



# ***Soroptimipool Times***

**April 2014**

E.McCue

## **Youth Speak out**

**R**egional President Victoria described the standard as "astronomically high" when she acted as a judge in our ninth Public Speaking Competition for 11 to 14 year old school children.

The overall aim of the contest is to foster presentation and communication skills in young students, as all walks of life especially the business world who are increasingly reliant on these abilities.

The contestants chose one of the following subjects to talk about for three minutes:

1. Do coalitions work?
2. Is wildlife preservation important?
3. Has the Olympic legacy lasted?



The contestants and judges

**B**arbara Menacere, a guest at this year's event said afterwards: "I must admit I wasn't quite sure what to expect when I recently took up an invitation to attend a Public Speaking Contest held at St Julie's Catholic High School. What a treat it turned out to be! It was hard to believe that the 15 contestants were only Key Stage 3 pupils. There are definitely one or two future leaders in the making, with their cogent arguments, fluent delivery and obvious enthusiasm for their chosen topic. All the participants should be rightly proud of their contribution to an enjoyable event, not to mention the sacrifice of a precious Saturday (ditto teaching staff present)." All fifteen students were amazing and regional President Victoria and President Anne agreed that it "gives great hope for the future of our youngsters".



The well deserved overall winner was Matthew Heneghan from St Edward's College.

***INSIDE.....***

***Ladies day***

***Giving help at  
Centre 56***

***Anne reviews her  
year***

***and much more....***

***"I will definitely  
put next year's  
contest into my  
diary."***

**B. Menacere**



## 87 years of archive materials

A team of 8 members put aside a Saturday morning in March to sort out materials related to the club since its foundation in 1927. We categorised, sorted and were amazed (and often distracted from our task!) by the wealth of interesting documents and artifacts which we uncovered. These ranged from minutes, membership records, newspaper cuttings, club newsletters, photos and letters and framed memorabilia. We even uncovered 2 letters, in red ink on House of Commons paper, written by Bessie Braddock. Our current records are mostly electronic and are being stored on an external hard drive. These will eventually be joined by some of the scanned older records.



## Adventures of a Victorian Millionaire

Richard Baker, better known as 'Richie the Ranger' (a former Liverpool Parks' Ranger), visited the club as the guest speaker in March to talk about Henry Yates Thomson, a Victorian millionaire. Richie spoke and dressed as Henry, even chiding Past President Mary for 'showing her ankles'!



In an amusing and informative talk he spoke of his privileged background, his travels across the world including China and Russia,

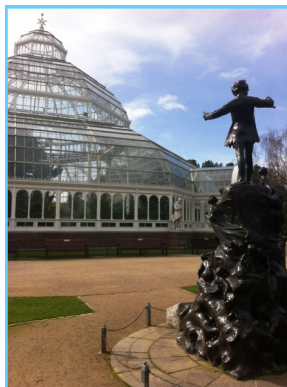
collecting exotic plants and manuscripts, and his interest in Sefton Park in 1896.

Henry Yates Thompson donated funding to build the magnificent Palm House, and this generated many questions from club members and the twelve guests present.

We were also fascinated by the story of Henry's true love, Catherine, whom he was not free to marry. They arranged one last meeting at



the iron bridge in Sefton Park one February 14<sup>th</sup> at 11.15pm. However, when Henry ran towards her that night she passed through him, having unfortunately died hours before after falling ill. This sad event was brilliantly re-enacted with member Gill playing the part of Catherine.



It is said that the bridge is haunted by the lovers every Valentine's night.

### ACTIVE 8

*Please remember to bring donations to meetings:*

- ⇒ food items for the Food Bank.
- ⇒ any loose change
- ⇒ old towels for a homeless shelter
- ⇒ quality items for raffle prizes
- ⇒ toiletries for a local women's refuge

***Women inspiring action.....Transforming lives***



## Fantastic Fundraiser

April 4th found SI Liverpool and friends enjoying Aintree's Ladies Day in true style! After drinks and lunch, the races were broadcast live to the cheering crowd in the Liner Hotel, who had drawn their horses from a tombola drum. The excitement was followed by afternoon tea, a raffle with generously donated prizes and dancing to the



fantastic singer, Alan Cross. Prizes were also awarded to the 'best dressed' Ladies. (pictured left)

The day was supported by Barclays Bank who match funded the sum raised (£3295). The six Barclays staff (pictured right) who attended



worked very hard to help the day go smoothly. Thank you! Glo Simmons also deserves a special thank you for compering the event so brilliantly and thanks also go to members Dot, Gill and Eileen for all the planning, organisation and hard work leading up to the day. The funds raised will go to MAST who will receive almost £6,600 to help their fantastic work with young people on 'Tall Ships' voyages.



## The BIG Project

Yvonne Gibbons will be visiting the club meeting on 25 June. Yvonne is the Federation Project Ambassador for SI South Lancashire, and is visiting clubs with Mariama, the Region's travelling 'baby' to promote the BIG Project, which is now in its final year. 'BIG' stands for Birthing In the Gambia. It is a three year fundraising challenge for Soroptimists that will save the lives of countless critically ill women, babies and children in The Gambia. Over £100,000 has been raised so far.



## Mary's Meals

President Anne, with the aid of a video on Mary's meals, informed us at the February meeting of how just £10.70 can give a child a daily meal in Africa for a whole year. The club agreed to raise £3500 over two years. One planned fundraiser will be a lunch at the *EST EST* restaurant. Look out for more details on 'A lunch for Mary's Meals' on September 24<sup>th</sup>.



Four new members were given a warm welcome into the club at the February meeting. Margaret Bragg, Mary Gregson, Andrea Scullion and Georgina Tang were inducted by President Anne and received their badges. (pictured on next page)

Welcome to you all!

*Women inspiring ac-*

## Out-going President's address

*As Anne Grimes prepares to hand on the Presidency, she reflects on the past year.....*

**"How quickly time flies when you are having fun!"** How true this has been for much of my year in office! All of the varied events, at which I have been privileged to represent SI Liverpool, have been memorable, even those that were sombre in tone. It was an honour and a very moving one, to lay the wreath on behalf of SI Liverpool at the cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday and also to represent the club at the city's annual Civic Service at the Anglican Cathedral. SI Bolton gave Danny and myself a very warm welcome at their annual Thanksgiving Service. I have thoroughly enjoyed the very kind hospitality given to me by our daughter clubs: Birkenhead, Bootle, Crosby, Southport, Warrington and Widnes and I was also welcomed at the charter dinner for SI Wigan too. One of the highlights of the year was our visit with our friendship clubs SI Cologne and SI Chalons-sur-Saone hosted in the beautiful city of Cologne. As mentioned in our last newsletter, the warmth of our hosts, especially Fadua and other club members, was overwhelming and I look forward to their return visit in 2015. I have given support to charity events, where possible, of regional and daughter clubs and all this contact has given the opportunity to not only make new friendships but the chance to share good practice too. Special thanks must go to regional past president Liz McConnell for her support and encouragement as well as our new regional President Victoria for her friendship and easy manner -such a help!

So on to the core of my year as president, within the club itself. Our charity fund-raising events have been well supported, beginning with a successful quiz night which raised over £500 for Beat Abuse, a group of teenagers working in schools to raise awareness of abuse and violence within teen relationships. We had a Christmas craft sale as well as an enjoyable evening of flower arranging, with entertaining stories throughout the evening. This month, we have had our most successful fund-raiser ever, with our alternative Ladies Day at the Liner Hotel, raising over £3000, a wonderful sum of money, for Merseyside Adventure Sailing Trust. What a difference this will make to the life skills of local teenagers, often disadvantaged, through the experience of life on a tall ship, at the mercy of

the sea and each other! Only working as a team will they learn how interdependent life is, theirs and others, values which are at the heart of Soroptimism!

