



information going forward – we will no longer receive summary emails from SIGBI via Christine. )

Dublin Convention - end of July – is any member planning to go?

### SI Edinburgh

Afghan Women's conversational groups - The Welcoming. I have been back in touch with Chiara. She is going to chat to her colleague Gosia about how we might be able to "visit" or support a group and get back to me.

Orange the World - letter sent to all MSPs - arrived but no specific response. Orange cafe meet up took place in January (Pat, Anna, Lindsey, Edith and Dunfermline Soroptimist) - attracted some interest from folk in the cafe.

We next meet up on the 25<sup>th</sup> Feb at National Portrait Gallery - this is a Saturday - can people do this?

Marie Curie collecting coming up at the beginning of March - individual members have signed up.

SIE signed Refuge campaign to UK government about impact of 'cost of living' crisis on safety for women and increased difficulties as a result of hardship in escaping domestic violence.

Agreed to collection of items (previously suggested – Pens, Spectacles, iPhones, used postage stamps etc!) at AGM that will be forwarded to appropriate beneficiaries.

A member of the Scottish Refugee Council has received an award.

### Breast Cancer Prevention, Scotland

We have been informed by a member that the Breast Cancer Prevention Scotland has folded. We supported this small charity, based in Dunfermline for a few years.

### **Membership:**

Jessie cannot join us at present because of family commitments. I have suggested Associate membership. She is interested in joining the club in the future and thanks members for their warm welcome before Christmas.

A new enquiry from Sara who will join us on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. She and her baby will also join us on 25<sup>th</sup> February at the National Portrait Gallery. She is on maternity leave until April when she plans to return to work. Her work is on issues of reproductive rights and privacy in the non-profit sector.

There will be a joint north and south conference in Dundee on 3<sup>rd</sup> June (see later in this newsletter) Anna

### **Report from 'Number 63' AGM 21/1/23**

Nikki reported that it had been a difficult year for the hotel, Number 63.

- Walls were still very damp following the flooding.
- Dining room chairs took two years to dry out.
- Occupancy was not good, but this had been expected.
- A separate Limited Company has been set up (Number 63 Hotel Limited) as a wholly owned subsidiary of Number 63(Soroptimist) Limited.Action taken

following advice to separate/protect certain assets; this was supported by the accountants.

- There is the possibility of a self-catering flat to be included in the accommodation available, in the future.
- Soroptimist Gin is no longer available.
- If going to London, members are encouraged to use Number 63.
- The auditor agreed the accounts.
- There are some Board vacancies but no nominations received. Therefore, all agreed to continue as a smaller Board and co-opt some with special knowledge/abilities when necessary.

### **SIE AGM – preparation:**

The following vacancies exist:

PAO, Membership Secretary, Region Representative, Minute Secretary.

President Elect will be required in a year, because Liz is doing two years as President.

Alison will send out the first notice of the AGM in March, to comply with the law.

Members will then nominate for election or appointment as required.

**SI Maribor:** has issued an invitation to members to join them at their 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations see email 5/2/23.

Action: tell Nikki if you plan to attend.

### **Programme:**

The speaker planned for 22<sup>nd</sup> February is unable to come. Pat informed us that two new interns from California were working with her. They could be invited to speak to the club via Zoom.

Action: Pat to liaise with Alison.

### **Representative updates:**

#### SISNR and SISSR

Joint meeting Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 1<sup>st</sup> May)

Standard Rate £45 (after 1<sup>st</sup> May)

Further information to follow.

#### SISSR:

Officers required: some have agreed to serve another year.

The position of the Federation Consultative Councillor to represent SISS Region is about to become vacant after Margaret holding office for her full term. If anyone is interested then please see recent email from Christine with Job description and application form.

Next SISS Regional meeting is via Zoom on 11/3/23. Full details will be circulated once received.

**United Nations:**

UN House has about sixty interns this year working on a wide range of projects from Climate and gender to human rights in various countries to nuclear disarmament to Model UN and many more in between. For more information check out the UN House website <https://www.unhscotland.org.uk/>

If any member would be prepared to act as a mentor for any of the new interns then please contact Gari.

**3S Fund:**

One application received from Thea had originally been to go to China with Project Trust. This became impossible and the destination was changed to Ghana. Thea has sent her report which is published in this edition of SIEnna.

One further application received but after discussion with the applicant it was established that the project did not connect/specifically support women and girls and therefore did not meet the 3S criteria.

**Communication:**Social Media

Pat encouraged members to sign up to the Hub. This new system will replace the SIGBI News Briefing and Club Mailing that come regularly from Christine. All members were encouraged to check all their emails in order to receive information as of now. Should you have any problems Pat is willing to help.

Morag Insley:

The next edition of SIEnna will include a reflexion of Morag's life. If you have any photos could you please send them to the editor?

Items for next SIEnna to Gari by Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February.

**AOCB:**Pat re-appointed to W7:

Nikki congratulated Pat on being re-appointed to the W7 international group, which advises the G7 leaders on gender equality. She represents Soroptimist International advocating to world leaders on equality and human rights for women and girls.

**Date of next meeting:**

Speaker Meeting: Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> February at 7.30 pm at ECYH and on Zoom.

**SI SCOTLAND NORTH AND SI SCOTLAND SOUTH MEMBERSHIP FORUM  
ZOOM MEETING 30.1.23.**

**Present:** Aileen, Pat, Janice, Jenifer, Anna, Audrey, Iris

**Apologies:** Marilyn, Annette, Susan

Aileen welcomed everyone and spoke of her recent attendance at the UKPAC meeting and of a zoom meeting with Lindsay SIGBI PA Director, and Dishy SIGBI Membership

Director. Aileen felt that the notes from the last meeting showed how motivated and enthusiastic Dishy was in her role as membership Director. Dishy will be working closely with the PA and PR Directors.

Audrey thought that working together as regions had the advantage of the size and the opportunity to share new ideas.

Iris spoke of the unfortunate situation in Crieff where there had been many resignations and things were still very much in limbo. There was a lack of motivation although she agreed that Dishy was inspirational. The attitude of SIGBI had tainted so many club members but there was a small number who were determined to keep going. It was agreed that we must all stand together and keep focusing on the positives.

Anna talked about the “Orange Cafes” which some clubs in the south had started. These take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> of every month and members meet in a variety of cafes, wear orange and orange badges, and have information about Soroptimism for anyone who shows interest. Although this was a UN initiative to spread awareness about violence against women, it was an important opportunity to sell Soroptimism rather than trying to recruit members. Promoting and publicising what we do and stand for is crucial. Cafes and other workplaces can be asked to display posters and if they are not able to do so publicly (as many chains are not) they can be asked to put them in staff rooms. There is the possibility of one of the orange cafes taking place in the café within the Scottish Parliament.

Aileen referred to the Federation Councillors’ report, which talked about the change in women’s lives and how important it was that we fit into that. Recent leavers’ feedback had showed that one of the main reasons for leaving was not being made to feel welcome, something which is of great concern.

Positives mentioned by members were new PR posts, Facebook briefing sessions, CANVA training, and the strapline “Standing Up For Women and Girls”. There was to be a survey of the social activity carried out by clubs and this would be done by the Federation Councillors.

E-clubs were discussed and there is some enthusiasm for trying to set one up in Scotland. Interns at UN House may be interested. A recent e-club was started in Northern Ireland and they were focusing on a different theme for each meeting.

Members spoke of current club activities. These included:

- Activities carried out for the 16 days and plans for International Women’s Day.
- Working with schools – Aileen said her local school had made a Tik Tok video about violence against women and this would be shown in the Scottish Parliament.
- Crieff have a Soroptimist Cup and pupils in local schools are talking about inspirational women.
- Taking part in Reclaim the Night marches.
- “Delivering Equally Safe” funds are available for work with young people in schools and other community settings.
- Mentoring and connecting with young people, other women’s groups and charities.
- Food tasting for IWD.
- The IWD Scottish Parliament event.

Aileen spoke of the joint Scotland North and South event, which would take place in Dundee of June 3<sup>rd</sup>. More information on this would be circulated very shortly.

An interesting format for perhaps an open night is to ask all soroptimists to speak for 2 minutes on what is good about being a soroptimist – no negativity allowed! It is also important to allow new members the opportunity to ask questions of longer serving members without feeling embarrassed or inadequate.

**Next Meeting: Monday March 27<sup>th</sup> 2pm.**

It was agreed to concentrate on retention rather than recruitment for this meeting.

## **2 February 2023 Meeting with Dishy Atwood, SIGBI Director of Membership**

Present – 14 Regional Membership / Organisational Development Officers (UK / Ireland only)

### **Background comments from Dishy**

- The membership context is different for every Region
- The Directors are committed to not working in silos. They are trying to bring people together and integrate things across Membership, Programme and PR, Marketing and Communications.
- There is a commitment to existing members who have a huge bank of experience. New members are only one part of membership. We need to re-energise ourselves and not get ground down by the nitty gritty.
- There is an issue re. paperwork being constitution bound. Giselle (Director of Governance) is clear that if we want to do something and the constitution is an obstacle, then it needs to be changed.

### **Points / issues raised by those present (not in any particular order)**

- Flexibility around the timing of meetings
- Badges – these seemed to be an issue as they take a long time to come and also the cost of them
- The importance of simplifying processes
- Everyone appears to have similar problems getting Region Officers
- One Region has set up a development group involving Clubs and Region to identify issues and look at what they can do about them
- Importance of valuing our existing members

### **New Members**

Where are the women who are not coming to us? Dishy said that her research showed many were joining business groups or similar. Why would they want to be a Soroptimist? These other groups miss out on being a charity, our links to the UN and volunteering. Businesses have to do work with a social value, and they could do that through us.

Cost – for these business groups, once you have paid a subscription, that's it, unless you choose to do other things e.g. attend a dinner. We tend to be paying our subscription, but also for many other things.

There is an 'offer' we could make, but it takes time to build relationships. We should look at getting involved, making contacts. Networking is often part of their job / role, and takes place during the day

Range of types of membership is key for us – traditional clubs, virtual clubs, workplace clubs etc

### **Associate Members**

There is a change away from the original idea behind this category. We should look at this as a possible starting point, where women can then decide what type of membership suits them best, maybe try different ones out. They can do Programme Action, work on things they are personally interested in. Some women want to be involved but don't fit into the local setting e.g. can't do evening meetings.

There is a fine balance between recruiting a woman and rushing it.

The directors are looking at how we might work with women who are cash poor, but time rich. These women are often involved in volunteering.

### **Communication**

Dishi said that the directors want to be really open to members. Information that they ask for is to try and identify issues across the Federation. They want to improve the communication channels. Her view is that what happens at the (Federation Management) Board meetings is everyone's business, so if we ask, it should be shared.

### **Membership Month**

It has been agreed that we are not getting the return we want for the effort that goes into social media for this. This year we will get a list of suggested actions that we could do instead.

She stressed the importance of being outward looking and having a public face.

### **School, Campus and Workplace Clubs**

In schools and campuses, they start with lower years to ensure continuity as the young people move up through the years

### **Leadership Academy**

S.I.Europe have this, and our directors are actively exploring setting this up for us. Aimed at young women graduates going into their first job. They hope to launch it at conference in November. It will involve business sector people, offering roles for women who are not yet Soroptimists, but who might then get involved.

They are trying to open up the world of Soroptimism, so people know what we're doing  
Jennifer McFarlane , Organisational Development Officer, Scotland South

Since our last Talking Pants, we've provided new pants and new and gently worn bras to 4 organisations:

- 1,420 pairs of pants and bras to Advance Charity, based in Hammersmith, who support women who experience domestic abuse or are at risk of offending or reoffending.
- 36 pairs of pants and bras to the Bridge Community Project based in Livingston.
- 607 pairs of pants to Care4Calais to support asylum seekers in Bristol and London.
- 100 pairs of pants to North Herts Days for Girls which will be included in their hygiene kits going to Ethiopia.

Thanks to you, we were able to provide pants and bras to Two Brews recently – a charity feeding and clothing the homeless of Manchester.

This is a simple way to help and support women and girls – Lindsey

SIEdinburgh programme 2023

22 February Sharon Cameron, NHS Lothian 'Scottish Government Plan for Women's' Health' (postponed) New speaker/s to be confirmed

8 March 2023 Business Meeting

22 March Speaker Meeting – Kate Alexander on "The Scottish Detainees' Project"  
Zoom Meeting only

12 April 2023 Business Meeting

26 April 2023 AGM

10 May 2023 Business Meeting

24 May Professor Yvonne McEwen "The 'green' electric car: the tragic human and environmental costs"

The United Nations House Scotland together with the CPG on Human Trafficking are inviting you to the **Roundtable on Mitigating the Risks of Human Trafficking Among Ukrainian Refugees -- Finding Best Practice and Policy to Safeguard Refugees in Scotland**. The meeting will bring together policy makers, academics and anti-trafficking organisations to identify tangible steps the Scottish Government and civil society organisations can take to mitigate the risk of human trafficking and exploitation of Ukrainian refugees living in Scotland.

**The meeting will take place in Committee Room 2 from 6-7 PM on the 21st of February. The meeting will take place in hybrid form.**

We kindly ask you to RSVP through this link: <https://forms.gle/Sg4QvhY12vMd9HyP6>