



Soroptimist International of Manchester
1926 - 2016

PRESIDENT

Rosemarie Marginson

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Dear Club Members

What a month May has been with the bombing catastrophe overshadowing all else. My thoughts went immediately to all friends in Manchester with grandchildren who might have been attending the concert. Fortunately none of them was involved. From extreme fanaticism to incredible kindness we have experienced the full range of human behaviour within the last few days. It is certainly true that terrible tragedy so often brings to the fore the best in people.

On a lighter note the beautiful Soroptimist rose that you gave me has survived the full range of May weather, from gale force winds, heavy frosts with snow on the mountains, torrential rain and, in the week preceding the Bank Holiday, extreme heat and has flourished and produced three flowers, five opening buds and more than a dozen buds still to develop. It is giving me endless pleasure. Thank you all once again.



OUR NEW PRESIDENTIAL TEAM

Our Annual General Meeting was held at the Pinewood Hotel on 20th April. Rosemarie Marginson was elected President for 2017-2018, Barbara Blaber became President Elect and Rosemary Steven Vice President.



A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

It's been nearly four weeks since the AGM when I officially became President. It has been very busy but enjoyable. Due to Molly's re-location, I had been filling in for the past six months and therefore had no concerns about the role. However it does feel different now I am actually President.

I feel privileged and lucky to be President of S I Manchester and hope in this coming year to continue spreading the word about the organisation and our club. So far I've attended S I Warrington's Charter Lunch and due to Susan's

hard work and organisation helped to host an evening - 'What's a Soroptimist ' at the Pankhurst Centre. In the same week I visited Francis House during an open day, enjoyed the Coffee Pot lunch and attended the Regional Conference. The conference had some great speakers but particularly moving was Sarah Brook from the Sparkle Malawi Charity.

I'm looking forward to the next few months and of course our big Fundraising Charity Lunch. Please support this.
President Rose



PANKHURST CHARITY DINNER

Seven Manchester Sorops attended this function which was held appropriately at the Radison Blu, an hotel created in what used to be the Free Trade Hall where the Suffragettes had protested. It is also within sight of the proposed location for the statue of Emmeline Pankhurst.

There was a glass of champagne on arrival at 6.30pm and for the next 45 minutes the reception area was a seething mass of people talking at the tops of their voices. A string quartet from Manchester High School for Girls provided entertainment, which was probably only heard by the early arrivals. Emmeline Pankhurst had sent her daughters to be educated at MHSG in the late 19th century. The school is very proud of this and had organised a writing competition to decide which six students should have the honour of attending the dinner to represent their school.



Upstairs, in an area outside the dining room, the maquettes created by the six short-listed sculptors were on display and one had the opportunity to speak with the sculptors and learn how they had chosen to depict Emmeline and her cause. I wish I had realised earlier that this was available as I would have enjoyed spending much more time appreciating these very varied works of art, but we were called to the dining room!

It was some time before the meal got under way but the food was enjoyable and well worth waiting for. Fortunately it had been arranged that speeches and readings were given between courses. I say "fortunately" because the service was abysmally slow and totally unstructured (disappointing in an hotel that must be accustomed to coping with large numbers). One certainly had time for cross-table chat.

There were the official speeches of welcome and thanks to the sponsors, supporters, workers and donors of the many gifts for the Silent Auction. At other intervals between courses we heard from Emmeline's great granddaughter Helen, the Headmistress of MHSG and Eve Steele who read from Emmeline's autobiography, "My Own Story".

On the tables there had been an envelope for each guest into which we were invited to put £5 to purchase a raffle ticket. The draw was made at the end of the meal, after coffee and truffles. Voting slips for our choice of sculpture for the statue were collected as were any bids for items in the fantastic range of sporting memorabilia and experiences and high-living events. Reserve bids were from the £100's to the £1000's....wonderful one off opportunities if one had that sort of money to spare.

The event was thoroughly enjoyable and I hope it proved a great financial and PR success. It was certainly an occasion for those who enjoy people watching.

Kathleen Beavis



The following three items have been taken from the Club website - many thanks to President Rose and Pat:

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

To mark International Women's Day 2017, Soroptimist International of Manchester donated hundreds of sanitary products to The Monthly Gift. Set up by Christina Ward while she was a



student, The Monthly Gift encourages donations of sanitary products for homeless women and other women in need. Volunteers distribute the products to those that need them most via food banks, refuges and homeless charities. Volunteers have already expanded The Monthly Gift to Nottingham and it is being launched also in Leeds.

MUGS!



We had a fun evening packing 100 mugs with sachets of tea, coffee, sugar and a biscuit. These were carefully wrapped to be given to the women's refuges. When a woman arrives at the refuge she is given one and we have been told by Gail Heath the CEO of Women's Aid that they are greatly appreciated.

