

---

# SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

## OF MANCHESTER

---

**PRESIDENT**  
Sue Underwood

Issue No 56  
Summer 2015

---

Dear Club Members



Early in May I joined with S I Anglesey members for their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations. Ninety seven people, of whom 12 were Soroptimisters, attended the Charter Lunch at the Bulkeley Hotel, Beaumaris. It was a splendid occasion at which about 40 people took the opportunity to sport elegant hats. We were honoured by the presence of SIGBI President Jenny Vince as well as the Regional President and the presidents of many neighbouring clubs.

After an excellent meal, the cutting of the cake and the drinking of toasts, guests had a couple of hours in which to relax enjoying the sea view. Others chose to explore the town before returning at 7pm for a most enjoyable music concert. This was followed by a finger buffet and lots of opportunity to mingle and chat. Festivities were concluded on the Sunday morning with a service at the local parish church where the minister rounded off his sermon on helping the needy with an appreciation of the work done by Soroptimists.



~~~~~

### **PRESIDENT III**

It is an honour and my privilege to attempt the role of President for the third time, especially in our Club's 90th year. I hope I can improve on previous performances!

Last year I was encouraged to review my Soroptimism when a friend asked if she could interview me about it for her journalism assignment. Here are some of the questions and my responses:



#### **'When' and 'Why' did you first get involved?**

It was in the early 1990's. I was invited to the Charter Dinner by the friend who had first recruited me into the motor trade (Angela Fidler for those who remember her!) and then asked if I would be interested in joining, seeing as the Club would welcome some 'young blood'..... Having just turned 40, that was the 'clincher'!

Why? Initially, it was a chance to meet people in a new town and for something not work-related.....then came the satisfaction in contributing to the work of the Club.....now, there is still 'friendship and fun' but also the opportunity to 'give a bit back'!

#### **How have you seen SI evolve over the last 10 years?**

We've embraced technology – or tackled it! BUT we must be cautious not to disenfranchise members without email and take care with social media. We need to embrace change – but not all new ideas are good and not all old ideas are bad!

## **You will be president next year - what's on your agenda for the Club?**

It will be Manchester's 90th year! We will be celebrating our **history** (daughter and granddaughter clubs) our **legacy** (looking at projects over 90 years) as well as our **future** (new members are always required!)

So, there you are! Perhaps you might like to include your own answers in your 'Member's Musings' notebook?

As your President I appreciate that I am totally reliant on the Executive and every member of our Club, but we also have friends and 'Sorooptimisters' who support us. Who knows how things will turn out? But, Members of SI Manchester, let us strive to enjoy our Soroptimism; we're an awesome band of women!

~~~~~

### **RUTH JACKSON**

The Club was saddened by Ruth's untimely death on 31<sup>st</sup> March after a short but virulent illness. Eleven Soroptimists attended the simple but moving funeral service, which Ruth herself had planned. This included the following poem by Pam Ayres and was followed by a woodland burial.

#### ***Woodland Burial***

*Don't lay me in some gloomy churchyard, shaded by a wall  
Where the dust of ancient bones has spread a dryness over all,  
Lay me in some leafy loam where, sheltered from the cold  
Little seeds investigate and tender leaves unfold.  
There kindly and affectionately, plant a native tree  
To grow resplendent before God and hold some part of me.  
The roots will not disturb me as they wend their peaceful way  
To build the fine and bountiful, from closure and decay.  
To seek their small requirements so that when their work is done  
I'll be tall and standing strongly in the beauty of the sun.*



Ruth was born and lived in south Manchester all her life. She left Fallowfield Central School early to study at the College of Art and Design. After graduating, she worked for the Calico Printers Association, designing fabrics for Horrocks dresses. Deciding that teaching would be a more fulfilling career, she took a teaching qualification and ultimately became Head Teacher of a Primary School.

Her mother died when she was fairly young and she lived with and took care of her father.

Ruth was a faithful member of Platt Lane Methodist Church, a Guide Leader and she enjoyed the Drama Society.

Ruth was introduced to Soroptimism by her good friend Marjorie Hughes (a Past President) in 1976. She enjoyed bowling and walking holidays, which in recent years have been spent in many parts of the UK. With Dorothy Mountford (another PP) she had several holidays in Spain at the villa of Dorothy's daughter, Kathy, where she learned to sail a yacht.

Another of Ruth's pleasures was cooking; we will miss her preserves, cakes and casseroles but most of all we will miss Ruth.

