

## PRESIDENT

Molly Robinson

Issue No 62

Autumn 2016

Dear Club Members,

The Olympics!! Haven't we done well? Wouldn't it be wonderful if, in this post-Brexit era, politicians, economists and "news" writers could approach their tasks with the same hope, enthusiasm and determination as our Olympic medal contenders? I have great faith in the power of positive thinking.

As a sports enthusiast, I am delighted that, thanks to the time difference, I have been able to watch many events live, without the viewing encroaching on my daytime activities. Loss of a few hours sleep was a small price to pay.

I hope you have all enjoyed a pleasant, relaxing or stimulating summer, whichever is your preference.

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***We are grateful to our website team of Val and Molly for the following articles. The reason for these inclusions is two-fold; firstly we appreciate that many of us do not regularly view our website and secondly without such contributions the Newsletter would be decidedly thin!!!***

## SPEAKER MARCH 2016



The speaker at our March meeting was the Rev. George Lane from the Manchester Airport Chaplaincy.

This is a workplace chaplaincy for over 20,000 workers at the airport, and also offers pastoral and humanitarian aid to anyone who may be in trouble on the site. He and his colleagues work closely with the airport customer care team and the police, and offer non-denominational support to people of all faiths who are in need of help. With over 24 million people coming through the airport per year, they deal with a wide range of issues including human trafficking, forced marriage and homelessness.

Their philosophy is that "it's about people" who are considered as human beings (rather than passengers or customers) and help is given according to their individual needs.

## ALEX'S AFTERNOON TEA

President Molly and members would like to say "Thank You" to Alex Charlton for organising his afternoon tea event in support of our 90th Project, HEAL Malawi.



Alex devoted many hours for his Bronze Duke of Edinburgh award to preparing the room and the food for the event on 23rd April. Guests enjoyed delicious homemade sandwiches, scones and cakes and there was a comprehensive menu of teas and coffees available.

With the sale of tickets and a raffle Alex raised over £400 for our project. Thank you, Alex, and good luck with all your efforts to achieve your Bronze award.

### **VISIT OF A DUCHESS**

In Autumn 2015, the members of Soroptimist International of Manchester were interested to read an article in a newspaper about the Duchess of Cornwall visiting a rape crisis centre in London. She expressed the idea that giving a small gift of toiletries to survivors of such crimes could make a great difference to them, by bringing them the "human touch" after their trauma.



This struck a chord with members of SI Manchester who have been donating toiletries to St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) here in our city since it opened in 1986, and they asked Val Moss, their Programme Action Officer, to write to the Duchess about it. In the letter Val informed the Duchess that St Mary's SARC would be marking their 30th Anniversary year in 2016 and expressed the hope that she would visit them if she were able.

Sometimes Soroptimist dreams do come true, and on April 26th the Duchess of Cornwall did indeed come to see for herself. Her Royal Highness was greeted and given a tour of the Centre by Dr Cathy White, the Clinical Director, and Val and President Molly were privileged to be amongst those introduced to her.

At the end of the tour the Duchess unveiled a plaque on the occasion of the centre's 30-10 Anniversary, which marks 30 years since they opened and 10 years since their specialised paediatric service began.

Dr White thanked the Duchess for visiting the centre and raising awareness. The Duchess said that she had learned that St Mary's was the first of its kind in this country, had been told that it was the best and expressed the wish that we all keep talking about such issues.

President Molly had only been in office for a few weeks, so this was the first engagement of her year. She is American and married to a Mancunian, and says that her Mum back home was very proud to hear how her Presidential year had begun.

***(Many compliments, Val, on your initiative! - Editors)***

### **JUNE SPEAKER MEETING**

In June, members were pleased to hear about the work undertaken by Age UK Trafford from their CEO, Ann Marie Jones, who was accompanied by Karen Patel, their Care Services Manager.

Age UK Trafford works in partnership with Age UK (the national charity) and only covers Trafford. This 'shared brand' allows for standards to be monitored, gives access to the national help line and the supply of literature. Other services, however, are funded and organised on a local basis, and Age UK Trafford have been operating for the past 40 years.



They offer information and advice to the elderly on both a drop in and telephone basis, advice on the benefits system, a home library service, dementia advice, meetings for interest groups, training for professionals and local businesses and silver surfer courses. They are also developing a falls prevention service, offer a 'Winter Warmth' programme to test electric blankets and a 'My Life, My Decision' programme highlighting rights for the end stage of life. They have a small team of enthusiastic staff who are supported by many dedicated volunteers.

### **MORE MUGS, PLEASE!**

The club has received feedback from Gail Heath, CEO of Manchester Women's Aid, about the drinks packs we made for their refuges last year. Each new arrival at a refuge receives a welcoming gift of a mug packed with portions of tea, coffee etc.

Gail told us how well received these small gifts have been, but warned us that stocks are now running low. In June, members were pleased to spend an evening working together packing up 100 more drinks packs to be donated to them.



