



Soroptimist International of Manchester

1926 - 2016

PRESIDENT

Barbara Blaber

Issue No 69

Summer 2018

Dear Club Members,



Towards the end of May, I (and most of you I should think) received innumerable requests/demands from societies and businesses to sign up to Data Protection agreements. These came in all shapes and sizes, some from firms suggesting that if I failed to sign I would miss out because they would not be able to inform me of special offers!

I don't know about you but I was delighted by the possible opportunity to get rid of some unwanted messages from my e-mail. It seems to be working, but time will tell.

I hope you are all enjoying the glorious sunshine and are not too troubled by the need to water your patio plants and gardens each evening. Blessings do have their consequences.



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - June 2018

Well, it may only be two months since I became President, but the time has been full of activity!

My first official engagement was to attend SI The Fylde's 80<sup>th</sup> charter celebration tea. So, it was off to Lytham St Anne's for the weekend, along with (old) motorhome, husband and two dogs. The Fylde is one of our daughter clubs and the event was full of colour and fun.

Two weeks later, I was due to attend SI Wigan's dinner but on that same afternoon we were also collecting our new motorhome from Chester. We thought we had plenty of time but didn't allow for the thing breaking down 5 minutes after we left the dealership (3 miles on the clock!). It took two salesmen, my other half and, eventually, an AA repair man, 2 hours to find and fix the fault. Needless, to say, we missed the dinner! Fortunately, our next outing with it was much more successful – a weekend in Ainsdale, during which I attended the Regional Conference, at the Southport Ramada Plaza. Particular highlights were guest speakers Hannah Flint (Stop the Traffik) and Ben Mott, who spoke on dementia awareness – oh, and the view!



SI Crosby also celebrated their 80<sup>th</sup> in May and I was delighted to attend this one with Pat and Sue Gledhill from Stockport.

Add to that our membership evening at the Pankhurst, helping to pack another hundred mugs for the Women's refuge and, only yesterday, a trip to St Marys SARC to present them with toys bought for their counselling suites, and you can see that it has truly been a couple of months filled with fun, friendship and fulfilment!

Have a wonderful summer.

**President Barbara**

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SPEAKER FROM HENSHAW'S SOCIETY FOR BLIND PEOPLE

At our May meeting we had a talk from Shona Boyle from Henshaw's, a charity supporting people living with sight loss, and providing services for them and their friends and family to help them live with their disability. The aim is to empower people with sight loss to live an independent life through development of skills, confidence and self esteem.

Shona gave us a history of the charity which started in Manchester in 1833 and explained how it has evolved and changed over the years initially being for the blind but now for any sight loss.



They do great work and it was a pleasure to hear about the history and changes over the years.

Rose Marginson

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#### **VISITOR FROM UGANDA**



Susan, Sue, Rose and Margaret Molyneux from Leigh Club met Barbara and Patrick at the Lowry Theatre for a coffee and a chat. Patrick is Act4Africa's Head of Uganda Operations. It was his first visit to the U.K and he had come for the 2018 Commonwealth Study Conference Global Leadership Programme. While here he was also meeting supporters of the charity.

He spoke about Kathy's Centre and the work they are doing providing vulnerable women and children from the area close to Mayuge with vital health and support services, pre-school education, a youth club and agricultural, enterprise and financial literacy training. It was lovely to hear first hand the work they are doing particularly as we are looking to support Act4Africa's work in Uganda.

**Rose Marginson**

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MEMBERSHIP EVENING

May is Membership Month so I had thought I had better arrange an event for Membership Evening. Thanks to the Pankhurst Trust we were allowed to have a relaxed fairly informal get-together at the Pankhurst Centre on the evening of Thursday 24th of May.



In the end after posting the event on Facebook and encouraging all members to spread the word amongst friends and acquaintances. Seven of our members who were free that night, including two of our newest members Liz and Sue, welcomed those who had responded to our invitation to come and learn more about us. It was a very enjoyable evening and I have had plenty of positive feedback since. Everybody had the chance to chat once President Barbara and I had explained about the organisation and the work we do. There was plenty of networking and all expressed interest. We hope to be successful in recruiting them. The next day I thanked them all for coming and also thanked Gail from the Pankhurst for the use of the building. It is always a pleasure to spread the word about S.I. Manchester.

Rosemarie Marginson

OUR GARMENT OF PROTEST

I'm excited as I've finally finished our "garment of protest" to be included in a summer exhibition at The People's History Museum in Spinning Fields, Manchester.

For over a year now, my mum and I have been enjoying the monthly Fabric of Protest workshops at the museum.



We mostly sew, but there have been workshops on printing, weaving and felt-making. We work on projects, sometimes in groups, sometimes individually, learning from each other and from artist Helen Mather. We were delighted when the Museum said that we could display the work in one of the galleries over the summer.

Some of the work shows participants working through very personal experiences and are very moving and uplifting. Some are protests about the decimation of the NHS. Many of the pieces are protests about misogyny and intolerance. One of the participants started a fabric graffiti Trump wall, to document his most vile and/or stupid utterances. One wall wasn't enough, as he is such a rich source of material!

Our "garment" – protesting victim blaming - was made by my talented mum – who makes many of her own clothes. I've embroidered the slogan on to it. My mum has a second piece in the exhibition protesting against FGM.

Please come and see the exhibition, if you can. It's running from 7th July till 9th September. It's in the room next to the "Represent! 100 years on" exhibition so it's a "two for one" experience! If you've not visited the main galleries and the banners on display, I would really recommend it.

For a sneak preview, here is the link to Helen's blog. <http://artworkshop.tumblr.com/> If you're interested in coming to one of the workshops with me, just let me know.

Elaine Loader

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On 10th April at the Pinewood Hotel, Handforth, after much friendly chatter over an enjoyable meal, we got down to the business of the Meeting but not before having the pleasure of inducting three new members, Liz, Sue and Lillian. Then reports and accounts were presented and accepted. Barbara Blaber was confirmed as President and Rosemary Steven as President Elect. Chains of office were exchanged and Rosemary Marginson received her Past President's badge. As a welcome and a thank-you, flowers were received by incoming and outgoing Presidents.



MANCHESTER ACTION ON STREET HEALTH



To celebrate International Women's Day 2018, S I Manchester visited Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH) – a charity that offers advice and support to women working in the sex industry. Their mission is not only to promote personal safety and health but also to empower women to make positive life changes.

President Rose and member Elaine delivered supplies of leggings and underwear donated by the club and were impressed by the facilities and the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff.

Elaine Loader

THE MANCHESTER ARENA AWARD



The Manchester Arena terrorist attack last year was both horrific and shocking. Our club received many messages of support both from this country and from round the world, sending sympathy to the victims and to the people of Manchester.

Members wanted to do something in memory of the victims and, after much discussion, we decided it would be appropriate to help a girl who wanted a career in performing arts. Pendleton College, a sixth form college well known for teaching performing arts, was approached and it was decided that the award of £250 would go to a girl, chosen by the college, who would benefit from a monetary award to help with her audition costs. We have committed to five years but hope to extend it.

President Rose and President Elect Barbara were delighted to present the first award to Kira McPherson. Kira is a dancer and has already auditioned for several dancing colleges, including the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts. Kira's class performed a short piece and Rose and Barbara have been invited back to future events.

Rosemarie Marginson

ST MARY'S ANNUAL DEBATE

Five members from S I Manchester attended the annual debate organised by St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre – "Portrayal of Sexual Violence in Drama – a Force for Good or a Vehicle for Harm?". Speakers included Dr Catherine White (the Director of St Mary's Centre - SARC) Rachel Coppock also from the centre and Noreen Kershaw (Coronation Street director).

A lively discussion followed the formal presentations which addressed the important topic of sexual assault, mainly with reference to women and the need to communicate sensitively in addressing the issue. Appropriate delivery of after care and support was also discussed and all those present agreed on the importance of keeping the issue alive in drama programmes but without sensationalising it.



Programmes such as Coronation Street can play a vital role in increasing awareness of the issue and the consequences of such abusive and violating behaviour. It is important, however, to ensure that it is not just about women as victims but also as brave survivors, and of mainly male perpetrators' actions.

During the question and answer session one of the Manchester Soroptimists, Malgorzata Kmita, shared her experience of working with traumatised women and the lasting consequence of sexual violence and abuse. She emphasised the importance of compassionate support to women which may include therapeutic, practical and spiritual dimensions of post-trauma management. All representatives of S I Manchester very much appreciated the invitation and the opportunity to voice wider concerns.

Malgorzata Kmita

MUG PACKING

Another successful mug packing evening! Over a 100 mugs filled with tea, coffee, etc., ready to be delivered to the Women's Refuges. Each woman who goes to the Women's Refuges is given a mug so that at least they can make a cup of tea or coffee when they arrive.

Many thanks to Pat for the use of her kitchen and for being a great host.



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## ST MARY'S SEXUAL ASSAULT REFERRAL CENTRE (SARC)

President Barbara, Val and Rose were pleased to present Charlotte Batra and Claire Fawcett, the children's crisis worker, with toys for the children who are referred to St Marys Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC). The club has supported the Centre in a number of different ways over many years – it is sad that this is needed but we hope the toys give some enjoyment.

**Rose Marginson**



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AFTERNOON TEA WITH CIARA AND FIONA



It was Ciara, Fiona's daughter, who was our hostess on the 16th June at the afternoon tea, which she held to raise funds as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award effort.

A select group of cake addicts accompanied our President to represent S I Manchester; we arrived first, of course! Many friends and neighbours soon joined us and we all spent a very pleasant afternoon chatting and sampling the delicious array of cakes. Ciara pointed out to us that there were even gluten-free cookies!

We wish Ciara every success in her future challenges.

Stella Kay

YVONNE MULLEN, 1924-2018, HONORARY MEMBER OF S I MANCHESTER

We are all very saddened at the death of Yvonne on 14th June. Yvonne has been a member of S I Manchester since 1964 and in the intervening years had chaired many committees and had served as an efficient, all-embracing Club Secretary. She was Club President three times and President of South Lancashire Region, during which time she was responsible for planning the Joint Regional Conference.

She had worked all her life for the NHS and after coming to Manchester her work as Matron of The Christie and as Chief Nursing Officer of South Manchester Hospitals earned her great respect in the community, as did her service as a JP.

As the year goes on we will come to realize just how much Yvonne did for the Club. It is said that what one does is never appreciated until one stops doing it. Yvonne loved to be involved in all that was going on be it social events, such as the Coffee Pot Lunch, the Strawberry Tea and the Christmas Party, or working for charities, being an ardent supporter of St Ann's Hospice, St Mary's Centre and Mary's Meals. She had a love of music and was very supportive of the RNCM and its Junior School and also of Chethams.



God bless you, Yvonne, and thank you.

Kathleen Beavis

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**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

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

|                 |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Ali Hanbury     | 15 <sup>th</sup> July |
| Pat Usher       | 18 <sup>th</sup> July |
| Maureen Heywood | 18 <sup>th</sup> July |



*(Apparently, if born on the 18<sup>th</sup> July you are guaranteed to be a super-efficient Club Secretary. Kathleen.)*

**DIARY DATES**

**July 2018**

- Tuesday 3rd – Club Meeting at Withington Golf Club; 6 for 6.30 pm. Speaker from Manchester Action on Street Health (MASH)
- Tuesday 17th – Club Executive Committee Meeting; 7 pm at Pat's home

**August 2018**

- Tuesday 7th – Club Meeting at Withington Golf Club; 6 for 6.30 pm. Speaker – Eddie Tarry, Community Engagement Officer from Styal Prison
- Saturday 12th – Strawberry Tea at Susan Hollicks home
- Tuesday 21st – Club Executive Committee Meeting; 7 pm at Rose's home

**September 2018**

- Tuesday 4th – Club Meeting at Withington Golf Club; 6.30 pm
- Saturday 8th – Regional Meeting at Leigh Sports Village
- Tuesday 18th – Club Executive Committee Meeting; 7pm at Pat's home

Last date for copy for the next Newsletter 25<sup>th</sup> August.

**Kathleen Beavis and Maureen Heywood**