

---

# SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

## OF MANCHESTER

---

### PRESIDENT

Sue Underwood

Issue No 57

Autumn 2015

---

Dear Club Members



July and August have been very full but frustrating months. Frustrating because so much has been going on that dates have clashed and I have had to prioritise. I hate not being able to fit everything in. I trust you are all enjoying more restful holidays. I am looking forward to a lazy second half of September.

~~~~~

### JUNE SPEAKER MEETING



President Elect Molly welcomed Eliazar Rose as our speaker at the June meeting. Eliazar is the Director of the New Hope Rural Trust in Orissa, India, a charitable foundation which the club has supported for many years. He comes to speak to us whenever he is in the UK and this was his third visit.

About 15 years ago, the late Dorothy Mountford saw an appeal in a newspaper from New Hope asking for clean, used tights. It was then a leper colony and the tights were used to secure patients' dressings, thus enabling the expensive bandages to go further. Dorothy brought this to the club's attention and 'the rest is history'.

New Hope will help anyone in need and a few years later the club sponsored the building of a 15 bed hospice for HIV positive children at New Hope. Later on we sponsored cataract surgery for the elderly, and most recently have given them a donation to help with rebuilding after a devastating cyclone.

Eliazar spoke passionately about his life at New Hope as the child of two leprosy sufferers, the stigma attached to that, and how he realised that he was not meant to be an engineer on the railways after all, but to give his life to helping others.

**Val Moss**

~~~~~

### JILL GHANOUNI, MBE

Eliazar's visit to the UK had been timed to coincide with the award of the MBE to Jill who as Secretary of the New Hope Rural Community Trust (NHRCT) is our UK link to Orissa. From the citation for the Award we learn of Jill's impact on a sizeable population of people living below the poverty line in rural India. She has harnessed widespread support in Britain, securing a major increase in funds and ensuring that these funds are used as beneficially as possible.

Jill's work started in 1981 at the age of 23 when she went as a volunteer to a leprosy colony at Tilagarth in the state of Orissa in India, which coincided with a terrible natural disaster when 6000 people lost their

lives in one afternoon due to flooding in the area she was in. Jill stayed for four and a half months working in a pioneering concept of a self-sustainable village inhabited by leprosy patients in Orissa who had been cured or were in the final stages of cure. On her return she kept in contact with NHRLT and eventually established in 1991 a sister trust, NHRCT, in the UK to raise funds to support the work of NHRLT in India.

In 2002 Jill succeeded in obtaining a large grant from the Community Fund (Lottery) for work by NHRLT in India including children's education, saving and credit schemes, health care training and forest replanting among other things. In connection with this, she returned to India, and during her visit met with thirteen representatives of tribal villages to listen to their needs.

In 2004, Jill succeeded in obtaining a large grant from the Department for International Development for a three-year project 'Empowerment of Tribal Women, Civil Rights, India'. This project covered 150,000 rural impoverished women in Orissa State's Rayagada District (with the highest infant mortality rate in India), empowering them by providing them the opportunity to form a networking forum of democratically run village-level groups that have legal representation at local government (district) level, thus enabling them to lobby government for rights, aid and services which at the time were denied them.



Eliazar, Jill, Jill's husband Kaveh and Liz Toon, the treasurer

One of Jill's achievements has been to maintain the focus of public support for leprosy, a disease that caused huge stigma in the past, whilst simultaneously addressing the more recent problems associated with AIDS in one of the more challenging environments in the world, involving the tribal people of Western Orissa and people living in deep poverty.

Through Jill's influence and tireless work, NHRCT has financially supported the trust in India in

vaccinating 63,000 tribal and rural village children against life-threatening diseases, caring for 2000 leprosy affected senior citizens, providing the only school in the whole of Western Orissa which cares for children with profound special and multiple needs, providing schooling and further education to people with no other means, establishing self-sustaining sources of electricity and cooking fuel and creating communities self-sufficient in the production of 65% of food supplies.

Obviously an extremely well-deserved Award. It is amazing how much has been achieved as a result of the commitment and efforts of one volunteer whilst carrying on her full-time job with the NHS.

~~~~~

## SUNDAY LUNCH

President Sue welcomed members and friends to an informal lunch on Sunday 5th July at the Wycliffe Hotel, Stockport. The food was both delicious and plentiful and a good time was had by all in a relaxed atmosphere.

**Val Moss**



## RNCM HELEN LATTO AWARD.



Since the year 2000, SI Manchester has provided an Award for Vocal Studies at the Royal Northern College of Music Junior School Prize Giving.

A legacy from former member Helen Latto provides the funds for this and the award bears her name. This year's recipient is soprano 17 year old Grace O'Mally, from Rossendale. Grace has been at the RNCM since she was 11 years old and has one more year in the Junior School. She comes from a family of singers and although both her sisters sang in choirs with her, they have not continued. She hopes to move into a singing career but is not yet sure in which field this will be.

**Susan Hollick**

~~~~~

## 90 DRINKS PACKS FOR WOMEN'S AID

As this is our 90th. Year, this is the first Project echoing this. 90 drinks packs were made up, to be presented to Manchester Women's Aid. Each has tea, coffee, hot chocolate and biscuits, packed in a mug and is a gift, from us, to each new arrival in one of Manchester's five Women's Refuges, so that at a time that has been traumatic for them, they will have the satisfaction of being able to make themselves a drink in their own mug.