The club itself continues to grow and move forward and we were delighted to welcome five



new members and hope they will continue to find friendship and support amongst us. This year, eight club members enjoyed an inspiring federation conference in Gateshead. From this, the club has taken on an international project, "Mary's Meals" and has pledged to raise £3,500 within the next two years to provide children in some of the poorest areas of the world with a nourishing meal each day at school. For £10, we can feed a child for a year! It has been good to see advances through our Programme Action groups, with continued support for Centre 56, with members sharing financial advice and counselling as well as giving practical help with bedding, clothes and toiletries. Our Public Speaking competition in March was bigger and better than ever, with eight Liverpool schools and fifteen pupils taking part. We continue to support food banks, Water Aid and other causes with both practical and financial help. Our food security and healthcare group will also be taking up the Federation's call to promote awareness of Endometriosis. With a view to securing the future well-being of the club, we have recently reviewed the different roles within the club and I am delighted that so many members are willing to take on a role, vital for the continued growth and health of the club.

So thank you all for your support this year, especially the club executive and in particular, those who have been so generous with the practicalities of organising events and meetings. A great team effort and a club for which has been my privilege to serve as president! I wish our incoming President Eileen every success in her year ahead and promise her full support in the year ahead.



## Positive Guidance

*Further to a previous visit to the Centre in August 2013, Marie Gray and Ann Mercer were asked to return to support a course run by Centre 56, to provide financial guidance to the women taking part in a 10 week course entitled 'Positive You'. The Centre, which provides information sessions and support for women and children who have suffered or are at risk of domestic abuse, runs the course which looks at all aspects of supporting the women to become more confident, assertive and independent.*

### **Budgeting, Savings and Debt**

Marie and Ann spent a morning with the women and team at the Centre discussing many financial issues and topics. A lively session on budgeting proved successful, resulting in awareness to plan monthly rather than weekly in light of the forthcoming changes to many benefits being received monthly in the future. The women were informed of the benefits of joining a Credit Union and were provided with handouts guiding them where to go for free debt advice, if needed, and websites for reference and guidance. Information and clarity around banking jargon was explained along with guidance on savings, also touching on the warning signs of entering into financial difficulty with a clear pathway to seek help and advice.

### **Grateful**

The Centre expressed their appreciation of the support they had received from the Liverpool Soroptimists not only for this session but for assistance with Lottery funding support, donations of clothes and toiletries and one to one counselling sessions.

Centre Manager Diane Hill sent a special thanks for the generous donation of cosmetics and toiletries donated by friends of club members.



## Dates to note:

Apr 30 – AGM

May 3 – **Annual Dinner and Change of Insignia** – Childwall Golf Club

May 14 – **Speaker meeting:** Mercy ships- Frances King focuses on the use of hospital ships partnering with land based programmes to deliver transformational health care at no charge to the world's forgotten poor.

May 28 – **Club meeting** & talk on Merseyside's police policy re forced marriage and honour killings from Denise Malcom

Jun 14<sup>th</sup> Regional meeting at Leigh

Jun 25 – **Club meeting** with focus on the BIG project and talk from regional ambassador Yvonne Gibbons

July 4<sup>th</sup> **Battle of the Brains Quiz** fundraiser at Aigburth People's Hall

Jul 9 – **Speaker meeting:** Gemstones and crystals: Robert Wood A light and entertaining talk on the mysteries surrounding Gemstones and Crystals.

Jul 23 – **Club meeting**

Sep 10 – **Speaker meeting:** Hazel- cruise ship speaker (tbc)

Sep 24 – **Fundraising lunch for 'Mary's meals** at EST EST, Aigburth Road.

Sep 24 – **Club meeting**

18 Oct Anti slavery day

Oct 22 – **Club meeting**

Nov 12 – **Speaker meeting:** Jerry Turnbull- Alzheimer's Research UK

Nov 21- **Demo and talk on seasonal** decorations using plants from hedgerows and gardens. (& make your own )

**\* Visitors are welcome at Speaker events ( et us know number of expected guests)**

