
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

OF MANCHESTER

PRESIDENT

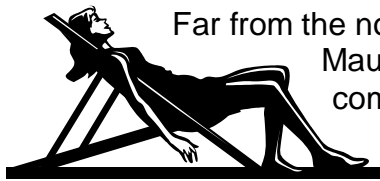
Val Moss

TREASURER

Joan Davis-Rice

Issue No 41
Autumn 2011

Dear Club Members



Before

Far from the noise and bustle and stress of Manchester, once again Maureen and I are sitting side by side in the peace of Anglesey composing this Newsletter. Holidays are drawing to a close and we trust that all of you have had an enjoyable and relaxing time.



After



ST. ANN'S GARDEN FÊTE

Saturday, 18th June dawned in the usual St. Ann's fashion: dull skies, threatening clouds, heavy rain at lunch time followed by a glorious afternoon. Enough about the weather!



With the exception of the B-B-Q and children's games, all the stalls were indoors, We had a prime position with what we thought was good table space but, by the time we had unpacked and arranged our home bakes and "The Baker" had arrived with lots of different breads, scones and Danish pastries, we were short of space. We were glad of his advice on the pricing of his goods. Christine had brought multi-coloured carrying boxes which we found very useful and which added a touch of gaiety to our stall.



Busy with our selling we neither saw nor heard the opening of the Fête by Les Battersby, late of Coronation Street.

A big thank-you to all our home bakers and our helpers.

Yvonne Mullen



JUNIOR RNCM PRIZE-GIVING 25TH JUNE

President Val was unfortunately unable to attend this year, so Barbara and I deputised. After a delicious afternoon tea provided by the parents, the prizes were awarded.

The Helen Latto Soroptimist Prize for Vocal Studies was divided between two young ladies, Alex Lowe, soprano, and Hannah Potts, mezzo-soprano, with whom we had chatted over tea.

After the prize-giving Karen moved all the students round to other tables so that we had the opportunity to hear of instruments studied students' future career



so that we had the the wide range of and to learn of the plans.

Those who remember our club will be there is an Ida Carroll Yvonne Mullen

another past member of interested to learn that Memorial Prize.

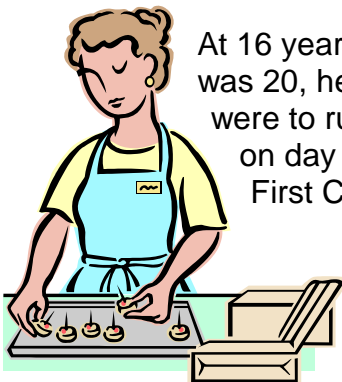


OUR CENTENARIAN

To many of our newer members, the name Hilda Swindells MBE will perhaps only be recognised as the lady who celebrated her 100th birthday on the 1st July this year. For many years Hilda has not been able to make the journey from Gee Cross to our evening meetings but until very recently could be seen at our Coffee Pot and Sunday Speaker Lunches.

The following are some of the facts of this remarkable lady's life.

Hilda was born in Bredbury and later moved to Mellor and was very much "a country girl". Her father was an accountant in Hyde and she was educated by nuns as a day girl at Harrytown Private School. She had a brother, Harry, and a very much younger sister, Claire. Hilda must have enjoyed her schooldays as she kept in touch and later in her career supplied the nuns with cookers, etc.



At 16 years old she attended a secretarial course at a business college. When she was 20, her father bought a bakery/confectionery shop, which she and her mother were to run. To this end she attended the College of Technology, Whitworth Street, on day release and studied bakery and confectionery at night school, achieving First Class in her City and Guilds exams.

When she was 26, both her parents died within five months of each other, leaving Hilda with the business and premises and a sister, aged 11 years, to bring up on her own. She sold up, moved to Gee Cross (where she still has her home) and successfully applied for a job with the Gas Board. She continued her education, took her teaching certificate in cookery and taught at Salford Tech Night School for many years. Fortunately, she had a very good neighbour (Ma) to look after her home and Claire full time whilst Hilda was working.

