

# SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL

## OF MANCHESTER

President: Susan Hollick

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Dear Club Members



After a very extended summer and a brief Autumn in which the trees were slow to change colour and almost reluctant to shed their leaves, I awoke one morning about 10 days ago to discover the lawn white with frost, snow on the mountains and a very cold nip in the air. A hundredweight of rock salt was promptly added to my shopping list for that day. I've not yet had need to use it although the weather, whilst bright, has still remained chilly. Christmas now seems to be coming upon us apace and my diary over the next two or three weeks has more than a smattering of Christmas lunches of organisations to which I belong. As a result of this I've ordered a goose for my Christmas as I feel that by the 25<sup>th</sup> I shall be over-turkeyed. Hope you all have whatever sort of Christmas you prefer.



### I HAD A DREAM.....

We are now into a second week in Cyprus (always shorter than the first), staying at this delightful hotel.

The weather has really been too hot but we are not complaining. Sleep, even with air-conditioning, has been fitful. I am inclined to dream but never seem to remember them. However, last night I had a dream which I do remember. Perhaps it was because I was aware that there had been a Sorop meeting during that evening but this was my most vivid dream for many years.

Kathleen was holding a "do". It was certainly not at her home which I knew in Manchester but it was in Anglesey? I rode there on my bicycle (my old Raleigh given to me when I was 12 years old) and which had a trailer containing food and raffle prizes. Not many people turned up so I had to take back most of the food. The problem was that I had "parked" my bicycle along a dark path in a neighbour's hut. When I stumbled there in the dark, there was only an old-fashioned butcher's bike and I could see Sue Underwood cycling off on my bike – my pride and joy! I cycled after her but



had to dismount every time a car came along, in case it was the police, as the bike had no lights.



I ended up at Stalybridge, laid my bike down and went off to the shops. I came back and found that many of my worst pupils from Mossley Holland were on the bike, shouting abuse at me. Then I woke up! Not a very exciting story but, believe me, a very real one at the time!

**Shena Cuttle**



## FRIENDSHIP



## EVENING

A most enjoyable social occasion was held on the 12th October at the home of President Susan. Our friendship link candle ceremony reminded us of the international aspect of our organisation in a quite touching way.



The Spanish theme chosen by Susan (with great support from David) was reflected in excellent Spanish food in abundance, background Spanish music and a Spanish quiz, which tested many holiday memories. We also attempted to guess childhood likenesses of club members, a very glamorous Maureen and demure Shena were to some degree recognisable, but not a pouting page 3 girl aged two (Sue Underwood!!!)



In addition to a great social occasion, £270 was raised for club charities. Our very grateful thanks to President Susan and David for their fantastic efforts to ensure we all enjoyed ourselves

**Rosemary Steven**



## SIGBI CONFERENCE 2013 – ITS LIGHTER MOMENTS

One is attracted to a Conference by three things: the quality of the speakers, the opportunity to see examples of best practice by other Clubs in Programme Action and to enjoy the social activities. The serious side of things can be read about in The Soroptimist or viewed on the website. Suffice it to say that the speakers were interesting and the work by Clubs exhibited considerable enterprise.

Val picked me up and we set off around 10.30am. It was a glorious day and as time was not an issue we decided to take the scenic route. The views were truly magnificent and greatly added to the enjoyment of the journey. Lunch was eaten in the car, having purchased sandwiches, fresh fruit salad and drinks at an M & S Simply Food.



All was well until we reached the outskirts of Gateshead where we met the inevitable road works and what road works – diversions to the left, diversions to the right and confusing roundabouts at frequent intervals. We could see The Sage ahead. At last we were reaching our destination – or so we thought. The sat-nav obviously had no knowledge of the road works and was therefore no help because wherever it directed us we were confronted by a “no road ahead” sign.



Eventually we caught sight of the Hilton Hotel (where I was to stay) but after four abortive attempts to reach it, we decided to change tack and make for Val's hotel. This we reached with relative ease. A coach had just unloaded an army of Soroptimists struggling to enter with their suitcases, so we unloaded my luggage onto the pavement and 'phoned for a taxi to take me to my hotel! Taxi drivers here are extremely helpful, obviously know their way around and were not expensive, which is just as well as my hotel, although for some people only five or six minutes walk from The Sage, was at the top of a lengthy 40° incline, which I was not prepared to tackle two or three times a day.



Having discovered that my hotel served meals throughout the day we decided to have our evening meal together there. Val arrived, having found her own way from her hotel, and we had a delicious meal served very quickly at our request before setting off for the Opening Ceremony. The flags

were carried most efficiently by members of the Girl Guides but some Soroptimists felt it a pity that each flag was not accompanied by a representative of its country. After speeches of welcome we were entertained by State Express Five, a lively group of musicians who had the audience tapping their toes and swaying in their seats.



On Friday morning we were all to assemble at 9am outside The Sage for the Red Square Event. Members had entered into the spirit of the occasion and as well as wearing red jackets and sweaters and shawls a number wore red wigs and many sported red umbrellas. Soroptimists mingled and chatted for a considerable time before being marshalled into one solid group for publicity photographs.

Coffee breaks were fine but lunch was a totally different kettle of fish. Val had pre-ordered her sandwiches but I hadn't done so thinking there would be several outlets from which cold food could be purchased. However, this proved not to be the case. Sandwiches were made to order, the queue for the purchase of any sort of food was unending. I reached the counter at the time that the five minute bell sounded for the afternoon session. I was grateful for the biscuit I had in my handbag. Day 2 was not much better but I did join the queue earlier.

