
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

OF MANCHESTER

President: Sue Underwood

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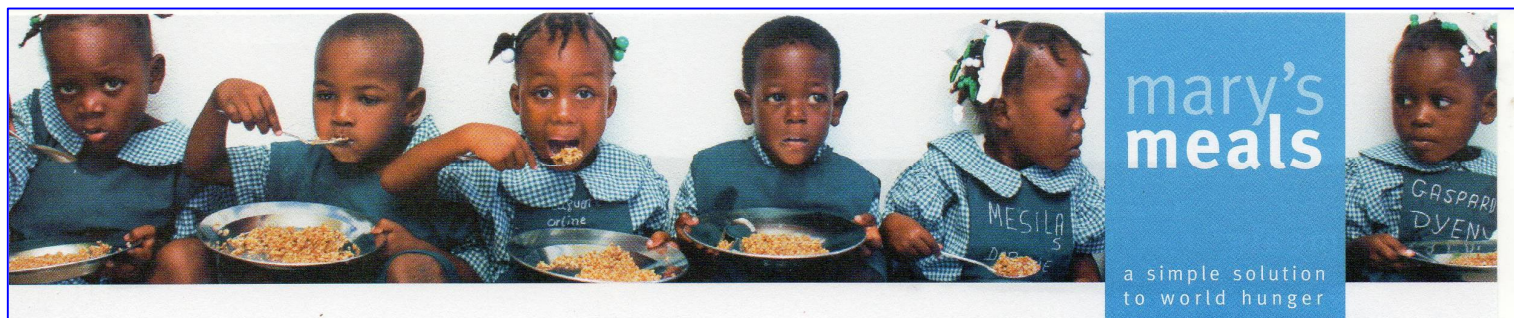
Dear Club Members

As I write this, it is not yet December but I am already conscious that there are not sufficient days left before Christmas to do all that needs to be done. Parties, Christmas lunches, Christmas fairs, carol concerts, street carols, nativity plays and the essential rehearsals are all crowding in, not to mention the baking of Christmas cakes and puddings and all the other seasonal cooking.



It will get done and I keep telling myself that it's all worth while and one mustn't give in just because one is getting older. Stress-free preparations is my wish for you all.

Kathleen



The following is a combination of letters received from Mary's Meals:-

"We recently surpassed the provision of a daily meal for one million schoolchildren which, as always, was only possible because of the continuing generosity and 'little acts of love' from our supporters, like you, from all around the world. We have been doing lots of work to measure the impact of Mary's Meals. The early results are truly staggering, giving compelling evidence that this simple thing we do – providing a daily meal in school – really does transform the lives of children and their communities.

"When we began our monitoring work in specific schools, more than half of the pupils told us they found it difficult to join lessons because of hunger. Now, that number has fallen dramatically to 7%.

"We will be publishing an independently verified report later this year, but we can already see that these are impressive results. Perhaps even more wonderful are the results based on children's happiness. Before our monitoring began, we asked children if they were happy at school, and just over half said yes. When we asked the same question seven months later – after they'd been receiving Mary's Meals – nine out of 10 children said they were happy. That's a lot of extra smiles and a huge amount of new laughter.

"We hope the evidence of what actually happens when children eat every day at school will encourage even more people to join us as we work to realise our vision; that every child receives one daily meal in their place of education.

"And we're delighted to be able to share with you some wonderful news that we hope will allow us to reach many more children still hungry and waiting for Mary's Meals. The UK government has agreed to double any donations made to Mary's Meals between **28th September and 28th December, 2015**. Even I can do the maths on this one. Instead of one child we will be able to feed two. You won't prompt one more beaming smile; you'll create two.

Magnus MacFarlane-Barrow, Founder and Chief Executive

Note: As you all know, S I Manchester made a donation of £100 to the charity in time to qualify for this offer to double any donation.



REGIONAL S FACTOR CONCERT



We had a very enjoyable evening at the Lowton Civic Hall on 18th September, with a concert organised by our Regional President, Margaret Baker.

Fourteen Clubs took part with varying acts. We had tap dancing from S I Bury. A number of Clubs sang, including our own Club. Barbara Blaber did a marvellous job singing our song, "A New Breed of

Soroptimist", which had been written by some Manchester members. Molly, Elaine, Maureen, Yvonne and myself joined in the chorus, none of us in our comfort zone but all for a good cause.

We had a funny performance of Red Riding Hood from the Warrington and Ashton Clubs featuring our next Federation President, Margaret Emsley, as the wolf. There was also poetry from Wigan, including the poem of "The Highwayman".



Liverpool gave us a medley of songs to celebrate the wonderful efforts undertaken by members of S I Liverpool during the Second World War, including helping with evacuees and providing half a million meals for servicemen.

The concert finished with music and song from "Last Night of the Proms" provided by S I Leigh with plenty of flag-waving and enthusiastic singing.



I am sure that everyone who was at the concert would agree that we had a very entertaining night.

Rose Marginson



A LESSON FOR US ALL

On March 11th this year, I had a lunch date with a friend and I was on the last minute, as usual. I jumped in the bath and noticed that all did not look well with my left breast. I had no time to think or act and rushed out for the day. However, I felt as though a black cloud was hanging over me and could not wait to get back home and telephone my surgery – after all, is that not what we have had drummed into us? “DO NOT DELAY!”

I requested an appointment with a particular doctor and was told “two weeks today”. I explained as clearly as I could that I may well have breast cancer; reply “two weeks”. I made the appointment but on the following day I requested a telephone call from the GP. After leaving my next day free, the doctor did ring me. I explained and the conversation went as follows; “Don’t worry, darling (female GP!!) I am sure it will be nothing. Take a hot flannel ... and pop in to see me next week. I finished the call and re-dialled reception to make an appointment and explained the doctor’s request. Answer: two weeks! I then sat down and wrote a long letter describing my symptoms, etc, and took it personally to reception. (Seven months later, an answer has yet to arrive!)

My anxiety was increasing daily. Time was passing and I was becoming more and more despondent but also more and more determined. I decided to be at the surgery for 7.45am and wait for the stampede at the desk at 8am to be allocated one of the few emergency appointments. At last I saw a doctor and on that day and from that moment on I was given the best treatment and kindness ever.

My consultant was Mr Lester Barr, a gentleman of middle age, who immediately filled me with confidence. I was examined, was sent for a mammogram immediately, then back to Mr Barr for the result. He explained that he wanted to do a biopsy there and then (very painful!) and he would see me a week later with the result. By this time I was convinced that the news was not good but he would not be drawn.

Now was the time to tell Barry and the family. Up until now I had felt that there was no need to worry anybody else.

It was a long week and, on April 2nd, I saw Mr Barr again (accompanied by Barry) and the worst was confirmed. Yes, it comes as a shock. That illness only happens to others. BUT Mr Barr has so often, both then and since, commended me on my speed in contacting my GP (or trying to contact!) He said that what I had could be very aggressive if left and my speed would probably make it a much more positive outcome. I remarked that surely all of his patients came to him at the very first opportunity. His response was “Far from it.” Older ladies of my age were the chief procrastinators, acting like ostriches, possibly due to embarrassment, possibly due to fear, possibly due to ignorance.



Easter came and went and I had a partial mastectomy on April 15th, followed by a second operation two weeks later. A reconstruction was performed during the operation. Only five weeks had passed since my first suspicion.

After further discussion, radiotherapy was recommended. I was to have fifteen consecutive sessions, apart from weekends. I attended The Christie at Oldham for my treatment. Words cannot express the kindness I was shown, from the young lady at reception, who knew my name from day one, to the lady in the café who always joined me when I had my round of toast. I had chosen my appointments for around 8am which left me the rest of the day to myself. I met and spoke to so many people, all with one thing in common; compared to many I felt a fraud.

As for the actual 'team' – their kindness, patience and sympathy really helped me back to normality. Nothing was too much trouble. An example of their kindness was that that day I wanted to be able to attend our grandsons' sports day at Ranby, near Retford, commencing at 10am. I mentioned this a few days before. I was asked to arrive earlier than 8am and my team began earlier. As a result I walked on to the sports field at 10am! At a time of great vulnerability, it meant so much.

In early August, I saw my radiologist who seemed pleased and, again, he emphasised that he felt so much more confident, thanks to my prompt action. Mr Barr saw me in September and he feels as confident as he can be. I will have regular check-ups and an annual mammogram, which gives me peace of mind.

I feel so much more fortunate than many ladies that I have beaten the dreaded "C". LADIES, the lesson to be learned is neither ignore nor put off any lump, bump or change. My outcome may well have been very different. Also cancer does not respect age.

I felt I had to write this, not for a sympathy vote, but simply to inform all ladies who read it that we are never too young nor too old to succumb to this dreadful illness. NEVER put off if you have any doubts. Better safe than sorry.

Shena Cuttle



MEETING PRINCESS ANNE



Val was honoured to represent the Club and be one of those who met HRH the Princess Royal at the recent SIGBI Conference in Glasgow.

The Princess had asked to meet representatives of the three clubs with proposals that had made the short-list for the new Federation long-term project.

Val said 'Federation President Jenny introduced me as representing SI Manchester and the Princess shook my hand. I had a short time to tell her about our HEAL Malawi project and how it aims to help young women find a way out of extreme poverty.'

Unfortunately, our project did not win when delegates voted later that afternoon, but Soroptimists do not give up when faced with a setback and the Princess will not be the last person to hear about HEAL Malawi.

RED ROSES IN GLASGOW

Seven Manchester members attended the 81st Federation Conference of Soroptimist International of Great Britain and Ireland in Glasgow in November 2015.

The photograph shows our Honorary Members, Yvonne Mullen and Kathleen Beavis, getting ready to welcome incoming Federation President Margaret Emsley, who is a member of the Ashton-under-Lyne club.

No, ladies! You are supposed to wave your Lancashire red roses!
Val Moss



A CONFERENCE FIRST-TIMER

I was really looking forward to my first Conference and it didn't disappoint. From the opening ceremony which was colourful and fun, to the closing ceremony, it was a very busy and enlightening few days.

It was lovely seeing all the flags of the different countries belonging to our federation carried by local girl guides with a member of that particular country beside them.

The speakers on the first day gave very interesting talks about their lives, including Dame Stella Rimington, previous Head of MI5, and Jo Fairlie who started the Fair Trade chocolate company, Green and Black. Princess Anne was in attendance and Val was introduced to her during the morning break. In the afternoon voting for the SIGBI Project took place. We came 3rd which was a great achievement. I felt very proud of my club, watching Val and Barbara give the presentation.

Saturday was all about Programme Action, with, again, very interesting speakers and some clubs talking about their projects. We finished that evening with the closing ceremony. All the members from our region waved red roses as Margaret Emsley was installed as Federation President. We finished it with a drinks party. Overall, a great few days.

Rose Marginson



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION



A couple of weeks ago there was a very uplifting feature on Woman's Hour. Jenni Murray was interviewing a young Maasai warrior, Sonyanga Oleng'ais, from Kenya. He is the captain of a cricket team and the whole team are campaigning to stop FGM. Sonyanga was only too well aware of the procedure because he has five sisters older than himself who are very dear to him. Apart from the physical horror they endured, the girls were unable to go to school because of FGM and also had to marry very young. He was determined that it wouldn't happen to his younger sister.

The team travel abroad and so they have become aware of equal rights for males and females. As nobody is allowed to question the elders, the boys talked to their parents and explained the negative effects of FGM. The cricketers have met much opposition and even received threats from the elders. The young man said it is like peeling an onion and will take time and persistence.

All members of the cricket team have vowed they will NOT marry girls who have been cut!

Two years ago, a film was made about this matter; it is called "Warriors" and is presently being shown at specialist cinemas but I could not find one of these in the North West. If you are interested enough, go to <http://herzimbabwe.co.zw/2015/11/warriors-maasai-men-fighting-child-marriage-and-fgm-through-cricket/>

Maureen Heywood



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Special Christmas greetings to Peggy and to Phyl who are in our thoughts although not able to attend meetings.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

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
Yvonne Healing	19 th	January



Elaine Loader	23 rd	January
Sally Carr	31 st	January
Rebekah Readhead	25 th	February
Beatrice Leigh	27 th	February

A LITTLE REMINDER

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

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

Pankhurst Centre – toiletries, etc.

Beatrice – used postage stamps.

DIARY DATES

Wednesday,	20 th	Jan 2016	Coffee Pot Lunch, Wycliffe Hotel, 12.30pm.
Saturday,	6 th	Feb 2016	Pancake Party at the home of Fiona. More details later
Saturday,	27 th	Feb 2016	S I Manchester's 90th Annual Dinner at Gorton Monastery
Saturday,	12 th	March 2016	Regional PAC at Leigh Sports Centre, 10:00 for 10:30 Council Meeting, 1pm. Bring lunch.

STOP PRESS!!!

HAVE JUST RECEIVED FROM SUSAN THE FOLLOWING NEWS OF OUR FRANCIS HOUSE CHRISTMAS TREE.



After dismantling the tree, I will deliver it straight to The Refuge it on Monday 7th Dec. Theresa was thrilled that we thought of them as they do not have a tree and this one will last them years. She said it will really give the women a boost and they will enjoy decorating it.

Incidentally, I had an email from Theresa saying they were overwhelmed by the number of 'gifts' we took them recently (clothing, scarves, bags and toiletries) and decided to share their fortune with the women in all the Refuges by holding a 'Jumble Sale' at her Refuge – but, obviously, the items were 'free'. She came up with the idea as none of the women knew what a Jumble Sale was and she thought that knowing what they were would stand them in good stead for the future. She said they had a wonderful time and she makes them very aware of who makes it possible!! Every time I speak to Theresa it makes me realise that for very little effort on our part we can make such a difference to these women, even if we are not able to see the look of happiness on their faces ourselves.

Susan Hollick

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS:

We are grateful to all who, in lieu of cards, have sent their Christmas greetings on the following page. Donations will go to our charities.

Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by Wednesday, 17th February, please. Personal anecdotes would be welcomed.

Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood



GREETINGS FOR CHARITY IN LIEU OF CHRISTMAS CARDS



Merry Christmas! Health and
happiness in 2016!
President Sue

Happy holidays and best wishes
for a happy and healthy New
Year! Love from
Molly and Andrew Robinson

Every good wish for Christmas
and the New Year
Love from Yvonne M

Happy Christmas and a
Peaceful New Year.
Love to you all from Kathleen

A Happy Christmas to all
Soroptimist Friends and their
families, with a Prosperous and
Healthy New Year from Stella.

Wishing you all a joyful
Christmas and a wonderful new
year and hoping to enjoy time
together in the future
Fiona, Paul, Alex and Ciara

A happy Xmas to all members
and a healthy New Year.
Our love from Barry and Shena

Wishing all members a very
Happy Christmas and a peaceful
New Year from Ann

Wishing a Happy Christmas and
Prosperous New Year to all!
Elaine

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

We wish a joyful Christmas to
everyone, and that New Year will
bring peace and happiness to us
all Barbara and Mario

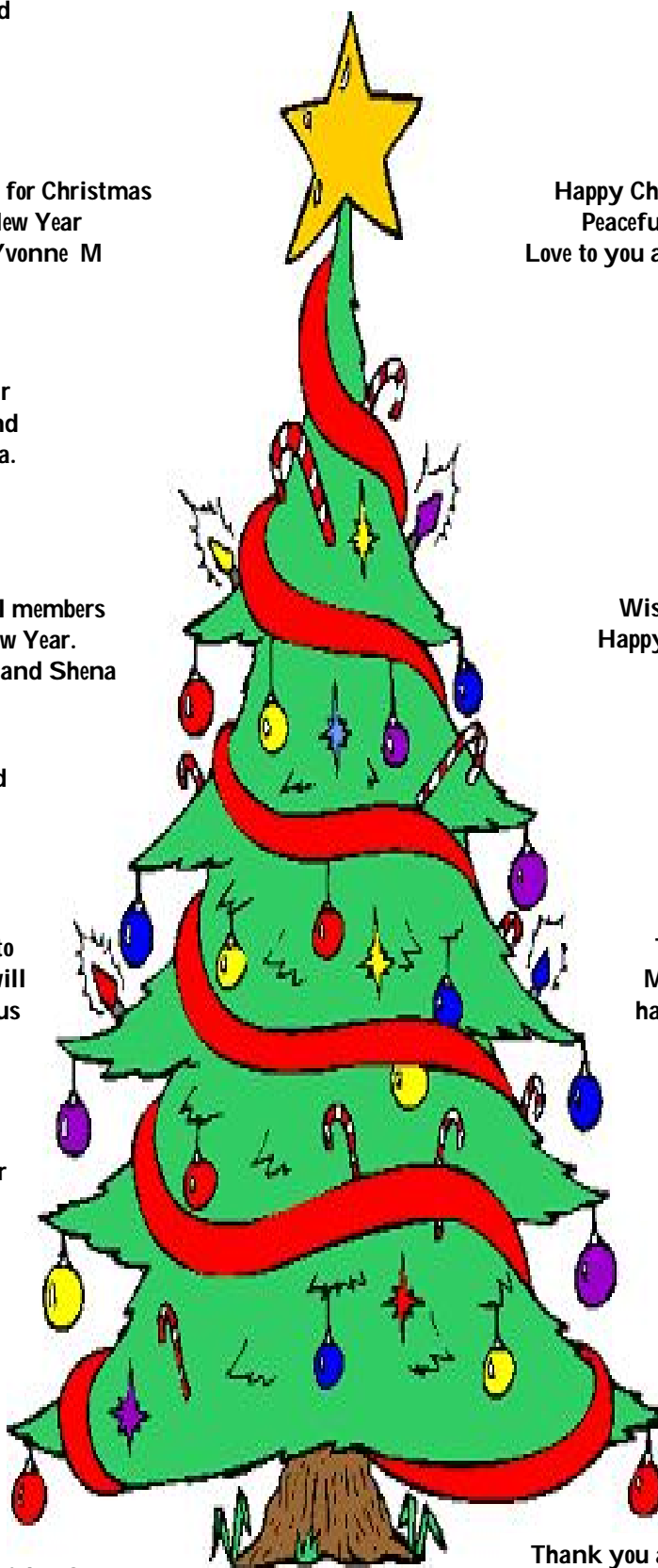
To wish my friends at S I
Manchester all the best for a
happy and healthy New Year,
Celia

A very Happy Christmas to
everyone and a peaceful New Year
Best Wishes from Rose

Good Health and Season's Greetings
to all with love from Margaret & Bill

Maureen and Bill wish you all
a Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year

To all my Soroptimist friends
Wishing you and yours a happy
and peaceful festive season
With love from Barbara B



We send everyone best wishes for
the forthcoming festive season -
Rosemary & Gus

Thank you all for your support over this difficult
year for us. We wish you all a very Happy
Christmas and good health and fortune in the
coming year. Love Susan and David