**Susan Hollick**

~~~~~



## SUNNY SUNDAY STRAWBERRY TEA



On Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> August, President Sue, members and friends enjoyed a lovely sunny afternoon at Yvonne's home.

The strawberries, scones, and cakes were delicious and the spirit of friendship very buoyant. There were a large number of items to be raffled and a home produce stall selling cakes and plants. The event

raised approx £450 - £100 for the Dinner Fund, £250 for St Ann's Hospice and £120 into our Charities Account.



All who attended gratefully appreciated the hard work of the organisers with special thanks to Yvonne who opened her home and garden and hosted the event.

~~~~~

## CONTROLLED COST DINNER SUPPERS

Now that we have committed to our special 90th Charter Dinner at the Monastery we have resurrected this fun challenge to boost the Dinner Fund! The rules are simple; host and guests pay £12, the host provides supper costing £2 per head and £10 per head goes to the Dinner Fund. Guests bring their own

drinks. The host provides a breakdown of her menu costings (credits are allowed for food consumed by family the following day!)



My Dinner Supper was on 23rd June, after the second operation on my shoulder on 11th June, so I kept it simple and relied on the understanding and assistance of my guests! My guests were Val, Maureen, Stella and Elaine. My special thanks to Elaine who arrived early and did all of the last minute preparation, as well as all of the fetching and carrying! Unfortunately, Molly and Susan were unable to attend but made donations.....and I was well fed the next day!

I served my signature onion tart (£2.50), a chicken tagine (£3.50), salad and new potatoes (£1.50), followed by strawberries and cream (£4.50). The Dinner Fund received £65 from tickets and donations.

**President Sue**

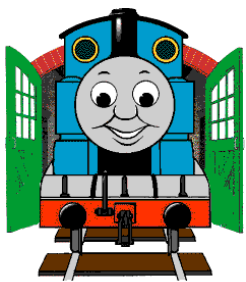
#### **ANGELA'S MUSINGS.**

Angela Fidler was a member of S I Manchester in the early 90's and when asked by President Sue her thoughts on her time with the Club, she forwarded the following:-

You asked me to pen some reminiscences of my time in the Soroptimists: I well remember being introduced to SI whilst in the Dental Hygienist's chair where I must have represented a very soft target! It was not a difficult "sell" however as I was immediately taken by the concept of friendship and sisterhood and the opportunity, as a newcomer to Manchester, to meet new people. At my first meeting I met a funeral director and an engineer so it was clear they would be diverse and interesting people too! I have very fond memories of many social events including a Lancashire Hotpot Evening - I still have the definitive recipe.



The project that sticks in my mind was a course the Club delivered for women returners to the workplace. It was designed to give participants the confidence to apply for positions in a rapidly changing work environment and to value the transferable skills gained outside of the formal workplace. As a Recruitment/HR Manager it was a cause close to my heart.



When my oldest son, Ben, was born I think he must have been the first Soroptimist baby for a while as he was so thoroughly spoiled by the members. I remember he accompanied us on an SI outing to Southport Flower Show but showed rather more interest in the Thomas the Tank Engine ride than the glorious floral displays. Ben is now 23!

**Angela Fidler**

#### **SOROPTIMISTANBUL !**

It has long been my ambition to attend an International Soroptimist 'do', I was delighted to be able to achieve this, and represent the Manchester Club during our 90th year, at the 20th Soroptimist International Convention in Istanbul, for a long weekend in July.

I met other Soroptimists from our region at the airport and we shared a taxi to our hotels. Our kind, helpful driver was pepper-sprayed by two policemen who asked him why he had stopped to help with the luggage at the first hotel....what had we come to?!? My room in the Hilton was cool and spacious, with a beautiful view of the Bosphorus.....I settled in for a good night's sleep before 'start of play'!

Breakfast was excellent, together with a 'sea' of Soroptimists (I've decided that that is an apt collective noun! – any other suggestions?) followed by Registration and the 'goody bag' with booklets, programmes, notebooks, calendar for 2015 (in July? Courtesy of Turkish Airlines, methinks they had overstocked!), L'Oreal samples (another sponsor) and a pill box for your week's supply!?!

The opening ceremony was followed by 'Friendship Evening' around the pool. The things I do for Soroptimism – I had to queue for my supper, eat it standing up and survive on cherry juice since I never did get to the bar for a proper drink!?! I had a fabulous, exhausting evening networking and handing out our bookmarks to get them all round the world. International President Ann Garvie joined models on the catwalk and we cooled down with ice-cream kebabs retrieved from clouds of dry ice.....At the end of the evening, these Danish and German Soroptimists were spotted cooling their feet in the paddling pool....but still talking!



Certain things stand out in my memory from two days of speakers, panels and workshops.....

- Michael Kaufman, founder of the White Ribbon Campaign told us that it all began in Canada in 1991 with three men sitting round a table pledging not to commit, or condone, or stay silent on violence towards women. Strangely, later that day I met a Canadian who had never heard of the 'White Ribbon Project'
- An African proverb: If you want to go FAST then go alone, but if you want to go FAR then go together.
- We were shown the 'Girl Effect' video, the same as Martin from Act4Africa presented!
- Empowerment of women makes business sense – businesses with women at the top make more profit!
- Never mind the 'Glass Ceiling', first address the 'Sticky Floor'! Equality at the entry level of business.
- What gets measured, gets done! (Editors' Note: We feel that very often what has to be measured prevents the real job being done!)

I had a fascinating conversation with Talat Pasha (SIGBI Director without Portfolio) on the bus on the way to the Turkish Henna Night.....and during the evening, I received some impromptu reflexology from Chooi Peng (Singaporean retired lawyer) to ease my stiff shoulder; she just pinched the base of my little finger very hard!?!



For the Saturday night, open-air Gala Dinner we all went for the 'windswept' look, but it was a warm wind! I joined a table of ladies from the Netherlands, Aylesbury, Thames Valley and Sierra Leone – more bookmarks were distributed! Coffee was served before the main course and we couldn't make the waiter understand our concern until we went in search of a Turkish Soroptimist.....no problem, they just served coffee again at the end of the meal! My favourite moment came in the 'loo queue'; we had taken over the Gent's and a Soroptimister sportingly stood in the queue with us, chatting away as he waited his turn!

On Sunday morning some superb young public speakers took the stage – we were surely listening to the voices of the future!

So overall, it was an inspiring, if sometimes frustrating, convention. There were some excellent speakers and discussions but some knowledgeable women were buried in 'powerpoint'. The 'panel' format was not handled well and keeping to time was an issue!

Would I go again?.....Kuala Lumpur 18-21 July 2019 is in the diary!

**President Sue**

~~~~~

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Mishaps!



We have now had our third grounding so this must stop!!! President Sue introduced the trend by tripping over a Parisian pavement. Immediate Past President Stella followed suit entering a service station on her way to Torquay and our Honorary Member Yvonne completed the trilogy outside the Portland Hotel in Manchester. We send them all our sympathy and best wishes for a full recovery and suggest they take more water with it next time!

**Birthday Greetings** to the following members, each of whom celebrates her birthday in the next couple of months.



|                   |                            |                |                           |
|-------------------|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| Rose Marginson    | 5 <sup>th</sup> September  | Evelyn Nichols | 4 <sup>th</sup> November  |
| Barbara Valcaccia | 22 <sup>nd</sup> September | Val Moss       | 5 <sup>th</sup> November  |
| Barbara Blaber    | 30 <sup>th</sup> September | Shena Cuttle   | 8 <sup>th</sup> November  |
| Margaret Cropper  | 14 <sup>th</sup> October   | Yvonne Mullen  | 17 <sup>th</sup> November |
| Fiona Spencer     | 25 <sup>th</sup> October   | Sue Underwood  | 17 <sup>th</sup> November |
| Rosemary Steven   | 2 <sup>nd</sup> November   |                |                           |

## FORTHCOMING SOCIAL EVENTS

Do please make a note in your diary of the following dates, in advance of the flyers, as they all need your support.

|           |                      |                                                                                                           |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Friday,   | 11 <sup>th</sup> Sep | - Supper at Fiona's                                                                                       |
| Friday,   | 18 <sup>th</sup> Sep | - Regional Factor Concert, Lowton Civic Hall, Warrington.                                                 |
| Saturday, | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Oct  | - Friendship Evening, 7 to 9,30pm at Heald Green Village Hall                                             |
| Friday,   | 4 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | - Grand International Evening working with King Edward V11th Lodge; Stanley House Masonic Hall, Audenshaw |
| Tuesday,  | 8 <sup>th</sup> Dec  | - Christmas Party at Yvonne's home; mince pies and mulled wine, hosted by Kathleen and Yvonne             |
| January   |                      | - Coffee Pot Lunch; date to be agreed                                                                     |

## OTHER DIARY DATES

|           |                      |                                                     |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Saturday, | 12 <sup>th</sup> Sep | - Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre           |
|           |                      | - PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Council Meeting |
| Thursday  | 5th-8th Nov          | - SIGBI Conference, Glasgow.                        |
| Saturday, | 28 <sup>th</sup> Nov | - Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre           |
|           |                      | - PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Council Meeting |

## Christmas Greetings

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

**Copy** for the next edition of the Newsletter by 18<sup>th</sup> November, please. Personal anecdotes would be welcomed.

**Kathleen Beavis**

**Maureen Heywood**