She worked her way up with the Gas Board N W (an only woman in a man's world) becoming Chief Home Economist in the North West, appointing and training all the home economists and demonstrators for the Gas Showrooms. She also organised catering for functions in the Manchester Town Hall.

The local church in Gee Cross benefitted greatly from her expertise when holding coffee mornings and charitable functions and long after retirement, she and sister Claire compiled a

recipe book for church funds. She is a friend of Marguerite Patten and during the war they collaborated in the production of a book of wartime recipes.

Hilda was very proud to receive the MBE in 1960 as Chief Home Economist in the North West for services to the Gas Industry. She retired at 63 years, well before the nationalisation of the Gas Industry, staying friends with all her old colleagues and staff over the years as though they were family. At work she was known affectionately as Tilly. Her Chairman of the Board for many years said he had never known a woman who could handle men as well as women so effectively to get their support and have harmony among staff at all levels.

In 1953 Hilda joined Soroptimism, becoming a member of the Manchester Club and its President in 1965/66. She also chaired the North West Standing Conference of Women's Organisations. She always enjoyed being a Soroptimist, travelling the world with them to conferences and enjoying the sisterhood, social life and networking they offered. Always an extremely elegant and well-dressed lady, she has attended royal garden parties in London and many top social events in Cheshire and the north west and is proud to have cooked for Prince Philip on one of his visits to Manchester. On the other hand, she could equally well roll up her sleeves and cook alongside anyone.



This outstanding lady celebrated her 100th birthday in great style in the Home to which she had moved at the beginning of the year. Over 80 people were privileged to be present at this function, including Soroptimist friends, colleagues, neighbours and family connections. Appropriate speeches were made but kept to a minimum, enabling everyone to have a few words with their hostess. Champagne and delicious food were plentiful. One's glass was constantly being topped up and the buffet table was laden with an assortment of sandwiches, mouth-watering meat pies, sausage rolls, vol-au-vents and other savoury nibbles. For dessert there were several huge bowls over-flowing with strawberries to be topped up with cream in addition to a large variety of cakes. Photographs were taken by the local press and many guests of the cutting of the birthday cake and of Hilda holding her birthday card from the Queen.



Yet one more wonderful memory for a lady who has enjoyed such a full life!

And now a few of my personal memories:

I was five years old on a family holiday in Bray when we first met Hilda. She was very jolly and chatty and she and my mother became bosom friends for life. I remember her as a very smartly-dressed lady in lovely tailored suits and stylish hats. When helping my mother with her Christmas card list, she was always referred to as "Hilda from Hyde". She breezed in and out of our lives over the next

20 years, usually passing our farm on her way to some function or other, often inviting my mother to accompany her. My father, meanwhile, would collect ducks, chickens, vegetables and eggs to fill her car on their return.

When I started General Practice in Ashton-under-Lyne, I became re-acquainted with Hilda who told me about Soroptimism and wanted me to join but this was not possible until I retired because of evening work commitments. We have remained friends to this day.

Margaret Cropper

~~~~~

**VISIT TO ST MARY’S SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE**

On the morning after the riots in Manchester five of us (Sandra, Joan, Margaret, Susan and I) set off to the SARC at St Mary’s. It is temporarily situated in the new building but on 16<sup>th</sup> September it will transfer back to the original St Mary’s red-brick building, which is being totally revamped. There will be three suites, all situated together under one roof (child, adolescent and adult).

Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, St Mary’s has taken “Cheshire” under its wing. (In fact Bernie had to rush off to Cheshire for a meeting.) She did say there is the potential of the SARC becoming a Regional Centre.

When we arrived we were greeted most warmly by Dr Cathy White (Clinical Director), and Bernie and Charlotte (Communications). Also present was the young artist, Ben Bradley, who is in his final year of his MA in Art. His girlfriend’s mother is from S I Ormskirk and was Regional President last year. He describes the installation as “generative art”, ie art that is generated by the individual. “Luna” as he has named it, will comprise an interactive projection onto the ceiling of the children’s forensic examination suite. The purpose is to distract the child. There is physical interaction with a soft ball, like a stress ball. (This ball has a one-year guarantee and costs £50 to re-new. The projector has a three-year guarantee.) The total cost will be £8,000, with no profit to Ben. (£4,000 of our original amount together with the £4,000 which we still hold in the bank!) The art work can be moved from room to room.



We discussed at great length our movements from here. Ben has his art show around the time of our intended “second” visit in late September and so I have asked Charlotte to e-mail me with a couple of suggested dates for our next visit. She is also happy to organise some publicity.

We have all agreed that obviously we Sorops are not “in it” for glory but we would like, perhaps, a plaque somewhere.

We were shown around the Adult Suite – not the Children’s Suite as there were two “clients” already in that morning. (Since it opened, the youngest victim was three weeks old and the eldest 96.)

After our tour we were invited to stay for a light lunch, which was most enjoyable. We left after a couple of hours or so and I know that I, for one, felt much happier after having the project explained to us. It seemed so much more worthwhile than I had anticipated. It was of great benefit having the meeting and I look forward to the next.

**Shena Cuttle**

~~~~~

THE GARDEN PARTY – OUR BIG FUND RAISER

Once again we are indebted to Sandra and Denis Woodhead, not only for the use of their delightful home and gardens but also for all the preparatory work which they undertook unsolicited and willingly.



As the day of the garden party approached the beautifully weather we had been enjoying gave way to clouds and rain. However, a somewhat breezy and overcast morning, which dictated an indoor rather than an outdoor function, developed into a pleasant afternoon enabling the braver attendees to partake of their meal outside and for several to enjoy a stroll around the gardens.

Features that differed from last year were an excellent tombola and a second hand book, jigsaw and CD stall. We are most grateful

to the Rev John Hemsworth for once again agreeing to value and talk about our antique jewellery and for kindly passing on the donations of £60.

The table was heavily laden with turkey, ham, salmon, assorted savoury quiches and a wide variety of salads: more than enough for the largest of appetites. Trifles, fresh fruit salad, a range of individual desserts and a choice of cheeses completed the banquet.

Throughout the afternoon Sandra's charming grand-daughter worked tirelessly and unobtrusively fetching and carrying and helping with the clearing and washing up and we must include her in our thanks to Sandra and Denis. This successful event raised £850 for our charities.

Kathleen Beavis

Membership News

Coffee Pot Lunch

Yvonne will book this for the end of November, to take advantage of the pre-Christmas prices! Details will be announced later.

DIARY DATES

- | | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| Saturday, | 10 th Sep | - Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre |
| | | - PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Business Meeting |
| Sunday | 18 th Sep | - Summer Speaker Lunch, Pinewood Hotel, 12.30 for 1pm |
| | | The speaker is Caroline Melliar-Smith, whose topic will be "Cameras Rolling" - a light-hearted look at the role of a TV/Film extra |
| Tuesday, | 27 th Sep | - Exhibition for the Blind – to be arranged with Fiona. |
| Saturday, | 8 th Oct | - Friendship Evening. St Matthews Church Hall, 7pm |
| Thur-Sat, | 27 th /29 th Oct | - Federation Conference, Brighton |
| Saturday, | 3 rd Dec | - Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre |
| | | - PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Business Meeting |

Saturday, 10th Dec - International Evening at St Matthews Church Hall, 7pm
Tuesday, 6th Dec - CHANGE OF VENUE FOR THIS FESTIVE MEETING
which will be held at Yvonne's home.

Christmas Greetings

Those who wish to send greetings via the December Newsletter are asked to have their messages ready for the October Meeting.

Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by, 28th November, please. Personal anecdotes would be welcomed.

Kathleen Beavis
Maureen Heywood

STOP PRESS

Christine has just informed us that our Friendship Link S I Wichita is about to celebrate its 75th Anniversary. We send them our good wishes and trust that they enjoy our Newsletters.

We also send greetings to our other Friendship Links across the globe.