### **"GENERATION HOPE" SCREENING.**



Regional President Sandy joined us for our July meeting. In place of a speaker members watched the latest video from the charity Mary's Meals entitled "Generation Hope".

It was filmed in Malawi, India and Haiti and features not only some of the children who have benefited from the school feeding stations, but also Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, the founder of Mary's Meals.

Magnus talks about his inspiration for starting the charity which now provides meals for over a million school children in the developing world each day, and he highlights how much there is still to do in this area.

President Sandy also joined us for our Business meeting and will be coming to our session in October when we will make up our backpacks for Mary's Meals.

### **CAR BOOT SALE**

We had a successful morning at the Car Boot Sale at Bowler's, Trafford Park, on Sunday, 7th August. We were there to raise money for our 90th year project supporting the Act4Africa HEAL Malawi initiative. Thanks to plenty of donations from the club members, £285 was raised! Plenty of goods were left over and we hope to do another event in a few months. A fun day for a great cause!



*For all these contribution, again many thanks to Val and Molly.*



### MARGARET EMSLEY'S LUNCH

A lunch had been arranged as a celebration and in honour of our Federation President, Margaret Emsley, on Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> June, at Statham Lodge. All the clubs from the region were represented.

We had a lovely meal followed by speeches from Regional President Sandy and Past Federation President Ann Garvey. Entertainment was from a ladies' choir which sang songs from a selection of films with a few comedy pieces in between. There was a toast to President Margaret and of course a cake.



It was a very enjoyable afternoon and great to see so many people there.

**Rose Marginson**

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### 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY AFTERNOON TEA



13 members and their guests assembled for a "posh" birthday tea at the Stanneylands Hotel on the nearest Saturday to our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (16<sup>th</sup> June 1926). We enjoyed the current fashion for sandwiches, scones and cream, and patisserie, but for special occasion we added Champagne and a smaller version of the cake made for our Charter Dinner.

Several artefacts were displayed, demonstrating the Club's celebrations, including a list of the names and categories of the 62 Founder Members.

President Molly gave a brief presentation of Soroptimist's beginnings in America. This was taken up by IPP Sue Underwood who covered expansion into Europe and eventually into Great Britain. Yvonne wound it up with the highlights of S I Manchester over the 90 years.

The Social Committee hope those who attended found it not only enjoyable but also informative.

**Yvonne Mullen**

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### THIS MUST BE A FAIRY STORY BECAUSE IT STARTS .....

A long time ago, when I was very, very young I had ideas about how the world should be, what I should do, even how I could do it. But I couldn't have been too young because somehow I realised that to do most of the things that interested me I needed money – something that I really didn't have. At least, I had nowhere near enough of it for all that I wanted to do.

Nowadays, the bank of Mum and Dad might have been worth a try, but not then. The only way to get any extra cash was to work for it, and so that's what I did. Baby sitting, window cleaning, gardening, housework, shop work, all these and more - each brought in a few bob, but the best job was the

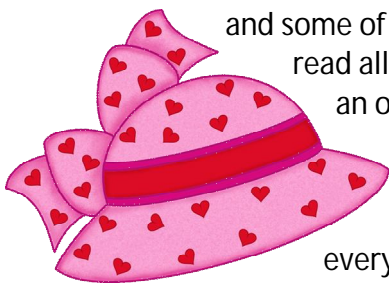


one that brought me into contact with Snow, one of the most interesting and amusing women I've ever known.

Snow was the mother of Julie, a colleague at my day job who was planning to marry. After her marriage Julie would join her husband on Tyneside, leaving her mother to live, alone, in a large house. Snow wasn't good at solitude and, knowing this all too well, her daughter set about enlisting the help of friends to help Snow adjust to her new situation.. She asked me to go to the house every Friday evening on the pretext of helping with the housework so that I could earn a little more money. Snow was a sucker for helping the hard-up and youngsters, and I qualified on both counts. I was to do whatever was needed, but principally I was there to keep Snow company. We got on well. We'd make a meal, do a few odd jobs (or not, depending on her mood) and eventually she would send me off to bed with a warm drink. Next morning we would have breakfast, do a bit more work and eventually I'd go home.



Snow was a multi-talented lady. She dressed smartly, always wore hats as was the fashion in those days, and some of her best were those she'd made herself. She was a good cook, she sewed, she read all and everything, and always had an opinion she needed to share. But she had an odd sense of humour. Many of the stories she told me caused raised eyebrows when repeated at home, but then, we didn't have such Bohemian friends as Snow. The house was filled with all sorts of oddments. Heaven knows where she found some of her odd pieces of bric-a-brac etc. Musical instruments were everywhere though I never heard her play any of them. On the inside of her little downstairs loo she hung a notice for guests to study in their more private moments. "All the world's queer, except me and thee..... and even thee's a little queer" In those far-off days I was so naïve that I didn't even know that it could have been interpreted in a sexual fashion !



Why am I writing this? Well, just after the dreaded referendum I received an email from someone dear to me, someone who has always been kind and who often makes me laugh. But not this time. The email contained so much hatred, vitriol, unreasoned venom. I couldn't reply. Everything I would have wanted to say would only have stoked up more anger. Though I realised the anger wasn't directed at me personally, still I was shocked. More than this, I was hurt and disappointed that I had been so blind and had not realised the depth of the passions that lurked under such a kindly exterior. And as I pondered on just how to deal with this revelation, those words hanging on the door of Snow's loo so long ago came to mind; it's true - all the world IS a little queer.

**Barbara Valcaccia**

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#### **HELEN LATTO SOROPTIMIST PRIZE – JUNIOR RNCM**



I received our invitation to the Annual Prize Giving at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music a little later than usual but President Molly, Sue Underwood and myself were able to attend. It is a very informal and enjoyable occasion with about 20 students present, aged 8 to 18, each of whom receives a cash prize. We, the guests, sit at round tables and the students join us for tea and cakes. After the presentation of prizes, Karen moves the students to other tables, thus we have a great opportunity to

talk with many of them and listen to their ambitions for the future. These young people are not only talented, they are also dedicated, travelling long distances every Saturday, some starting out at 6am.

This year's winner of our prize is Daisy Lydia Ball, soprano, who lives between Coniston and Windermere. Last year's recipient of the Soroptimist Prize, Grace O'Malley, lives in Rawtenstall and has given a solo performance for S I Burnley! She is going to the Royal Academy in the autumn.

The Junior RNCM has done very well this year. Jess Gillam, aged 17 years, saxophonist, reached the final of Young Musician of the Year. Andrew Woodcock, aged 16 years, a percussionist, made it through to the semi-finals. We met both these young people.

**Yvonne Mullen**

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**STRAWBERRY TEA**

We had a great afternoon at Yvonne's house on Sunday. She hosted a charity Strawberry Tea for members and friends. There was a stall selling home-made cakes, plants and other produce that had been donated. Of course, we had to have a raffle with plenty of prizes!

The occasion proved to be a tremendous success, raising more than £500. Cakes which were left over were donated to Cornerstone who were delighted to receive them.

A big thanks to Yvonne for her hospitality!

**Rose Marginson**



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**HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL**

*The following e-mail has been received.*

Thank you so much. The support from clubs and groups during our recent Every Step Counts appeal was truly AMAZING! In the final weeks of the appeal, there wasn't a single day when we didn't learn about a new fundraising event or have generous donations arriving in the post.

From a sponsored silence to a mobility scooter challenge (thanks Tamworth Soroptimist, Pauline and Southport Soroptimist Elaine!), it was brilliant to have such a variety of events taking place. A walking group in Lincolnshire and Soroptimist clubs in Dundee and St Helens were amongst those who organised Every Step Counts walks.

Not all the events were quite so health conscious: Stafford Soroptimists organised a pub quiz, Kidderminster Soroptimists held a bread making demonstration and Soroptimists in Rugby and Lichfield organised coffee mornings with delicious cakes. We also had fantastic support from Lions Clubs and Quaker Meetings



Altogether, our supporters raised over £200,000 for our rehabilitation work with disabled and injured people! This incredible amount means we will be able to provide more physiotherapy sessions, more wheelchairs and more artificial limbs to disabled people in countries including Nepal, Jordan and DR Congo.

A huge THANK YOU from myself, Beatrice, Tom and all our team to the clubs and groups that took part.

**Get ready for the Forgotten 10 Challenge 2016**



This December, we invite you to join us as we raise our voices for the forgotten victims of conflict. With the use of banned weapons like landmines and cluster bombs on the rise, it is more important than ever to take a stand to protect civilians.

A new Action Pack with more information will be available soon and as the next few months will go quickly it's definitely not too early to think about how you could get involved. [Find out more here](#)

Thanks again for your brilliant support!

**PROUD MUM AND DAD!**

We would like to congratulate Shena and Barry's son, Major Fraser Cuttle, who has received an MBE for services to the armed forces. The Cuttle family as a whole has always done much to support S I Manchester and we are delighted for them.

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Belated Birthday Greetings to the following Members; we hope you all enjoyed your birthdays.

Pat Usher	18 <sup>th</sup> July
Maureen Heywood	18 <sup>th</sup> July
Molly Robinson	3 <sup>rd</sup> August



Greetings also to those 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		

**DIARY DATES**

Thursday,	15 <sup>th</sup> Sept	- Speaker Supper – Modern Slavery; Pinewood at 6.30pm.
Saturday,	17 <sup>th</sup> Sept	- Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre - AGM
		- PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Council Meeting
Saturday,	8 <sup>th</sup> Oct	- Friendship Evening, 7 to 9.30pm at Heald Green Village Hall
Thursday	10 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> Nov	- SIGBI Conference, Malta.
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.

Contributions from Members are crucial if we are to continue with this Newsletter.

**Copy** for the next edition of the Newsletter by 18<sup>th</sup> November, please. Personal anecdotes are always welcome.

**Kathleen Beavis**  
**Maureen Heywood**