Joining us on the evening was Malgorzata Kmita who is due to be inducted to the group at our next meeting. Thank you to Pat for offering her house for the occasion and the tea and biscuits.

A NEW MEMBER

We were delighted to welcome our new member Malgorzata Kmita . She was previously a Soroptimist in Yorkshire and is now living in Manchester. She has already been involved in one of our evenings – Mug Packing for the Women's Refuges (see above). I'm sure she will be a great asset to our club.

President Rose



ARCHIVE CORNER

From time to time names pop up and we wonder who and what they did as former members. As we celebrated our 90 years, the list of Founder Members was on display. To the best of my memory and limited research, I propose to bring to you information on these women who pioneered Soroptimism in Great Britain, and hope you will find it interesting.

Miss Edith Hesling LI.B (1899-91) – President 1934



From December 1919 it was possible for women to be admitted to the Inns of Court. The first woman was Edith Hesling who was admitted on 4th October 1920, whilst studying for a law degree from the University of Manchester. She was called to the Bar at Gray's Inn on 13th June 1923. Her Chambers were in King Street where she practised Commercial Law. Principally, she worked as an academic at the University.

Miss Hesling was married and during her presidency of the Manchester Soroptimist Club gave birth to her third daughter. Those of us who attended the Pankhurst Statue Dinner may recall her being listed among the outstanding women of Manchester.

Yvonne Mullen



THANKS FOR FRIENDSHIP

Our Manchester Soroptimist friends are aware of the traumatic experiences we recently had following Gus suffering a heart attack whilst on holiday in the Caribbean. We would like to thank everyone for their kindness and good wishes which we both appreciated. President Rose was a star and her contact with SIGBI resulted in superb support from Soroptimists in Martinique. In addition she and John gave me wonderful professional advice and on occasions saved my sanity. Shena and Barry were also a great tower of strength at such a difficult time.

Thank you all for the many cards and enquiries since our return. Gus is now making excellent progress and has started an active cardiac rehabilitation programme. He is driving and is fit to fly. Skiathos here we come.

Rosemary Steven

SOROPTIMISM IN MARTINIQUE

I will never forget receiving a phone call on Thursday 9th March (the very day Gus had cardiac bypass surgery) from an English voice saying, "my name is Alison and I am a Soroptimist". After five days struggling to communicate in my limited schoolgirl French of over fifty years ago these words were incredible. From that day until almost five weeks later, when on Sunday 9th April three Soroptimists bade farewell to us at the airport, I received tremendous support. Practically (visits to supermarket and pharmacies), emotionally in so many ways and some wonderful diversional visits to the opera, restaurants and lunch at the home of the British Consul (Alison the Soroptimist).



I learnt so much about the island, was taken on many interesting tours and visits and learned of the history and culture, also tasting some amazing Creole food. The French island of Martinique (Euros are the currency) is approximately 80 miles by 40 and has a population of 400,000. The capital, Fort de France, has 140,000 inhabitants. From the harbour on a clear day the nearest island of St Lucia can be clearly seen. I stayed in Fort de France where the University Medical School and excellent hospital are situated. The cardio-thoracic unit was only three months old and received patients from all over the Caribbean and Central America. Gus was very fortunate to eventually receive such excellent care.



There are four Soroptimist clubs on the island, two in Fort de France (each having over 50 members) and I met the two current Presidents. The club from which I received amazing support was Fort de France Alyzes Sud. I am now an honorary member, attended a meeting and on 15th March walked for two hours around Fort de France on a march they had organised of over 300 women to raise awareness of Endometriosis; I have the T shirt!!!

I have been invited to speak at our forthcoming regional meeting regarding my experience of Soroptimism in action. I am delighted that SI Alyzes Sud wish to form a friendship link with us.

I certainly could not have coped without my Martinique Soroptimist friends.

Rosemary Steven

LADIES WHO LUNCH

One of our Club's most popular traditions with retired members is the Coffee Pot Lunch. This normally takes place in the rather dreary post-Christmas period but this year, because of an event-crowded calendar, it was re-set for 10th May. Having such lovely weather so early has kick-started the holidays this year but President Rose was happy to welcome nine members and friends on a most beautiful Spring day.



The Wycliffe remains our favourite restaurant for this occasion and we were not disappointed. As ever, our menu choices were delectable and the service faultless. We all enjoy this informal get-together and send our thanks once again to Yvonne, not only for arranging it but also for negotiating very reasonable rates for upmarket quality.

Stella Kay

SI MANCHESTER HITS THE AIRWAVES



On April 18th, President Rose and I were delighted to take part in the radio show, Divas Up North, on Salford City Radio. The programme, hosted by Dena Ryles, is targeted at women of all ages in the Northwest and its stated aim is "To represent North West women, to empower our sisters and give each other a voice".

