

## Women's Organisation - Orange Cafe

In February we were at the Women's Organisation, 54 St James Street, which is President Ann's charity. President Ann and some club members held their Orange Cafe.

We were made very welcome and appreciated the publicity give by our partner charity this year, We are helping to support women with limited means to begin their own business.



## Breathe Easy

Dorcas and her husband travelled to Nigeria again, spending three weeks travelling around parts of Nigeria, delivering much needed asthma medication and equipment to clinics and hospitals in the region. There is a dire shortage of basic medication for the condition, with hospitals asking patients to share inhalers!

Pictured are Dorcas and Claudius distributing vital inhalers and nebulisers on behalf of the charity, Breathe Easy, founded in loving memory of their daughter.



## Charter Lunch

Soroptimists from across the region gathered to celebrate the SI Liverpool's 97th Charter Lunch to celebrate and to welcome Rosemary McNamara as our new President. We were delighted to be joined by Lord Mayor Cllr Mary Rasmussen and her escort Sue Gibbon, Prof. Maggie O'Carroll CEO of the Women's Organisation and Sandy Taylor MBE, President Elect of SI South Lancashire. Outgoing President Ann Mercer presented a cheque to the Women's Org as her chosen charity for the year. The club thanked Ann for leading us through a very successful year. We wish Rosemary every success as she takes up office.



## The Colours Fashion Show

A fantastic joint fundraiser with SI Crosby for 'The Colours Fashion Show' which was a great hit! There was a wide range of different styles of clothes in numerous colours, also a lovely collection of bags to purchase too. This was a great event in which everyone had a lovely time and also a fabulous turnout with lots of purchases on the night.



## Easter Egg Delivery - First Step Project

There have been two visits to the First Step project in Huyton. The first visit was with the Christmas presents, and then for Easter we took chocolate eggs. They were incredibly grateful and overwhelmed by our generosity.



## Congratulations Dorcas

Congratulations Dorcas from all your club sisters! What a wonderful achievement and recognition for all your efforts to support others at home and abroad. 'We would like to proudly congratulate ARC NWC Public Advisor, Mrs Dorcas Akeju (OBE) who was honoured at the Liverpool Commonwealth Association ball for her services in the Community, Nationally and Internationally on 15th March 2024'

## Club Speakers

This year, we have had a number of interesting speakers at club. In January Jean Finney gave an entertaining talk about the dark origins of Children's nursery rhymes. At the March meeting, we had a talk from Blood Bikes and the invaluable work that they do. They even brought one of their motorbikes so Ann could have a photo of with them.



## Violence and Conflict Group

SI Liverpool has received a refund from The Royal Liverpool Charity fund to the value of £1419.70. It was agreed by the club that the monies would be given to organisations that support women and girls who have been subject to violence in all forms, and where the money could underpin an educational aspect of care. The South Liverpool Domestic Abuse Services (SLDAS) and Amadudu Refuge have been identified as recipients of funds.

President elect Rosemary, Anne Grimes and Sue Woods held a zoom meeting with Diane Jean, a member of Zonta International, in April. Zonta International have worked in recent years with Savera UK to organise a march and other events in Liverpool to mark 16 days of activism 25th November to 10th December. SI Liverpool are looking to collaborate with both groups in the planning for events in November and looking to include other local Soroptimist groups. Information has been received which will be disseminated to club and region in the next few weeks.

Dorothy has sent in a photo of a Tie Blanket (no sew tie blanket) and would like to know if any club members have made one of these. All you need is:

- Material,
- Scissors,
- A piece of cardboard cut in a square
- A ruler

There is no sewing required.

Dorothy made a few of these blankets when she was in the USA visiting family last year. They are nice to give as presents. These could also be very useful in nursing homes or for other individuals. If you are interested please contact Dorothy.



## Health and Food Security Group

The group continue to coordinate collection of items for the food bank on behalf of the club. Our latest project, because of a successful partnership with LHCH to deliver an event on Women's Heart Health, is to explore the possibility to deliver a Women's Health Event. To this end we have approached SWAGGA, a group of GP practices and NHS Trusts who are working to address health inequalities in South Liverpool. We hope to have an initial meeting to explore how we might support events. We are also pleased to be able to support SI Crosby to develop and deliver a Women's Heart Event in the Sefton area, replicating our event with LHCH. We have brokered a meeting with LHCH and SI Crosby, shared our planning, lessons learnt and will support SI Crosby any way we can to ensure success. A great example of working together.

## Education, Economic and Environment PAC Group

It has been agreed that we will continue to work with the First Step Project at Huyton and so we are looking into how we will be able to assist them in the future in a practical way. Members recently took part in the Big Plastic Count, which took place from 11-17 March. Overall 1 in every 300 people from the UK took part, 8 members of SI Liverpool included. This was not a Soroptimist project but a countrywide project where household units have been requested to count the numbers of individual pieces of plastic accounting to types. They were then recorded online throughout a week in April. The statistics were recorded and the organisers have reported back to the households and also given us total figures for the country. This project has raised awareness among Soroptimists members who became involved in last years count and they have stated that they now use less plastic, which is the ultimate aim!

The results can be found on [thebigplasticcount.com](https://thebigplasticcount.com)  
Please be encouraged to sign up for next year's survey.

## President Ann's Closing Address

I was so fortunate to start my year with a unique celebration, the well attended afternoon tea at Nourish in celebration of the Coronation of King Charles and Queen Camilla also marking the fantastic opportunity given to our city to host the Eurovision Song Contest, members and guests enjoyed a lovely spread and good company.

This was the start of many fundraising events and social get togethers and I am pleased to say that this was my main focus this year, as a Club we so often get so involved in raising money, service and programme work and supporting others, that we sometimes forget how important it is to look after our own wellbeing, particularly following previous difficult years.

Saying that, we have done and continued with some fantastic Programme Action work, the highlight being honoured to accept, on behalf of the Club, the Regional PAC award at the new members lunch in September for the Breatheasy Foundation event in Sefton park the previous September.

Our fundraising this year has gone from strength to strength and I am so pleased to be able to donate £2375 to my chosen Charity, The Womens Organisation, along with £500 each to our other two charities, Blood bikes and The Owen McVeigh Foundation, if agreeable to this? I hope you have all enjoyed the events we have held this year and I thank you for your support and would like to take this opportunity to personally thank the Events team, led by Anne Grimes, with Val, Rosemary, Debra and of course Judith keeping an eye on our spending! Also to Dorothy as our Dinner Secretary and to yourselves for the generous donation of raffle prizes. I have been delighted to commence the relationship with The First Step Project in Huyton and we will continue to support and partner with them into next year. I feel the Club as a whole, and each PAC group will be able to contribute to their very important work within the community and in supporting their refuge in the local area.

I was also pleased to attend Strawberry Fields in August and present a cheque to support the Steps to Work programme which was one of our charities last year, also to Knifesavers when Lauren attended our November Club meeting as our Speaker. Can I also take this opportunity to thank Mary Smith for her hard work as our Speaker secretary, contacting potential speakers, making arrangements to attend our Club meetings, having a meal with them and making sure they taken care of during their visit...thank you Mary.

Whilst we have not welcomed any new members this year, apart from the honorary induction of Mary Rasmussen, Lord Mayor of Liverpool at our International lunch in December, we have had many visitors to our Club meetings over the year and hope they will join us in the near future. I thank Rosemary for her continued work as Membership Officer.

Our Club has fully engaged with the creation of Orange cafes, recognising 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, or as near as, as a day to meet locally to raise awareness of issues involving women and girls. We have held 3 of these so far, In Dobbies Garden centre, The Bridge Community centre in conjunction with South Liverpool Domestic Abuse Services and of course at the Womens Organisation in their Artisan cafe. We will continue with these events next year and I would like to thank all members who have attended and supported as well as Dorcas for her work as our Publicity Officer.

My Exec team this year have been so supportive and helpful and whilst we commenced the year with Josie as our PAC officer, she was unable to continue with this role within the Club due to her own personal loss, however I thank each and every one of the team, Dorcas, Debra, Pat, Rosemary, Val and Judith for their contributions and guidance.

I have attended many Charter lunches and Regional Club events this year and whilst have had a lovely time at each and every one of them, I really look forward to our own lunch and Change of Insignia next Sunday at the Pullman where we can celebrate our Club's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday and I can pass the President's chain over to Rosemary who I look forward to supporting throughout her year.

Thank you

## Dates for your Diary

### MAY

1st “ –Time to Talk” 11am Toby Carvery, Aigburth Road

11th - Regional Conference “RISE UP and ROAR”

22nd - Club Meeting

24-26th - SI Friendship weekend in Cologne

### JUNE

5th - “Time to Talk” 11am Toby Carvery, Aigburth Road

8th - Regional Programme Action Mtg (am) Council Mtg (pm) at Leigh Harriers, Turner Way,  
Leigh Sports Village, WN7 4GX.

26th - Club Meeting

### JULY

3rd - “Time to Talk” 11am Toby Carvery, Aigburth Road

24th - Club Meeting

### AUGUST

No Events

Website: [www.sigbi.org/liverpool](http://www.sigbi.org/liverpool)

Facebook: [Facebook.com/LiverpoolSoroptimist](https://www.facebook.com/LiverpoolSoroptimist)

Twitter: [@liverpool\\_si](https://twitter.com/liverpool_si)

Instagram: [SI Liverpool](https://www.instagram.com/SI_Liverpool)

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