

Welcome President Ann Mercer!

On Wed 26th April, club members formally welcomed Ann Mercer as the 97th President of SI Liverpool, at the Liverpool Aigburth Hotel. After thanking outgoing President Lynne for all her hard work the previous year, Ann set out her plans and hopes for the year ahead.



I can't believe 2 years have passed since I agreed to become President in 2023, where have those years gone? Well, I am still working, albeit part time but am looking forward to combining the role with a busy life of working, grandparenting, holidays & leisure time with husband Dave.

I truly believe you get out of life what you put in and it's to that end, I will put all my efforts into being the President the Club wants, an ambassador, a leader & a person who is approachable, whatever the issue.

So, what is in store for this Presidential year:

My chosen charity is The Womens Organisation, which many of you, I know, will be familiar with.

Why this charity? I'll give a bit of background but first I want to relay to you their Mission statement:

Our mission is to support women to achieve their full potential; to encourage, enable and facilitate their active involvement in business, employment, learning and community life. We seek to achieve this by harnessing the economic power of women and communities, promoting social inclusion, changing perceptions and influencing policy.

We're proud to deliver a broad range of services to women from diverse communities, inspiring them to become more economically active and personally fulfilled. Our areas of support include: personal development, education and business support.

In 2013, after a long and happy and successful career in banking and wealth management, I took the offer of mass redundancy at the age of 53, took some time off then decided to start my own business in travel, working alongside Dave who also had his own business in Event Management, arranging and managing overseas sporting trips, so the travel business dovetailed with this as I was able to arrange the international travel for him and the sporting teams going on the trips.

Having worked in finance, I had an idea how to start & fund a business but joined the Womens Organisation in St James Street, Liverpool, who help & support local women starting businesses by way of courses, assistance with business plans, funding, marketing & many other aspects of starting a new business. This organisation was invaluable as it meant I had opportunity to meet likeminded women starting out on their own, some of which, like me, had had long careers elsewhere and doing something completely different to what they had known most of their working life. I was fortunate, I was able to fund going on courses, attending seminars, meet for coffee, take time off. However some women did not have this luxury so the purpose of me choosing this organisation, further to recent meetings with Maggie O'Carroll, CEO of the Womens Organisation, and again, some of you already have met her, we discussed how we could use the funds we raise to support these less fortunate women. The money will be used to assist women thinking of or indeed starting their own businesses, to go towards say, travel costs for attending courses, childcare if needed whilst they attend these courses, meals costs if needed, also to purchase that cup of coffee in order to meet and chat with like-minded women, which is so important when making life changing decisions.

They have their building and offices in St James Street and I am arranging a visit for club members soon.

I would like this year to be not only about our charities and our very important programme action work but also about ourselves and our own wellbeing, particularly following a few very difficult years for many and hope you can all attend the fundraising, social events and speakers I have planned, along with the support and guidance of members of the club to whom I thank in preparation of these activities.

I look forward to being President in our 97th year.

Education, Economic and Environment PAC Group

Yes, *Soroptibooks*! Our book project for children and young people now has its own name, suggested by PAC group member, Mary. We continue to give books each week at a local Food Pantry, over 630 books in the last 9 months. However, thanks to the generous donations of books from SI Liverpool friends and families, we have been able to distribute to other community organisations. These have included: a foster carers group, a holiday playscheme, the traveller community, a foodbank and 2 other food pantries. Each has received a minimum of 50 new or nearly new books. The latest recipients of *Soroptibooks* have been a group of children who are helping to transform an overgrown space on an outer-city estate into a lovely community garden with a peaceful reading area.



“At our February meeting, members from the club’s climate group promoted the climate action theme “Show the Love”, <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love>, aimed at raising awareness of issues around climate change.

Members crocheted or knitted green hearts to stimulate conversation and will use the power of these hearts to show decision makers that they want urgent action to tackle climate change, to protect nature and reduce energy bills.

The group will also be lobbying their MPs on the subject of climate change. Club members wore green at the February meeting to show their support and they were each given a "Show the Love" bookmark as a reminder ! “



Violence and Conflict PAC Group

Over the last year we have been supporting WHISC and as requested by them we provided ,at Christmas, a selection of toiletries. We also made a number of visits to their unit in Bold St. to talk to their clients about the valuable work that has helped them over difficult times.

In January we took part in the survey issued by the Merseyside Police working in partnership to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls YASG. across Merseyside. We found this very enlightening so we are in the process of contacting the agencies that offer help and advice to victims.

A coffee morning is being held at the end of the month to bring together our findings and discuss how we take this further within our group.

International Womens Day

Members visited the newly built Royal Liverpool hospital by invitation, along with members of Crosby, Southport and Bootle, to do a tour of the new facility and discuss with their fundraising champion how we were going to allocate the funds the clubs had jointly raised for the benefit of women visiting the hospital suffering from domestic abuse.

In the evening, some members visited the Athenaeum in Liverpool city centre for an International Womens Day celebration hosted by Anna at Fierce Futures, a charitable organisation supporting women who have been victims of sexual violence, isolation and trauma. The evening comprised various speakers, music, food and networking. Dorcas has since met with Anna who is keen to become a member of a local club.



Long Service Awards to club members!

One of the first pleasurable duties for President Ann after her installation, was to present long service certificates and flowers to eight club members who have given 255 years of service to improving the lives of women and girls! What an amazing achievement and a wonderful legacy of experience for the club too! Pictured from left to right : Norah Rawsthorn, Ann Clayton, Judith Harris, Sue Woods, Yvonne Davies and Carol Abbasi. Grateful thanks to Anne Pagendam and Caroline Griffiths too.



96th Charter Lunch

In February we celebration our 96th Charter Lunch which was a lovely celebration of our 96th year's anniversary of being chartered with 80 members in 1972. We were joined by SI members from our sister club Manchester, and our daughter clubs Bootle, Crosby, St Helens, Southport and Warrington, and our granddaughter club Heswall. Moreover, Lady Mayoress of Liverpool, Cllr. Roz Gladdenn was presented with and accepted Honorary Membership of our club.



SI Manchester's 97th Charter Lunch

Club members attended SI Manchester's 97th Charter Lunch at Worsley which was a lovely celebration enjoyed by all.



Charity Quiz Night

Mossley hill athletic club, supporting Alder Hey neonatal, Knifesavers, and Strawberry Fields Steps to Work. A fabulous quiz prepared by Anne Grimes and over £600 was raised for the charities.



In Loving Memory of Maureen Edwards

Maureen was a much loved club member until her sudden death in 2017. She was an excellent bowler both for Liverpool Soroptimists and as a member of Calderfield Bowling Club. The club holds an annual cup competition, The Maureen Edwards Memorial Cup, on the first Bank Holiday of May. This year, it seemed quite appropriate that Anne reached the cup final, coming in second place! However, Maureen would surely have been delighted! Here's to next year!



Celebration of the The Kings Coronation and Eurovision Song Contest

Our afternoon tea which was held in recognition of the Coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla, and also the Eurovision being held in Liverpool. The event was held at a local cafe Nourish on the Brow in Gateacre, South Liverpool.



Dates for your Diary

MAY

24th Club Meeting

JUNE

7th - Time to Talk

10th - Regional PAC & Council

12th - Executive Meeting

28th - Club Meeting

JULY

5th - Time to Talk

10th - Executive Meeting

13th - Fundraising Flower demonstration & talk -Cricket Club

26th Club Meeting

27th - 29th - International Conference Dublin

AUGUST

2nd - Time to Talk

WE STAND  UP
FOR WOMEN!
Believe to Achieve