
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

OF MANCHESTER

PRESIDENT

Val Moss

TREASURER

Joan Davis-Rice

Issue No 42

Winter 2011

Dear Club Members

By this date last year, the first snow had fallen in Anglesey – a mere smattering compared to the 12" to 15" which descended on us over two days at the end of the first week in December. I was never a Girl Guide but, wishing to be prepared, when in October, I saw 5-kilo bags of salt in the local supermarket, I purchased one. If sod's law prevails, this might give us a snow-free Christmas. Personally, I quite like the snow because everywhere looks so beautiful and I must admit that adverse conditions do seem to bring out the best in people as neighbourly offers are readily forthcoming.



MARY'S MEALS

The following is the latest news we have:-

"When I first visited Turkana, a remote part of Northern Kenya, four years ago, I described it as one of the most inhospitable places imaginable, where the semi nomadic people of the region faced an enormous daily struggle to survive. With every passing 'dry' year since then, that struggle has grown greater. The Turkana people depend on their cattle which are now dying. So are some of the most vulnerable people. "The animals have all died. I am old, I cannot go to town to find work, I cannot fish, so I am just waiting," said 70-year-old Loruman Lobuin, sitting under a tree, his skinny body partly exposed under his traditional shawl.



"Thousands of families here also depend on Mary's Meals. Since 2007, in little nurseries all over the region, we have been providing over 3,000 children of the Turkana tribe a daily meal of beans and maize mash. Those meals have encouraged many families here to send their children to school for the first time. Johnson Ekalale is a teacher at Kangatosa Nursery, where his own children receive Mary's Meals. He said "*I took care of my father's goats from childhood and would not like the same to happen to my children,*" he said. "*It was cruel that I was denied the right to education - I have seen the fruits of going to school and want to ensure that they are passed on to future generations.*"

"Whilst that hope for a better future remains, today those meals are more simply about keeping those children alive. Now, in response to urgent pleas, we are extending our work in Turkana to provide a further 6,000 young children with daily meals over the coming weeks. It costs 50p to feed one child for a week here and we rely on donations so that we can continue feeding these children and respond to other desperate requests for further life saving help in this area. Tim

Flynn, of the Diocese of Lodwar (our long trusted partners in Turkana) tells me: "*Hunger is widespread, animals have started to die and we know that things are going to get worse because there is no expectation of any rain, if it comes at all, before October.*"

"Recently some women here, in their desperation to find food for their children, decided to cross the border into Ethiopia to barter their beautiful beads for food. They did that but, on their home journey they were attacked by a hostile tribe, whose territory they were walking through. Seventy of them lost their lives.

"Thank you for helping us save lives in so many places of suffering. Thank you for helping the brave people of these communities feed their children allowing them to live in hope of a better day. Please help us feed more children if you can and please pray that rains falls a plenty on the dry lands of Turkana this October."

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow

Mary's Meals CEO

www.marysmeals.org

(Mary's Meals is administered by Scottish International Relief)



GUIDE DOGS GALORE

On Tuesday 27th September, Ruth and I went as volunteers to the Queen Alexandra College Sight Village at the Ramada Renaissance hotel in Manchester. Maureen had also volunteered but was unwell with a nasty cold that felt like 'a head full of porridge', so couldn't go.

There were three large rooms with charity and information stands and stalls selling all sorts of visual aids. It was very well attended and was a free event for visually handicapped people, their carers and professionals in the field, with over 400 people coming through the doors.

I have never seen so many guide dogs all in one place! They were all beautiful, mostly Labradors of every available hue and a few German Shepherd dogs. As I ate my sandwich at lunchtime the liquid brown eyes of a black Labrador watched every mouthful!



I guided a number of different people throughout the day, the most memorable of whom were a pair of ladies from Oldham who could give Del Boy Trotter a run for his money. They had a great time exploring the technology stalls and haggling over the percentage reduction available by quoting offers they'd had from other stall holders. Ruth spent many hours with one man, by the end of which she knew his full life story.

I found it very tiring but extremely rewarding. I came to realise how much we take our vision for granted, and how much people who overcome their visual disabilities are to be admired. I hope the event returns to Manchester and I hope more of us will be available to give what is quite literally 'hands on' service.