We arrived at the Salford City Radio premises about half an hour before the show was due to start and, along with the other guests, were briefed on the

format, timings etc. Each pair of guests would have approximately a 10-minute slot to talk about the causes that they were representing.

First up was Beth Knowles, a Manchester City Councillor, who leads the Greater Manchester Homeless Action Group and Corin Bell, a director of Real Junk Food Manchester. The plight of homeless people has been identified as a priority issue for the City and Beth talked about the new Homelessness Charter and how people can get involved in helping to end homelessness. Real Junk Food is an organisation that sources food from supermarkets, restaurants, etc, that would otherwise go to waste, and turns it into healthy, nutritious meals for anyone and everyone, but particularly those in need. The organisation is currently working on getting a café set up in Manchester, which will operate on a "Pay as you feel" basis – an interesting concept!

Next up, we listened to Kate Fraser, Northern Services Manager from the charity, Women in Prison, and Amy Morgan, a Development Worker from Trafford Rape Crisis. Kate and Amy discussed the collaboration with Styal Prison, entitled "Women's Search for a Meaning", a fundraising evening of spoken word, poetry and live music, in which the contributions of women in prison will be shared. It was particularly interesting to chat to Kate and Amy in the build up to their slot, given our Club's previous work with Styal Prison and our links with St Mary's SARC.

Last up, it was our opportunity to raise awareness of Soroptimism and the work of our Club. I gave a very short intro to the organisation and a bit of information on our international projects, and then Rose focused on our local activities. Our theme was "doing small things that make a big difference", such as the mug packing for the women's refuge, toiletries for SARC etc.

It was an interesting and very informative afternoon, and we can't have done too badly, as we have been invited back to appear on the show again, on June 13!

Barbara Blaber



Act4Africa now has a recycling scheme set up for inkjet cartridges and old mobile phones. Funds raised through the scheme will benefit Act4Africa's projects enabling and empowering women and girls in Malawi and Uganda.

INKJET CARTRIDGES



Makes you can recycle: HP, Dell, Lexmark, Canon, Samsung, Neopost, Epson, Kodak.

Cartridges don't have donation value if they are damaged, they have been previously refilled, they have labels removed or extra holes. (Signs that refilling has been attempted)

Unfortunately, toner cartridges are not accepted

MOBILE PHONES



Any type of mobile phone. It doesn't matter if it is broken, faulty or locked

Please remove SIM card before recycling

If you would like to recycle any of these items, please bring to a club meeting and hand to Barbara Blaber. For those unable to get to meetings, Freepost envelopes which hold up to 5 cartridges are also available - contact Barbara if you would like one of these. *Freepost envelopes cannot be used for mobile phones or for Epson or Kodak cartridges*

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MANCHESTER ARENA

We are most grateful for messages of support received from:

- | | |
|--|---|
| SI GBI President Ann Hodgson | Lucy Swithinbank, Joint President S I Bristol |
| Margaret Oldroyd, Secretary S I Nottingham | Jean Foster, Secretary S I Bury |
| Shirley Thompson, President S I Bournemouth | Jane Jolly, President S I Skipton in Craven |
| Elaine Stephens, President S I Solihull & District | June James, S I Leamington and Warwick |
| Grace Onions, President S I Croydon & District | S I Denbigh Ruthin and District |
| Maria Finnegan, National President S I Republic of Ireland | Marie Murphy, President S I Ballina West of Ireland |
| S I Union Israel | Ruth Thomas, President S I Weston super Mare |

We have also received the following message from Eliazar Rose, New Hope, Orissa:-



We have no words to explain how we feel about the present situation in Manchester. We have no comprehension of what this whole terrorist thing is about - other than sheer hate and misguidedness from fanatics.

The children here have the TV news and see International news, of course, and these ongoing terror attacks are very hard to explain to children. The terrible horror in Manchester will without question create fear in the minds of people and children in attending good events and functions. This is the mentality of the people who do these horrible attacks.

I'm Indian - and I have been all over England and never felt any racial comments or problems. Te UK has been the most incredible cultural mixed curry one could imagine - more than here in India.

We stand with you in our thoughts of solidarity that these terrible events will not deter us from being good and kind hearted trusting humans. From all at New Hope - with sadness.



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Pat Usher | 18 th July |
| Maureen Heywood | 18 th July |



DIARY DATES

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Sat 17 th Jun | Regional PAC and Council Meeting at Leigh Sports Complex |
| Sun 23 rd July | Charity Lunch, Swinton Golf Club, 12 noon to 5pm, £25 incl 2-course lunch, bucks fizz and afternoon tea. Family and friends welcome. |
| Tues 1 st Aug | Business Meeting: usual time and venue |
| Sun 6 th Aug | Strawberry Tea at Yvonne's home; 3-5pm, £10. Family and friends welcome |

Last date for copy for the next Newsletter 25th August.

Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood