Speaker Meeting in May to be extended to SISS. Invite to go out through Liz Jamieson. Alison to progress.

Representative updates:

SISNR and SISSR

Joint meeting Saturday 3rd June 2023 at Discovery Point, Discovery Quay, Riverside Drive, Dundee DD1 4XA

“A DAY OF DISCOVERY

Fast Fashion – friend or foe?”

Early Bird rate £39 (deadline 1st May)

Standard Rate £45 (after 1st May)

A SOROPTIMIST SCOTLAND SPECIAL EVENT

Sat 3rd June, 2023

Discovery Point,
Discovery Quay,
Riverside Drive,
Dundee. DD1 4XA

Early Bird Rate £39
(deadline 1st May)
Standard Rate £45
(after 1st May)

A DAY OF DISCOVERY
Fast Fashion – friend or foe?

Join us for a very informative and fun day of discovery. Listen to inspirational speakers and learn more about this fascinating topic. Price includes speakers, lunch, fashion show, free entry to the exciting RSS Discovery & Museum and much more!

10am: Registration & coffee
Morning Theme:
Who is making your clothes?
Afternoon Theme:
Dress For Success, plus Fashion Show
4pm: Close and coffee

For information or returning registration form please contact:
febullions@btinternet.com

3S Fund: No update

SIenna

Items for next **SIenna** to Gari by April 22nd including reflections/thoughts on Myint Su.

AOCB: Nikki and Pat participated in the SIGBI review of our social media. Positive feedback received re our facebook and website.

Summer visitors from Vancouver July 12th/13th – poss joint dinner on the 12th.
Ideas to Anna of who might be able to help and with what.

Date of next meetings:

AGM: April 26th 7.30pm ECYH and Zoom.

Business meeting: May 17th **Zoom only**

Speaker meeting: May 24th 7.30pm ECYH and Zoom

Dublin convention: July 27th – 29th

London conference November 3rd/4th



Misogyny Consultation: What do the provisions do – an explainer

There is a wide range of necessary activity to help deal with misogyny in Scotland. Baroness Kennedy's report (the report) focused on how the criminal law has a key part to play in helping drive behavioural change amongst men to prevent the harmful effects of misogyny arising, and where they do arise, ensuring the criminal justice system can respond effectively to such behaviour.

The report made recommendations for four new criminal law steps to be taken. In converting these recommendations into draft law, the Scottish Government has split up the most important recommendation – that of a public misogynistic harassment offence – into two separate offences that cover the conduct intended by the recommendation – a misogynistic harassment offence and a misogynistic behaviour offence.

Taken together, these proposals for new law are a comprehensive response to the need to address the type of male misogynistic conduct committed almost exclusively by men, which is a blight for women and girls across Scotland.

This comprehensive response ensures the criminal law can either deal for the first time, or better deal, with situations such as where someone:

- Harasses an individual woman or girl, or a specific group of women and girls by behaving in a threatening, sexual or abusive way that is likely to cause them to experience fear, alarm, degradation, humiliation or distress.
- Behaves in a sexual or abusive manner that causes a woman or girl to experience fear, alarm, degradation, humiliation or distress
- Commits certain existing offences in a manner which is motivated by, or demonstrates misogyny
- Sends threatening or abusive communications invoking rape, sexual assault or disfigurement to a woman or

girl, or a group of women and girls to intimidate or silence women, especially online, with the effect of discouraging women from participating in public debate

- Uses threatening or abusive language or communicate threatening or abusive materials intending to stir up hatred of women and girls in others

Summary of the provisions being consulted on:

An offence of misogynistic harassment

This can be seen as the core provision which will make it a criminal offence for a person to behave in a way that amounts to misogynistic harassment directed at a woman or girl or group of women and girls. It expands the existing criminal law by making it an offence to behave in a way that is threatening, abusive or sexual towards a woman or girl, where this behaviour is directed at them by reason of their being a woman or girl, and a reasonable person would consider the behaviour likely to cause them fear, alarm, degradation, humiliation or distress.

For the offence to be committed, the accused must either intend their behaviour to have one or more of these effects or be reckless as to whether their behaviour is likely to do so. This offence is wider than, for example, the offence of 'threatening or abusive behaviour'.

Firstly, it captures conduct which is sexual only, as well as that which is threatening or abusive.

Secondly, it covers behaviour likely to cause degradation, humiliation or distress as well as fear or alarm.

Thirdly, the court is asked to consider whether the behaviour would be likely to have these effects on the specific victim, rather than on a hypothetical 'reasonable person'.

In contrast with the offence of 'stalking' a single incident is sufficient for the offence to be committed.

The kinds of behaviour this offence may cover include shouting sexually abusive remarks to a woman, rubbing up against a woman in a crowded place, or using abusive language to a woman or girl who does not want to be 'chatted up'.

An offence of misogynistic behaviour

This offence is intended to deal with misogynistic behaviour which is likely to have the effect of causing a woman or girl to experience fear, alarm, degradation, humiliation or distress where that behaviour is not directed at a specific woman or girl or group of women and girls (and so could not be described as 'harassment').

It expands the existing criminal law by making it an offence for a person to behave in a manner that is sexual or abusive (or both) where that behaviour is either motivated by contempt or malice and ill-will towards women or girls or is of such a character that a reasonable person would consider it to be contemptuous of women and girls, and which is likely to have the effect of causing a reasonable woman or girl to suffer fear, alarm, degradation, humiliation or distress if they are at least reckless as to whether their behaviour would have this effect.

As with the offence of 'misogynistic harassment' above, it is wider in scope than offences of, for example, threatening or abusive behaviour or common law breach of the peace by explicitly criminalising behaviour which is sexual only, as well as that which is abusive, and behaviour likely to have the effect of causing a reasonable woman or girl to experience degradation, humiliation or distress as well as fear or alarm.

The kinds of behaviour this offence may cover include watching graphic pornography in a public place such as a bus or train where women and girls are likely to see or hear it, or having a loud sexually explicit conversation discussing

women in a demeaning or degrading way, in a place where women and girls in the vicinity are likely to hear it.

A statutory aggravation concerning misogyny

We expect the majority of criminal misogynistic behaviour will be covered either by the proposed new offences of misogynistic harassment and misogynistic behaviour, or by existing criminal offences where the misogynistic element of the offence is clearly recognised, such as rape, sexual assault and domestic abuse.

However, someone could commit other offences against a woman or girl and be motivated by, or demonstrates, misogyny. This could include, for example, assault.

The statutory aggravation will ensure that, as is the case with existing statutory aggravations concerning e.g. hate crime or domestic abuse, the fact that an offence had a misogynistic motive or the accused demonstrates misogyny, is recorded and taken into account when sentencing.

The aggravation defines an offence as being aggravated by misogyny:

- Where there is a specific victim of the offence, at the time of committing the offence, or immediately before or after doing so, the accused demonstrates contempt, or malice and ill-will towards the victim on the basis that the victim is or is presumed by the accused to be a woman or girl; or

- Whether or not there is a specific victim of the offence, the offence is motivated by contempt, or malice and ill-will towards women and girls.

As recommended by the Working Group, offences where the misogynistic aspect of the offence is widely recognised, such as sexual offences, offences involving domestic abuse, and the new offences proposed in the Working Group's report, are 'carved out' from the aggravation so

that it cannot be libelled in these cases. This ensures that the court would not have to consider whether an individual instance of, for example, rape or sexual assault involved the offender being demonstrates contempt or malice and ill-will because the victim was a woman.

An offence of threatening or abusive communications to women or girls that reference rape, sexual assault or disfigurement

The Working Group heard during their evidence-gathering phase that a particular issue faced by women and girls is the experience of messages threatening or invoking rape, sexual assault and disfigurement being used to intimidate or silence women, especially online, with the effect of discouraging women from participating in public debate.

Offences like threatening or abusive behaviour under section 38 of the 2010 Act can be used to prosecute this behaviour in certain circumstances. However, they require the court to be satisfied that the comments are “threatening or abusive” and likely to cause a reasonable person to suffer “fear or alarm” and that the person making the comments was at least reckless as to whether their conduct was likely to cause “fear or alarm” to a reasonable person.

This offence criminalises sending an abusive message to a woman or girl that refers to rape, sexual assault or disfigurement.

There is no requirement to prove that the message is likely to have a particular effect on the recipient, nor that the accused must intend to cause, or be reckless as to whether their behaviour is likely to cause, any particular effect on the recipient.

As such, the circumstances in which this offence can be used are wider than is the case for the offence of ‘misogynistic

harassment’, though we acknowledge that in many instances, the sending of such a message would also amount to an offence of misogynistic harassment.

An offence of stirring up hatred against women and girls

The Working Group recommend that an offence of ‘stirring up hatred of women and girls’ is created. While in many circumstances, behaviour intended to stir up hatred of women and girls may amount to an offence of misogynistic behaviour or misogynistic harassment, these offences are concerned with the direct effect of behaviour on women and girls towards whom it is directed, or who may otherwise see or hear it.

By contrast, behaviour intended to stir up hatred against women and girls, may take place in all-male spaces, including online. This offence is concerned with the effect that the behaviour may be likely to have on the (probably male) people in whom the perpetrator is seeking to stir up hatred of women and girls.

As with the ‘stirring up of hatred’ offences concerning religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity, age, disability or variations in sex characteristics, the offence is committed where the accused behaves in a threatening or abusive manner, or communicates threatening or abusive material, with the intention of stirring up hatred against women and girls.

The offence would cover behaviour intended to stir up hatred of particular groups of women and girls, as well as women and girls in general - for example, women and girls who dress a particular way, or single women and girls, or women and girls who campaign for (or indeed against) women’s rights – but it applies only where the accused intends to stir up hatred of women and girls and not merely a group of people predominantly comprised of women and girls.



Orange Café March 2023!

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF DUNFERMLINE

President-Elect Eva would like to invite you to our Annual Charter Lunch being held on Sunday 14th May 2023 12.30pm for 1pm at Pitbauchlie House Hotel, Aberdour Road, Dunfermline KY11 4PB Price £30.00.

Soroptimists and Guests most welcome.

Payment for the Lunch may be made via BACS to account:

Bank of Scotland,

Account name: Soroptimist International of Dunfermline.

Sort code 80-06-55

Account Number 00309588.

Please use your name and lunch as the reference for the payments

Please acknowledge your attendance and any diet requirements to:

Mrs Margaret Dow, Email: dmargaret114@aol.com

No later than Friday 5 May

UNHS Healthcare event

UNHS is holding a roundtable 'Is the right to healthcare fulfilled in the UK?' on **Thursday the 27th of April from 18:30 to 19:45!**

Here is the eventbrite link to register for a ticket. Of course it is free of charge: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/is-the-right-to-healthcare-fulfilled-in-the-uk-tickets-621215150237>



It was worth 2 hours dressed as a Daffodil!

Nikki and Edith recently represented the Club and supported the Marie Curie Daffodil Appeal by collecting at the local Retail Park. Between them they collected over £340! Nikki said "that made it worth looking like an over grown daffodil for 2 hours! The faces on the small children as they walked past looking at this talking daffodil was priceless!"

Nearly £1500 was raised just on our patch on the day - what a brilliant result for an excellent cause'

UNITED NATIONS HOUSE SCOTLAND PRESENTS:



'IS THE RIGHT TO HEALTHCARE FULFILLED IN THE UK'

A ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON HEALTHCARE IN THE UK.

27th of April 2023

18:30 - 19:45 BST



Free Webinar