President Val



THE BRIGHTON CONFERENCE

In a way this was a Conference with a difference – credit crunch – no goody bags and no transport laid on – taxis did a roaring trade! The meat of the Conference was a mixture of keynote speakers and Workshops. Unfortunately, attendees had been asked to sign up beforehand to the Workshops they wished to attend without knowing which keynote speaker they would be missing. This proved to be extremely frustrating. As usual, the reports of the Program Action work done by

clubs throughout the Federation was most stimulating. It was good to meet up with friends from distant parts but time to chat was short.

In conclusion, the Conference was interesting, different but needs tweaking before being accepted as a format for the future.

Kathleen Beavis



ST MARY'S SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE

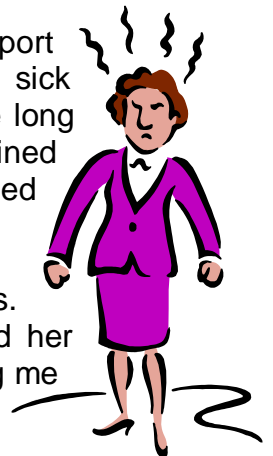
Although my position within the Club nowadays is, merely, organising "The Speaker" there is more to it than meets the eye!

My remit for the October Business Meeting was to ask Dr Cath White (Clinical Director of St. Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre.....SARC).to come to speak to us. For those of you who are "new girls", in our 80th year we raised £12,000 for the Centre you can imagine the work by all our members which went into this fund-raising. £8,000 was presented some time ago of which and a small amount was spent by the Centre. We had always been aware that the Centre was due to be relocated and were worried that the fruits of our efforts may be left behind. We had made various visits and Dr White agreed to come to give us an update of their work. They have only recently moved into "new" premises in the "old" St Marys. (I can still remember taking my two months premature baby boy there for his first check up.)

Keeping up with the times, I arranged it totally by e-mail with the lady in charge of Communications. Charlotte, I am sure was sick and tired of re-confirming her confirmation. Dr White is such a busy lady; she has four children, a part-time general practice and St Mary's!

The audience were in place, including our visitors from the Oldham and Stockport Clubs, but as 7:30 approached, where was our speaker? I began to have that sick feeling and went to the front door desperate to see headlights coming along the long drive of Northenden Golf Club. 7 45 and still no Cath. Sandra came down and joined me. In her usual soothing tones she told me to calm down and that our shortened Business Meeting was going ahead now instead of after our Speaker.

Fortunately, I had with me a letter from Cath, with a telephone number at St Mary's. I rang and a pleasant lady replied. She rang Cath on another line and I heard her speaking and began to imagine our speaker to be on a train to London! Cath rang me and said she had had an emergency at home. A few minutes later (seemed like hours) her car screeched down the drive! Was I relieved?



We were given an update of the Unit, which now takes in the Cheshire area, various statistics, such as "clients" varying in age from three months to 91 years. The new premises now house a children's unit, an adolescent unit and an adult unit. Cath herself has become a multi-national figure, travelling to Malaysia, Hong Kong, etc and receiving guests from countries such as Saudi.

At the meeting, Cath was given a further supply of toiletries for the Unit, which are given out to Clients after their examination. We, as a Club, have been donating these for many years.

11th November, the official opening of the new Centre, will be the occasion of SI Manchester handing over the balance of our monies and the unveiling of our art project. (I am so sorry to be on holiday on that date.)

I feel it was a worthwhile evening but my headache lasted all the following day!

Shena Cuttle



THE OPENING OF SARC'S NEW PREMISES

President Val and six of our Members attended a very pleasant opening ceremony at the Whitworth Art Gallery. Bernie Ryan began by thanking Soroptimist International of Manchester for their support and friendship over many years and for the donation to fund the art installation for the Children's Suite. She expressed the wish that this relationship would continue.

In his address, Councillor Paul Murphy, the Chairman of the Greater Manchester Police Authority, informed us that the Police, who work very closely with the Centre, are its main funders (to the tune of £750,000 per annum) and, despite economic cuts, will continue to be so.

Dr Rainey Roberts, who founded the Centre, was also in attendance and both Bernie and Dr Cath White paid their sincere respects to her.

Finally, a very brave young woman, Linda Latchford, was asked to perform the opening ceremony. Linda told us a little of her story; she spoke eloquently of how she had been in "a whirlpool of despair" and how the people at the Centre had gradually given her back her life and continued to help her. I think we were all very moved.



After a splendid buffet lunch, groups of people were taken across to St Mary's and shown the new examination suites and particularly the art installation for the children. This consisted of a gaily-decorated trolley, which housed the equipment, and a soft ball, which the child could squeeze to control lots of coloured shapes reflected onto the ceiling (as a distraction whilst being examined).



Maureen Heywood



FRIENDSHIP EVENING



On Saturday, 8th October, nine Soroptimists with seven partners and friends, were welcomed by President Val and together celebrated Friendship Evening at St Matthew's Church Hall in Stretford. Despite the gloomy weather outside, inside, the evening lived up to its name.

Five candles were lit as we remembered our Friendship Links and Val reminded us that SI was founded 90 years ago and to mark the occasion the Executive Committee had decided to give certificates to long serving active and supportive members. Those present who received their framed certificates were Phyl, Stella, Kathleen, Ann and Yvonne.

Then, thanks to Ann, who organised the food, we enjoyed cheese, pâté, bread, biscuits, grapes and celery- plenty of it, with wine and juice of course.

Next we drew a raffle for which were 14 prizes had been generously donated. The raffle raised £75.

Afterwards we all tried our hand at Kathleen's 'A HORTI-NOT-SO-CULTURAL QUIZ'. This was

quite tricky. 30 brilliant clues. Number 16 had all of us foxed. The answer to 'Blessed relief (not heart's ease)' was ... sweet pea. Thanks Kathleen. President Val was the winner with a score of 22.

Our next Social Event will also be at St Matthew's on Saturday 10th December, when we shall celebrate International Evening with a Welsh flavour and Welsh quiz.

Sandra Woodhead



WOMAN OF THE YEAR

I was invited to attend the Women of the Year lunch at the Intercontinental Hotel in Park Lane, London.

I arrived at the same time as Ruby Wax and we walked into the hotel together. I didn't realise who she was and chatted along quite happily as we climbed the stairs to go to the ballroom where the event was being held. She was really nice and asked me lots of questions about why I was there and where I was from. One of the organisers took the photo of us together.



Every lady present is a Woman of the Year and I met so many well known people. My host for the day was Doreen Lawrence, Stephen Lawrence's Mum, a wonderful and very brave lady, and I sat next to Hetty Bower who at 106 years old still campaigns for peace and regularly speaks in Trafalgar Square in London. In October this year she joined the march to Downing Street to present a petition for peace to the Prime Minister.

Lulu came to my table and put her hand on my shoulder and said 'you are the jam lady aren't you'. What a surprise, but we talked about Strictly Come Dancing and jam!!

It was a fantastic day which I enjoyed so much.

I asked why I had been nominated and Doreen said possibly because of organising the Alderley Edge Farmers Market for so many years and raising funds for The Christie at each of the markets I run, and also because I had started a new business with the Preserves when I was no longer a spring chicken!!

It was a wonderful experience and something I will never forget.

Christine Munro



COFFEE POT LUNCH

On the 24th November, Soroptimists and friends once again met at the Wycliffe Hotel for their Annual Coffee Pot Lunch, choosing from a superb "Credit Crunch Lunch" menu. The food really was excellent, as was the service, and it was good to see those members and friends who are not always able to come to our meetings and social events.

President Val offered a vote of thanks to Yvonne for organising this happy event on our behalf.

Maureen Heywood



ORISSA UPDATE

On the 25th of this month, I received an e-mail containing numerous joyful photographs of children celebrating their Community Day, Nehru's birthday, 21st November, interspersed with the following interesting notes.

On their birthday every child receives a "Vegan" made cake (no egg or milk). Children who do not know their birthday celebrate together on Community Day.



This year the children decided that Ruth would be the Chief Guest. Ruth is seen as "Mother" to all the small orphan children. She is aunt to countless children. As is Indian tradition she is referred to officially as "Madam" – a polite form of address.

Children's Day is a big festival. A young man in one of the photographs is Koteswara Rao, who used to be a lorry driver. He lost sight in both eyes due to corneal infection and has been staying with us for the past six years in our community centre at Kothavalasa. We have no age discriminations for children's day - all are children.

This year the children of Nameste House, Muniguda, are here at Kothavalasa for holidays, so this is good for us to celebrate all together in one home.

We have a big social message played, messages by senior children, games and competitions conducted by senior children. Everyone wins something. That was really good fun for all the children and staff, too.

Eliazar concludes the e-mail by thanking all dear friends and families for making this day a wonderful one, and for making all his little children smile!

Kathleen Beavis



A LITTLE REMINDER

A New Year approaches but don't forget that we have many ongoing projects requiring your continued support.

Cornerstones - coffee, sugar, biscuits and tinned meats, etc.

Save Our Soldiers Appeal - items for the shoeboxes.

Genesis – used bras to raise much-needed cash for this charity.

Orissa – used tights to be used as bandages and your old Christmas cards for their schools.

NSPCC – used inkjet cartridges.

Ruth – used postage stamps.



Membership News

Many Happy Returns to all members celebrating a birthday before the next issue of this Newsletter.

Clelia Gatley	8 th	January
Stella Kay	14 th	January
Kathleen Beavis	14 th	January
Eleanor Duthie	16 th	January
Joyce Sowerby	10 th	February
Beatrice Leigh	27 th	February



We are very happy to welcome Eleanor Duthie to our Club and hope that she will enjoy her membership with us. Eleanor is a teacher and her details are:-

Eleanor Duthie
9 Mayville Drive,
Didsbury, Manchester
M20 3RB
Tel: 0161 445 7127
eduthie@msn.com

We are also happy to welcome back Peggy. Peggy's address is:-

Peggy Howarth
8 Souchay Court
1 Clothorn Rd
Didsbury, Manchester
M20 6BR
Tel: 0161 445 1894

Congratulations to Phyl on a successful move to her new home, where we hope she will be very happy.

Phyl Warrior
Flat 17, Patterdale House
Boundary Court
Gatley Rd
Cheadle, Cheshire
SK8 1LX
Tel: 0161 485 2363



Congratulations to Sue and the Hollick family on the birth of Hugo!



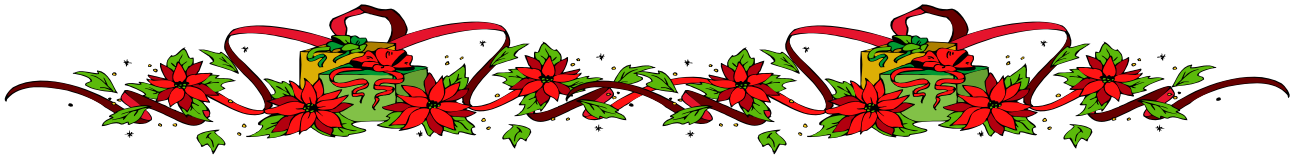
We know that several members have been far from well in the past few weeks. We wish them a speedy and full recovery to good health and trust that everyone will remain fit over the Christmas period.

DIARY DATES

Saturday,	3 rd Dec	Regional PAC at Leigh Sports Centre, 10:00 for 10:30 Council Meeting, 1pm. Bring lunch.
Saturday,	10 th Dec	International Evening with a Welsh Theme at St Matthews Church Hall, 7pm
Saturday,	3 rd March	S I Manchester's 86 th Annual Dinner at Freemasons Hall, Bridge Street, Manchester, 7pm

Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by Wednesday, 22nd February, please. Personal anecdotes would be welcomed.

Kathleen Beavis
Maureen Heywood



Best Wishes for Christmas
and the New Year from
Denis & Sandra

Merry Christmas and Happy
New Year to all members and
their families.
from President Val

Good Wishes for Christmas
and the New Year from
Christine

A Happy and Peaceful
Christmas and Best Wishes
for 2012 from Yvonne

Much love and happiness to
all our Soroptimist friends
and families...Fiona, Paul,
Alexander and Ciara

Health and happiness
to you and yours from
Barbara and Mario

Wishing you all a very
Happy Christmas and good
wishes for 2012 - Joan

With all Good
Wishes for
Christmas & 2012
Ann

Health and Happiness
for Christmas and
the New Year Sue
Underwood

I wish all my
Soroptimist friends
all the best for 2012,
Clelia

Peace and Goodwill to
everyone. Have fun!
Kathleen

With our very best wishes
for a Merry Christmas and a
Happy and Healthy New Year,
Margaret and Bill

Wishing you all a very Happy Xmas
and all the best for 2012
Rosemary and Gus

Merry Christmas
everyone. Hope we all
have a peaceful 2012
Best wishes, Sophie.

Barry and I wish all members
of S.I. Manchester a happy
Xmas and a healthy New Year
Shena

Good Cheer for Christmas
and Good Health for 2012
Maureen and Bill

Best wishes to Soroptimist
friends everywhere for a
Happy Christmas and a
Good New Year from Stella