On Friday evening Val and I had been invited by the International President, Ann Garvie, to a drinks reception, We enjoyed mingling with the great and the good from all regions, everyone having been welcomed individually by Ann. There were more than 150 present and no chairs were provided. Although I enjoyed the event, standing for an hour with a glass in my hand did nothing for my knees.



Saturday was Programme Action day and really inspirational and after the close of Conference at four o'clock, Soroptimists returned to their hotels to dine and change into their glad rags for the Change of Insignia ceremony, followed by entertainment from the Arco String Quartet. After this, we went to our Regional party, an occasion for thanking our retiring Regional President Liz and welcoming our newly-appointed President Victoria.

Sunday morning Val picked me up at 10 o'clock and without difficulty we made our way to the motorway and took the direct route home. This was the end of a most enjoyable weekend so packed with interest that it is hard to believe that it only lasted two and a half days.

**Kathleen Beavis**



#### **ANOTHER STORY OF ONE OF THE CHILDREN WHO BENEFIT FROM MARY'S MEALS.**



**Minisha**

For 14-year-old Minisha, sleeping in for school is not an option. By the time she arrives for school lessons, she's already put in a full morning shift, starting at 6.30am working as a housemaid for a wealthy family.

After class, Minisha returns to the home of the wealthy family to finish her housemaid duties, before heading back to her own home by the side of the railway tracks where she works until midnight cutting flip flops from huge sheets of rubber.

Minisha is one of the many millions of children in India working to help support themselves and their families. There are laws against child labour,

but the reality is that many families could not manage to survive without the additional income from their children, who in turn often miss out on an education as a result.

Thanks to Mary's Meals, Minisha's family are happy for her to attend classes at Holy Cross, a non-formal education centre for girls, run by nuns in the Park Circus slum in Kolkata where she lives. The charity is giving girls in India the chance to learn their way out of poverty, meaning that their futures - and, one day, the futures of their daughters - can be brighter. Minisha says: "After I finish work, I come to the centre where I can study and have something to eat. I'm tired every day but I know if I study hard one day things might be better."

There is a prevailing, old-fashioned notion in some parts of India that educating girls is unnecessary - pointless even - but parents are often keener to send their daughters to school when they know they will receive a nutritious meal as well as learning skills for their futures.

Minisha's second job means her days aren't over until close to midnight, and the repetitive process of cutting flip flop shapes using scissors hurts her already weary hands. For every 12 flip flops, she will be paid one rupee - roughly one pence Sterling. Her life is hard, but the chance to attend the education centre has changed Minisha's outlook and allowed her to hope that one day things will be better. "I want to be a teacher when I'm older, and I know I need to study hard for that to happen."



Our thanks to Shena for the following verse.

#### MY GARDEN

Here are some ideas for your garden for daily living

Plant three rows of peas  
Peace of mind  
Peace of heart  
Peace of soul

No garden without turnips  
Turnip for meetings  
Turnip for service  
Turnip when asked

Plant three rows of squash  
Squash gossip  
Squash indifference  
Squash selfishness

And in our garden we must have thyme  
Thyme for each other  
Thyme for family  
Thyme for friends

Plant three rows of lettuce  
Lettuce help one another  
Lettuce be kind  
Lettuce us be patient

Water freely with patience  
And cultivate with love  
There is much fruit in your garden  
Because you reap what you sow



We are grateful to all who, in lieu of cards, have sent their Christmas greetings on the following page. Their donations will help to swell our charity fund.

# *Greetings for charity in lieu of Christmas cards*



Wishing you all Peace at Christmas  
and Health and Happiness in 2014  
President Susan and David



Merry Christmas and a Happy  
New Year to all Members and  
their Families, from Val



Good Health and Happiness in  
a Peaceful 2014  
Kathleen



Very best wishes to you all for  
Christmas and 2014  
Yvonne



Sincere Season's Greetings to  
all our Soroptimist friends  
from Bill and Margaret



Happy Christmas and all good  
wishes for 2014  
From Ann



Barry and I wish everybody a  
healthy and happy 2014  
Shena



Health and Happiness to you  
and yours - Love Sue U



Wishing everyone a wonderful  
Christmas and a very Happy  
and Healthy New Year - Clelia



Greetings to all Soroptimist  
friends for a Happy Christmas  
and a Good New Year  
From Stella



Seasonal greetings to all  
Soroptimist friends  
Rosemary and Gus



Wishing all our Soroptimist  
friends peace and happiness at  
Christmas. With love from  
Fiona, Paul, Alexander & Ciara



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



Wishing everyone a happy and  
peaceful Christmas and a  
healthy and fulfilling New  
Year from Christine



Wishing you all happiness at  
Christmas and peace in 2014  
From Peggy



Health and happiness to you  
and yours  
from Barbara and Mario



## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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 and able to enjoy their Christmas celebrations.

## BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

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

Clelia Gatley	8 <sup>th</sup>	January
Stella Kay	14 <sup>th</sup>	January
Kathleen Beavis	14 <sup>th</sup>	January
Eleanor Duthie	16 <sup>th</sup>	January
Beatrice Leigh	27 <sup>th</sup>	February



## COFFEE POT LUNCH

Yvonne will organise a Coffee Pot Lunch for February. More details later.

## 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.

**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.

## DIARY DATES

Saturday,	8 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 2014	Pancake Party at the home of Fiona. More details later.
Saturday,	1 <sup>st</sup>	March 2014	S I Manchester's 88 <sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner at Chancellors
Saturday,	15 <sup>th</sup>	March 2014	Regional PAC at Leigh Sports Centre, 10:00 for 10:30 Council Meeting, 1pm. Bring lunch.

**Copy** for the next edition of the Newsletter by Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> February, please. Personal anecdotes would be welcomed.

**Kathleen Beavis**

**Maureen Heywood**