***Yvonne Mullen***

**MARY'S MEALS** - from their website

Celebrations are taking place today across the globe to mark some wonderful news – Mary’s Meals is now feeding more than **ONE MILLION** of the world’s poorest children with a nutritious meal every school day! And it’s all thanks to supporters like **YOU!**

The biggest party to celebrate this momentous milestone is in Malawi, where Mary’s Meals first began feeding 200 hungry children in 2002. Our founder and CEO Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow is at Chirimba Primary School, in the country’s Machinga district, to join with the local community in recognising the impact of the school feeding programme.

The millionth child to receive Mary's Meals is 13-year-old orphan Patuma who attends Chirimba Primary School. She said: "I am so happy that Mary’s Meals has come here. Before I would get dizzy, have headaches, and my legs would shake.

"But the porridge makes me full and I am a very happy girl! The walk to school is easier and I can focus on doing well in class. My dream is to become a nurse. I know what it’s like to be sick, and I want to help sick people get better."



Magnus said: "It’s remarkable to think that 1,035,637 children, like Patuma, are now eating Mary’s Meals every school day in some of the world’s poorest countries. "More than anything, it makes me feel even more strongly that this vision of ours – that every child receives a daily meal in school - is possible.

"While we should celebrate and feel good about this landmark, 57 million children are still out of school, so in some ways our work has only just begun. Let’s go on so we can reach those other children with Mary’s Meals. Thank you again from all of us."



**SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL MANCHESTER – SOME HISTORY**

The Club was chartered in 1926, the second Club to be founded in the UK. There have been many distinguished members over the years, among them Alderman Kingsmill Jones, Alderman Evelyn Hill MP, Dame Isobel Baillie and Ida Carroll, Vice-Dean of RNCM (Royal Northern College of Music).

Club efforts have always been directed to services locally, nationally and internationally, acting as advocates for minority causes and at all times concerned for human rights, especially for women and girls.

Many difficulties were encountered in the early years due to war conditions. The Club started a trolley canteen at Central Station for members of the Armed Forces, with members also assisting nightly at the all-night canteen in the Allied Newspapers Building. In 1942 the canteen trolley was replaced by a wooden kiosk, serving an average of 6,000 persons per week. It was taken over by the YMCA in 1947. The Club received many letters of appreciation.

The National Magazine commenced publication in 1930, the Editor and Business Manager being Manchester members; this has become "The Soroptimist" today.

To celebrate our 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, money was raised to provide a multi-sensory therapy room for Action for Children in South Manchester.

We actively support St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC); the Pankhurst Centre and Women's Aid, and Cornerstones, a drop-in day centre for the homeless. National and International appeals all receive support within our means, particularly New Hope Rural Leprosy Trust in Orissa, India and Mary's Meals.

In addition we hold the following "ring-fenced" Trust Funds:-

**Daisy Cross (Soroptimist) Trust:**

Miss Daisy Cross was Club Secretary in 1930. After her death, her estate was left to her brother and sister; following their deaths, any residue was to be given to S I Manchester to be used for the elderly in need. The Club drew up a legal Trust Deed:-

There were to be four Soroptimist Trustees at any one time with their term of office to end at their 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. The capital of £6,000 to be invested and the interest used at the discretion of the Trustees. Club members can make recommendations to the Trustees, who report in the Annual Report.

**NSPCC (Manchester) Trust:**

The money for this Trust was raised by members to mark the Club's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. There are three Trustees who liaise with the NSPCC to purchase toys or equipment for use in the Manchester HQ, again using the interest from the capital.

**Connie Dale and Margaret Johnson Trusts:**

Constance Dale was a very long-serving member who was interested in helping disadvantaged children to succeed. Her legacy was used to provide a prize and shield to the child who had achieved most at Roundwood (Special) School. This school closed a few years ago.

Margaret Johnson, a Past President, left a legacy for the Club to use in a philanthropic way. It was decided to combine the two legacies, keeping the capital intact. The interest is currently supporting the education of a girl in Afghanistan, through ActionAid.

**Hilda Swindells' Legacy:**

Hilda was a Past President who died two years ago, aged 100 years. Her legacy had no strings attached so the Club decided to keep it for a project to mark our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Meantime, £600 was used to endow a seat in the Club's name in the refurbished Concert Hall at the RNCM, raising the profile of Soroptimism and assisting a music scholar of the College.

Two other Annual Prizes, which we have funded are:-

**Royal Northern College of Music:**

To mark our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a prize was established for an undergraduate in Composing or Conducting. The President is a guest at the Congregation of Awards.

**Helen Latto (Soroptimist) Prize:**

Helen was a Past President. We offered her legacy to the Junior RNCM to create an Annual Prize in her memory. This is awarded to a vocalist. We attend the prize-giving and have enjoyed hearing some very talented young singers.

The capital of these two prizes is held by the College in their investment portfolio, a fact which maximises their value.

***Yvonne Mullen***

**NEWS FROM THE CLUB WEBSITE (Thanks to Val and Molly)**

**89<sup>th</sup> Charter Lunch**

SI Manchester's 89th 'birthday' was celebrated in style with the Charter Lunch held on March 1st at Chancellor's Hotel. Honoured guests were The Lord Mayor of Manchester, Councillor Susan Cooley, and her consort and the President of the South Lancashire region, Margaret Baker. Rachel Lappin, the Manager of the Pankhurst Centre, proposed the Toast to Soroptimism and the Speaker was Jayne Bessant, CEO of St Ann's Hospice.



**Visit to St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**



On March 31st President Stella and eight members were privileged to visit St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). They were shown around by Charlotte Batra, the Training and Development Officer. The facilities there are much improved since the early days of the service that many members remember. There are now three self-contained areas where users can be seen in complete privacy – one of which is exclusively for the use of those under 16 years of age. There are also counselling rooms, offices, a meeting room and a video link room in development. The latter will enable a live link to be established to a court room hearing. This will mean that a victim will be able to give evidence without the fear of meeting the perpetrator. The public areas are beautifully decorated with images representing the four seasons.

2016 will mark the 30th Anniversary of St Mary's SARC. Having supported the unit from their beginning, the members of SI Manchester are looking forward to helping them celebrate their achievements over those years.

**REGIONAL ROSE BOWL CHALLENGE**

This is the photograph that we have submitted in answer to Regional President Margaret Baker's Rose Bowl Challenge to 'get out of our club' this year. We not only did that but 'got out of our region' with an Act4Africa stall at the North West England and IOM regional conference in May.



There were a few items on sale for the charity but the main purpose was to promote the HEAL Malawi proposal we have submitted for the SIGBI long term project.

**LONDON MARATHON**



As you know I only started running six years ago so am still a novice and this was my 9th marathon. Being the second time for London I knew what the process was. Arriving on Friday afternoon I went to Export Excel to get my number and timing chip, as all runners have to. There is a lot of merchandise available to buy with all leading runners' brands and I got away with buying three items. All the charities are there, too, meeting their runners so I took the opportunity of meeting staff from Hospice UK and the MS Society. Part of the weekend is about eating lots and we found a lovely Italian restaurant in SE1 and enjoyed post marathon birthday celebrations at Heston's Mandarin Oriental (two-star Michelin).

Saturday was no rest; we went off to do 5K park run at Bushey Park near Hampton Court and met the founder of the charity. That is another story for maybe another newsletter.

Sunday up early at 6am and trying to eat breakfast when not hungry, just nervous. We get a coach to start in Blackheath so it's not stressful but it was cold and wet this year and we had to hang around for 90 minutes just getting more nervous. My friend and I ran together for the first 18 miles which made it much easier and made the miles go quickly. We were also followed by a gorilla for 20 miles and couldn't shake him off.

Hospice UK had four cheer points with Cutty Sark and Tower Bridge being significant. My highlight was seeing Mike at the 19 mile cheer point for a smile and a hug and then seeing the final 25 mile cheer point. It was very emotional and good as I knew it would be my penultimate mile and the crowds were amazing down the Mall.

Felt a lot better after pasta and a massage by Hospice UK; meeting all supporters and listening to stories was great. £0.5 million was raised for Hospice UK and the same amount for the MS Society. Hardest thing I ever do in my life but it's for a worthy cause.

*Christine Gibbons*



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

Phyl Warrior	6 <sup>th</sup> June
Pat Usher	18 <sup>th</sup> July
Maureen Heywood	18 <sup>th</sup> July
Molly Robinson	3 <sup>rd</sup> August



**DIARY DATES**

Sat 13 <sup>th</sup> Jun	Regional PAC and Council Meeting at Leigh Sports Complex 10am for 10:30am PAC; followed by lunch (bring own) and Council Meeting
Tues 23 <sup>rd</sup> Jun	Supper at the home of President Sue – further details later
Sun 5 <sup>th</sup> July	Sunday Lunch at the Wycliffe Hotel. 12.30 for 1pm
Sun 9 <sup>th</sup> Aug	Strawberry Tea – further details later

Last date for copy for the next Newsletter 25<sup>th</sup> August. Surely some of you are prepared to put pen to paper or fingers to typewriter to share your views and holiday experiences with the rest of us!

**Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood**