

**PRESIDENT**

Rosemarie Marginson

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Dear Club Members,

Minus 10° C, howling gales and patches of black ice on the roads made me feel a sense of relief at not having to go out but concern for those who do need to travel and especially for those sleeping rough – I pray they may find shelter.



My daffodils which look beautiful during March against the front of the grey stone wall are on the point of bursting into bloom but are being so heavily battered that several have already snapped off. When the wind drops I will rescue them for indoor display.



Stay warm and safe and look forward to SPRING!

**Kathleen Beavis**

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**NEW HOPE, ORISSA**

*The following was due to appear in the Christmas Newsletter but we ran out of space!*

".....Thank you most sincerely for the recent gift - It s always gratefully received and your faith and support is truly appreciated.

In the attached photograph - six of the women are coming back for second eye surgery. There were nine women in the group who came one eye 'blind' (cataract) and four with 'almost mature'. More by chance than plan they have the opportunity to have their second eye operated on. Our first priority is double-eye blind cataract getting one eye cleared. However the monsoon closed a major track at the end of a forest area and so we stopped at the nearest junction where this group came from. So as not to waste time and fuel they came back for final checks and will have surgery at the end of next week.



I read that even England has had the backlash of the terrible cyclone on the US east coast. Maybe climate change is real!!! We are both well and have our daughter, Honey, with her baby girl staying with us. New sound in house!

Regards

**Eliazar"**

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## MANCHESTER COMMUNICATION ACADEMY CHRISTMAS FAIR - DECEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup> 2017

This is the second year that we have had a stall at this annual event in Harpurhey. The Christmas Fair is primarily a fundraiser for the Brainhouse Academy in Nairobi, Kenya, a school that MCA adopted as its main charity several years ago. A team of staff from MCA visit every year, and this year for the first time, the headteachers from Brainhouse have been able to travel to the UK to spend some time with staff and students here in Manchester.



For SI Manchester, it provided another opportunity to get out into the community, raising awareness of what we do, whilst also raising some funds for our own charities. Not as well attended as last year, we still managed to take in £45 plus a further £10 from the sale of Act4Africa gifts. Mr Hollick's magic tricks proved to be a great attraction! We made some interesting connections with other local groups and individuals, including a couple of gentlemen who make wonderful decorations out of recycled books.

Many thanks to David and Susan for their support.

**Barbara Blaber**

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### HAPPY 90TH STELLA

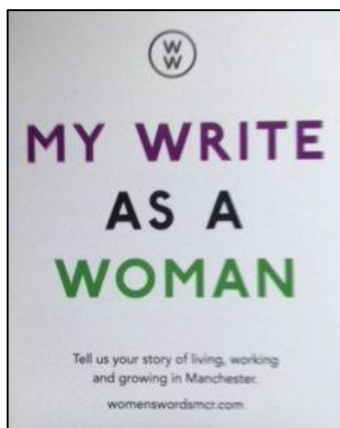
Sunday 14th January was a great day of celebration, the occasion being Stella's actual birthday. Personal friends of Stella, Soroptimists from other clubs and club members joined Stella for a luncheon party. President Rose welcomed everyone and following an excellent lunch Val Moss gave a lively and interesting resumé of Stella's lifetime achievements. A birthday cake – cutting was followed by "a Happy Birthday rendition".

It was a great shame the new nonagenarian was not in the best of health following a traumatic fall resulting in an arm fracture, however, as resilient as ever, Stella ensured, "The show must go on" and it certainly did. We also had the opportunity to give our birthday wishes to Kathleen (91) who shares the same birthday. There is something special in Soroptimism as our club has the advantage of the ability to call on the wisdom and knowledge of four members in their 90's all of whom contribute so willingly to the achievement of the objectives of our organisation.

**Rosemary Stevens**



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### WOMEN'S WORDS OF MANCHESTER

Nearly three years ago Soroptimist Manchester was asked to be a partner in a project - Women's Words of Manchester. Susan, Sue and I were on the steering committee from the start and more recently Elaine joined as our expert on uploading and organising the blogs. The other partners were the Pankhurst Trust, WordPlay and Manchester City Council.

Women's Words was the idea of Cllr Josie Teubler. She wanted women to write and share

their experiences of living, working and growing up in Manchester. Initially a book was planned but the project changed along the way following advice from the Arts Council who helped fund the project. The call went out last year to all women from any background to write their words. Workshops were arranged in libraries around the city to help those who needed assistance with their writing. Other workshops were also arranged to help the vulnerable and marginalised: those experiencing domestic violence and abuse, refugees, asylum seekers and the homeless. They produced rosettes and aprons showing their words and spoiled forms. Everything will be on display in the Central Library till the end of April. All the entries will be archived in the library later in the year.

Our Suffragette tea party (the celebration at the end of the first part of Women's Words) was held on the 5<sup>th</sup> February, the eve of the 100 years since the first women were granted the vote. It was a great night! Councillor Eddy Newman, Lord Mayor of Manchester and Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, attended. Many of the women who sent in entries and attended the workshops were also there.



Our new re-imagined Suffragette magazine was on sale. Dr Helen Pankhurst, the great granddaughter of Emmeline Pankhurst, spoke. Three entrants, whose pieces were included in the Suffragette, read out their contributions. It was wonderful to hear their words.

It's been amazing meeting so many interesting, dynamic women through the process. I have been out of my comfort zone but I've learned so much, blogged for the first time and taken part in some of the workshops. It's also been a great way to spread the word about Manchester Soroptimists and the work we do to help women and girls.

**President Rose**

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### DANCING WITH DEMENTIA

We were delighted to welcome Lesley Fisher to our February Club meeting. She spoke to us about Dementia and her group - Dancing with Dementia. It was set up to provide social activity and mental stimulation for people with Dementia and to improve their quality of life through dance and music. The great thing is it benefits the carers as well. What a great idea.

**President Rose**

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### PANCAKE PARTY 2018

A group of Soroptimists and neighbours gathered at Fiona's for her traditional pancake party. This has become one of the year's most popular events and was an evening of fun and wonderful food. We played games, had a quiz, the mandatory raffle and copious amounts of chat! Another really friendly evening, hosted happily by the whole family and which raised over £400! Thank you all so much!

**Susan Hollick**





## NEWS FROM CHILDREN ON THE EDGE

This is one of the charities we have supported and they write:-

....In mid January we completed the humanitarian component of our response to the Rohingya Refugee Crisis. Thanks to the generous support of many donors, we were able to provide food parcels, solar lights, clean water and latrines for over 5,000 refugee families. We also doubled up our established 45 schools in the Kutupalong camp as safe spaces for around 2,250 newly-arrived Rohingya children.

Throughout February we have been hearing feedback from these families about the quality of this provision, and how it is making a difference. We're pleased to be able to share this with you as we prepare our longer term response, establishing 150 new classrooms in the camps.

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

With best wishes,

***On behalf of all the team at Children on the Edge***



"We don't talk about negative experiences. It's too soon. We only try to give them a happy place to come".

Ayasha - Rohingya Refugee Teacher



### GOATS FOR AFRICA

The club gave a donation to Act4Africa which enabled the charity to buy a goat – named Flossie – for their growing herd at Kathy's Centre in Mayuge, Eastern Uganda. Goats form a vital part of their Health, Empowerment and Livelihoods (HEAL) programme which equips young women with the skills and training they need to become independent.

*(From the Club website)*

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Peggy Howarth	12 <sup>th</sup>	April
Ann Thomas	19 <sup>th</sup>	May
Susan Hollick	29 <sup>th</sup>	May



### Diary Dates

Sat	10 <sup>th</sup>	Mar	Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Centre, WN7 4JY. (Bring own lunch) PAC 10am for 10:30am, followed by Business Meeting
Tues	10th	April	AGM and Dinner, Pinewood Hotel Dinner 6pm for 6.30pm. Meeting 8pm
Sat	12th	May	Regional Conference at Ramada Plaza Hotel, Southport
Thu/Sat	26th/28th	Oct	SIGBI Conference, Liverpool

## Hot Off the Press!!!

*Very many thanks to Sue for getting up early on Sunday morning to get the following to us in time for this issue.*

### 92<sup>ND</sup> CHARTER DINNER, 3<sup>RD</sup> MARCH 2018, MARRIOTT HOTEL, HALE BARNS.

In true Soroptimist style, President Rose overcame several challenges to preside over a very successful Charter Dinner! Most guests arrived despite the weather: Shena and Barry managed to dig their car out, Past President Molly and President Rose's family braved the trains, but sadly the Pennines defeated Soroptimister Jeff!

In her toast to the City and Ports of Manchester, President Rose explained how she came to Manchester on a temporary assignment but never left (I know that feeling!) In response, the Deputy Lord Mayor, Councillor June Hitchen, praised her beloved city, looking forward to her year as Lord Mayor, especially appropriate for a woman

as we celebrate the centenary of the first women getting the vote. During the interval she made her way round most of the tables, saying that she had learned a lot about us talking to President Rose, and that she looked forward to being invited back for our 93<sup>rd</sup> Charter celebration.



Ellaine D Fries, Operations Manager of the Pankhurst Trust, including Women's Aid, proposed the toast to Soroptimist International based on working with us on the 'Women's Words on Manchester' project. She is certainly aware of the Soroptimist spirit! In her response Regional President Margaret, a member of S I Southport, told us she was born and bred in Manchester, still preferring it over Liverpool for her 'retail therapy'!

Guest Speaker Hannah Flint from Modern Slavery Response encouraged us to stay vigilant for any signs of modern day

slavery because "we cannot stop what we cannot see". We can look forward to hearing her speak again at our Regional Conference in Southport on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

So, another lovely evening in the company of Soroptimists, family and friends, enjoying the good hot food and lively conversation. Elizabeth, one of our new members, brought as her guests the local Ghanaian 'royalty', their names being Victoria, Margaret, Elizabeth II and Lillian(?) but we did remember their names! Topics were many and varied, from Manchester to Accra, 'Jollof rice' and our Frugal suppers. We can look forward to more 'food and friendship' in the future!



Special thanks to Toastmaster and Soroptimister David and all who contributed to the success of the evening.  
***Sue Underwood***

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We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to this issue and should any of you feel you have a comment or anecdote that would be of interest to others, please play your part and send them to us for publication. Last date for copy for the next newsletter is Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May.

***Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood***