
SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

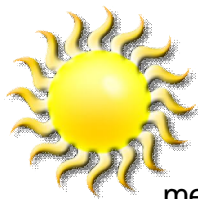
OF MANCHESTER

PRESIDENT
Val Moss

TREASURER
Joan Davis-Rice

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Dear Club Members



Welcome to Summer! Let us hope it will last - with gentle night-time rain of course, for our gardens.



This is very much an Alderley Edge May Festival edition. I remember a club meeting, many months ago, when Christine announced that money was available for a community project and that she would like to mount such a festival. We expressed concern as to whether we had the manpower and contacts for such an undertaking.

As plans went ahead, leading from the front, Christine imbued the club with her own enthusiasm and in the following pages you will see what transpired. Working as a team, a community project was brought to fruition and our Club and Soroptimism in general received some very welcome publicity.

Well done Christine and all who helped her!

We are most grateful to David Hollick for the splendid Festival photographs.



ALDERLEY EDGE MAY FAIR – CHRISTINE’S TRIUMPH

My memories of the day? I struggled out of bed in time to get to the Festival Hall for 9.30am. Good, so far. I greeted various friends, Maureen, Ruth and assorted marshals and stewards while I waited for my fluorescent yellow jacket to arrive. Having booked in all the entrants in the parade I was surprised to be approached by a couple I didn't recognise – a man in a strange red and white suit who was carrying a white ventriloquist's dog, and his companion in a most peculiar hat. "And who are you?" I asked politely. "I'm Silly Billy" the dog replied. Definitely not one of mine, I thought. Time for me to get out of here. Quickly I borrowed a yellow jacket from the Macclesfield Town Centre people and made my way to Chapel Road to await the arrival of the vehicles.



Very noisy things, tractors, and smelly too. Friendly though. The fire engine people were also nice. The Volvo with its trailer advertising, I-can't-remember-what, didn't arrive. And the other radio car Unpredictable, the parade people.



As we heard the procession coming along the road, engines were switched on, revved up, and we waited for the appropriate space to slot each vehicle into the parade.

And then I heard another noise. flashing crazily, zoomed parade stopped, the car slewed approached the policeman. IMPRESSED” was the reply. know what had upset him? said. “Why?” Repeating problem was.



A yellow and blue police car, lights towards the oncoming parade. The across the road, blocking it completely. I “What’s the problem?” I asked. “NOT “Why?” Stupid question, but how could I “You’ll have to wait for half an hour” he myself, but I really didn’t know what the

I can’t remember the precise was that there was a 5K race, a.m. from half way down the a couple of circuits of the route.

wording of the conversation. The gist of it with about 150 runners, starting at 11 parade route, and they planned to make This seemed to make him exceedingly

unhappy. I tried to explain that they couldn’t all run at the same speed, and that they would probably be in single file by the time they had completed the first circuit. He wasn’t impressed. After telephonic communication with an unidentified person he said he would “go and see.....” He sped off and after a couple of high-speed turns round the roundabout at the end of the road and a stop to talk to yet another unidentified person, he came back and resumed his position blocking the road. “You’ll have to wait for ten minutes” he said, muttering about shopkeepers “taking advantage” and “street furniture”.

The white horse had had enough by this time, and decided to retrace its steps to the Festival Hall. The pony agreed. The wizard and his knights (though most seemed to be mediaeval villagers) milled about. In their midst I spied my friend Karen in a most beautiful dress, with her partner equally splendidly attired, pushing her grandchild in a very modern baby buggy. Incongruous!

It only took a couple more minutes for him to realise that the road race really wasn’t going to be a problem. He relented, drove off at quite a reasonable speed, and the procession moved on. As the last vehicle joined the parade I picked up my bucket, brush, and shovel and followed the parade to the park. Ruth had similar equipment. When animals are in a parade there are certain to be consequences.



Barbara Valcaccia

THE HUB OF ACTIVITIES

The sun shone on the arena which had the ambience of a holiday resort. Surrounded by the wine bar, hog roast, llamas and children's fairground attractions it was a pleasing sight. At 12 noon, after the wizard had struck the ground with his staff and declared the May Fair open, the festivities began. The fancy dress competition was judged, prizes awarded then the music started. The Davyhulme scout troupe musicians. Samba Dancers, Morris Dancers, Style C.P. School Maypole Dances, Dogs, all led to a grand finale. And all the time, a little train, carrying young and old, ran round the outside of arena and inside down one side.



Three stilt walkers strode round the outside area sprinkling magic dust on happy children as dog walkers, ambling through the arena and on through the Park, mingled with the crowd.

It was a grand community occasion as I witnessed so many young families enjoying themselves. Timeless and memorable!

Finally, I was delighted that Christine was acknowledged in the arena as the person who had organised the whole event.

Was it worth it? Yes!
Sandra Woodhead



SPORTS



We had children from 3yrs to 13yrs old taking part in fun relays. The little ones didn't want to struggle with eggs and spoons. They were desperate to run with a baton! It never ceases to amaze me what change comes over a child when you put a baton in their hand and say "RUN". The older ones, of course wanted to do everything, so skipped, sacked, egg and spooned and batonned to their hearts' content. They, and we, had a wonderful time.

Sue Hollick

PRESIDENT VAL GOES WALKABOUT WITH THE VIPS

The Alderley Edge May Fair theme was based on the fantasy books of local author Alan Garner and the main judge of the children's fancy dress competition was his wife, Griselda. It's a hard job to do alone and Regional President Jenny and I agreed to help her. I did my best to get the children into the appropriate age groups (herding cats comes to mind) so we could see them. The criteria used were how well they fitted the theme and how much effort had been put into creating the costume. So having ruled out Harry Potter look-alikes and various shop-bought wizard costumes, winners were selected for each of the four age categories. All the entrants received a bag of sweets and there were book tokens for the group winners. The ultimate winner was a boy dressed as a knight sporting a lovely cardboard white horse. It turned out that his grandfather had been in the same class as Alan Garner at school and Griselda presented him with a signed copy of 'The Wierdstone of Brisingamen', which will be something to treasure.



Later in the afternoon Councillor Roger West, Mayor of Cheshire East, arrived and Jenny, her husband Tony and I spent a most enjoyable couple of hours going around the Fair with him. He stopped at nearly every stall for a chat, including at our club stall for photographs. He also met Griselda Garner at her stall about the Blackden Trust, and was very keen to meet local artists and craftsmen. One of the highlights for me was the birds of prey stall. The Mayor was asked if he wanted to hold one of the birds and when he declined I volunteered. It was a lovely Indian owl called Jazheera and the leather straps were well wrapped around my glove so that she didn't get away. Before he left, the Mayor started the tug o'war contest in the main arena. He was most impressed by the Fair and said that he had enjoyed it very much.

Val Moss

RUBBISH GALORE



The day dawned - the weather looked "iffy". I had packed my equipment (bin liners and Marigolds). Barry had kindly offered to run Joan and myself over from Saddleworth and Glossop to Alderley Edge, which took the worry of parking off my shoulders. We ended up parked in a prime spot, a few yards from our Soroptimist stall. Typical Barry! (The marshal in charge of parking was already stressed and uttering expletives and it was only 8.30am.)

Next problem – no gazebo available for S I Manchester but Christine came to our rescue. Four of us uplifted a gazebo, marched across the grass and re-instated it in our prime spot – directly across from the row of toilets and backing onto the “Free Spinal Checks” stall.

My job, in charge of rubbish, was slow to start but the initial problem was that liners provided for the wheelie bins were too small. My liners were longer but still not a brilliant fit. I then met a new problem with the open bins usually found in parks. Oh dear, this was going to be a stressful day! The bins filled up quickly but the liners were clipped in – even with David Hollick’s expertise, I could not move these clips. However, my years of study for a degree in Classics came in useful – keep a clear mind and use one’s initiative. There is always a way round everything. The skip was very handy for throwing in full bags – good exercise for my arthritic shoulders.

My assigned job left me time to help with other things, selling raffle tickets being one. There were three beautiful hampers as raffle prizes; a fruit and vegetable basket, a farmers’ market basket and a pamper basket. Three separate books of tickets were used, one of which Barry took to sell. I watched his technique of people and, if they beside them and our work with the little success. After a sold around 150 tickets around 40 tickets. He selling 300 tickets, and, finally, reluctantly £150 to each of our Cornerstones Day Centre for the Homeless, the Oasis Centre in Gorton and to sponsor Dr. Verduyn, a local doctor who is going to work in a Fistula Clinic in Uganda.



How enjoyable it was to spread the word about Soroptimism to so many people and to explain “who we are”. A good day’s work for S I Manchester!

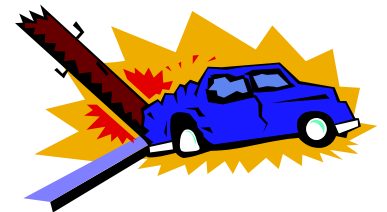
The rain kept off all day and only at the end did the clouds appear. Christine must have run three marathons – how she kept going I do not know. If not wanted at the Band Stand or by the stilt walkers looking to be paid, or rushing home to collect the raffle prizes, only to mention a few, she was rushing off to buy more toilet paper,.

Well done to Christine, and to all our helpers.
Shena Cuttle

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### **OUT OF AFRICA.....VERY SOON NOW!**

As my return home rapidly approaches, I have been thinking about some of the things that will stay in my ‘Memories of Africa’ file that could be labelled ‘Things they don’t tell you about Africa’!.....



It is now winter in South Africa.....I am looking forward to coming home to feel warm again! It seems that all ‘weather’ in Africa is extreme, the heat, the rain and particularly the spectacular storms, but somehow the freezing nights and early mornings still came as a surprise! Some say this is down to my declaring that I was not homesick but rather weather-sick for the crisp sunny days of a British winter.....OK, I’m better now!

Driving in Johannesburg is enjoyable once you’ve mastered the route between the potholes and the speed humps.....but my recent journeys to Burgersfort, about 350 kilometres north east of

Jo'burg, pushed the challenge to a whole new level.....a small car could be lost, or launched, for ever!

In just over a week I can claim that I survived 16 months in Africa with all limbs intact.....despite the fact that I am yet to discover a set of steps or stairs with an even rise! If 'Elf & Safety' ever reach Africa they will implode! I have had a lot of fun watching the incredulous looks on the faces of South Africans as I relate completely true stories about 'Health & Safety' in the UK. Afrikaans is a very colourful language and I really ought to try and learn more words than braai (barbeque) & babalas (hangover).....it is wonderful for giving somebody a real telling off! During our problems getting out of Ghana, when my 'gentile English woman' failed, we just stood back and watched in awe as Retha, a petite blonde, let loose in her native Afrikaans.....we were on the next plane!

I've mentioned before the problems that I had getting my tongue around the Nigerian names but Ghana was a breeze....all very British apart from the Japanese Chairman! They continued to address me as Mama Sue which was nice. Now, back in South Africa, I am Aunty Sue, a term of respect for anyone older! Apparently this is the tradition in many African cultures. (And in India. Ed.) Recently, the idea of Zuma factoring peace in Libya was bizarre to me until a South African colleague quipped that he was fine with 'road maps' but hadn't completed any 'journeys' yet! Of more concern was the mood, the apprehension felt in the country when Nelson Mandela was ill recently.....a living legend.....but dreams of a 'Rainbow South Africa' need him for a while longer.



Africa is huge! I could be referring to the landscape, the sky, the food portions or the hearts of the people.....I hope to return to experience some more! Does this mean that I have become a 'child of Africa'? ..... only when I have packed the appropriate clothes!

Sue Underwood



**RECOGNITION FOR SIGBI**

Last month at the Manchester Luncheon Club, the speaker, Rob White, was from the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), a charitable organisation which is co-Laureate of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

After an interesting talk, Kathleen was asked to give the vote of thanks and took the opportunity to mention that during the very early days of anti-landmine action, SIGBI asked its members to lobby their MPs to get the Government to sign the Non-proliferation Treaty. After the meeting, Rob approached Kathleen and told her that they greatly appreciated the efforts of Soroptimists on their behalf and said that without our support and financial help the organisation might not have been able to develop as it has.

Maureen Heywood



**EXCITING DATES WHICH REQUIRE YOUR SUPPORT**

**Garden Party**

Sunday, 14th August, 12-30pm-4pm, at Woodbank, Light Alders Lane, Disley

Lunch £10

Games outside if fine; a book and jigsaw stall (new-to-you items required, please)

Tombola - prizes gratefully received. Hopefully, jewellery valuations.



## Friendship Evening

8th October at St Matthew's, Stretford

7.30 - 10.30pm

An informal evening of wine, cheese and pâté with a scintillating 'getting-to-know you' quiz and, of course, a raffle



## International Evening

10th December at St Matthew's Stretford

All these events are open to everyone, so please bring some friends.

Sandra Woodhead

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DIARY DATES – WHY NOT PUT THEM IN YOUR DIARY NOW !

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| Sat | 18 th June | - | St Anne's Hospice Summer Fete – to be held at the Hospice, 10.30am. |
| Sat | 18 th June | - | Regional AGM and Meeting at Leigh Sports Complex 10am for 10:30am PAC; followed by lunch (bring own), and AGM and Business Meeting |
| Fri | 1 st July | - | Hilda Swindell's 100th birthday celebration. |
| Sun | 14 th August | - | Garden Party at Sandra's home – a family fun day with a touch of Antiques' Road Show. |
| Sat | 24 th Sept | - | Regional PAC and Council Meeting at Leigh Sports Complex. 10am for 10:30am PAC; followed by lunch (bring own) and Council Meeting. |
| Thurs | 27 th –29 th Oct | - | SIGBI Conference, Brighton. Stop Press: We are delighted to learn that Sameem has been invited to be one of the speakers. |

Last date for copy for the next Newsletter Thursday, 8th September. Do share your views and holiday experiences with the rest of us.

Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood