

President: **Rosemary Steven**

Dear Club Members,

Welcome to the Spring edition of your Newsletter during this 'never in a month of Sundays' time! I spoke to Kathleen last week, she told me how she was spending her 'Stay Home' time between her garden and her kitchen. I quipped 'So you're not bored yet?' 'Never bored! Frustrated, cheesed-off maybe, but never bored!' was her reply!

As per the quote from Maya Angelou in the Winter edition, "Do the best you can until you know better, then do better" how are you coping in these unprecedented times? If you enjoy receiving this Newsletter and would like to see it more often for a while, then please send me your thoughts, tales, ideas, triumphs, mistakes, articles to share and I will compile some interim editions.

Sue Underwood

President's Message April 2020 – President Rosemary Steven

It is difficult to believe that, only a few short weeks ago, so many of us met to celebrate the occasion of our 94th Charter Dinner, so much has happened in the interim period and we now find ourselves in an extremely stressful situation, unprecedented in our lifetime, facing a war against the enemy the coronavirus COVID-19

Many of us owing to age and health issues find ourselves facing a minimum of 12 weeks of isolation, loneliness, boredom and anxiety. Members working within the health care services are at the front line of this terrible situation. The impact on our club is of postponed and deferred meetings and planned events and of our inability at the current time to give service.

The Executive have responded by setting up a communications network to ensure regular contact to all members. We have also outlined ways in which members who may be experiencing financial stress can be given a little help in matters such as club fees. We are also able to access the SIGBI Benevolent Fund should it be necessary. We are planning, as part of our programme action agenda, ways in which we may give some financial assistance to the charities with whom we are already involved.

Keep safe, stay at home as much as possible, be positive and look forward to the time when we can resume our normal lifestyle and club activities and most importantly keep in touch.

In friendship

President Rosemary

International Women's Day 2020 .
An equal world is an enabled world [#EachforEqual](#)



Our 94th Charter Dinner

President Rosemary welcomed her speakers - The Lord Mayor of Manchester Cllr Abid Latif Chohan, Elizabeth Mora from Cornerstone, Regional President Yvonne Gibbon and Dr Hilary Hodge.



Among our welcome guests were past members Val Moss, now a member of Lancaster, seen here with Maureen, Barry & Shena....

& Molly Robinson, now a member of Greater London, our 'Mother' club.

As you see, both are wearing their Past President badge!



Were you at the dinner? What would you like to say about the experience?

Kathleen's Birthday Gift - A Windmill for New Hope, Orissa, India

I think this is a lovely story, which many of our members are already aware of, but for the benefit of some of our new members, I would like to add a bit of background. Kathleen Beavis had been a very active member of the Manchester Club for many years until she absconded to live on Anglesey, where she joined that Club, but she is still a well-loved Honorary Member of Manchester.

SI Manchester has been supporting New Hope for 20 years. We started modestly by sending them used tights, which were used to hold in place dressings for their leprosy patients, saving much scarce cash on bandages. The Centre is run by Eliazar Rose and his wife, Ruth, both of whom have stayed with me on several occasions when they have been visiting the UK. They each had parents who suffered from leprosy and were both brought up in leper colonies. (Indeed Ruth's father was very active in fighting for the rights of leprosy sufferers.) The following is an extract from New Hope's recent Newsletter.....

....In 2018, our friend and supporter of many years, Kathleen Beavis, contacted us with the kind offer to celebrate her birthday with a gift to New Hope. She asked us which New Hope project could make best use of her support, so everyone put their heads together and the wish was for a windmill to be installed at our Community Centre to provide the power to operate the water pump.

Kathleen and her daughter Hilary had visited New Hope's Community Centre in 2011, seeing first hand the work they undertake in remote and rural areas. They travelled unmade roads and paths and made do with candlelight and sporadic power supplies during



their time at our Community Centres - electricity was a rare and precious commodity! Electricity from the national grid is expensive and we never knew when a power cut would happen, so 'home grown power' for our Community Centre came about through necessity! There is an anaerobic digester in the Centre which processes animal and human waste along with fruit and vegetable leftovers. The energy from this supplies 60% of the power required in our communal kitchen each day. There are also solar panels placed in three strategic locations, with battery storage units that provide 90% of all lighting required at night in the Children's Homes, surrounding footpaths, the First Aid Clinics and the kitchen/dining room. The annual power bill saving is more than £265.

When we put the concept of the windmill to Kathleen she felt happy to support this project, especially as there is such a rich history of windmills in her homeland of Anglesey. She was particularly fond of the Llynnon windmill and told us about her visit some years previously.

Everyone at New Hope in the UK and India, was intrigued by this story and we looked into some of its fascinating history. Our Director and his team felt it fitting, as Kathleen was generously supporting this project, to place a dedication stone at the foot of the mill in honour of her and to name our new windmill 'Llynnon'!

We're delighted to let you know that India's 'Llynnon' is working wonderfully and thanks to Kathleen's generosity we have continuous power for our water pump. Precious supplies of water can now be saved and stored in tanks during the drought season.

Not only are we the beneficiaries of an invention from several hundred years ago, still going strong in this 21st century, but we are proud that New Hope can continue to care for its people and its environment with this clean source of power....

On her birthday in January, Kathleen received the following e-mail and photograph from Eliazar and Ruth. (I am including this because I think it gives an idea of the atmosphere of the place and the humour and confidence instilled into the children.)

.....Subject: **And They All Sang and Laughed**

Dear Kathleen

Class leaders read and clap for students' birthdays. Then senior girls speak of the birthdays of Aunts and Uncles, ie our sponsors. It is holiday time here so all senior girls who are part of educational grants from Soroptimist are home. Four of them were giggling. Ruth stood silent – waiting. Girls are hesitant, possibly not sure how to pronounce Kathleen (the double ee thing) so they sing "Happy birthday to Aunty Windmill". All the boys clap and they sing "Happy Birthday to Aunty Kathleen". So they obviously thought you should have a title and a name!

There is silence. Ruth says "and do I have a title?". One of the girls says "Madam you are Aunty Fuss because you always look at head and shoes, head and shoes, which is being very fussy." Ruth smiled and walked quickly back into the house so that she could laugh. I told Ruth that Aunty Fuss was a perfect title for her. Behind my back they call me Uncle Drip because I often call the three senior boys and ask "why is that tap dripping?" I also know that one of them mimics me.



The New Hope girls are so grown up and smart but it is difficult to keep a straight face. The senior boys are all involved in 'water' jobs and monitoring the solar pump and our windmill. It is a big thing every morning and evening. Solar is called Mister Sun and they are learning about weather and wind speed by the windmill tale. They also say "No Aunty can give us this much water in one day. No Aunty has a bucket that big."

HAPPY 90+ BIRTHDAY, Kathleen
Love Ruth and Eliazar.....

New Hope covers all aspects of developmental work – from planting trees in rural hill tribal areas, to offering vocational training to street children and railway children in Visakhapatnam and Vizianagaram cities in Andhra Pradesh State in India. Free eye surgery for the Cataract blind, and corrective surgery for polio crippled children. Women and children are immunised and women giving birth are given free safety delivery kits. To cover all they do would take up too much space so you may like to visit www.newhopeindia.org – I hope you do.

Maureen Heywood

New Hope, Orissa, India from Eliazar Rose's Facebook Posts:

Recently, Eliazar emailed Maureen to let her know that the parcel of our card fronts sent by Pat had arrived

"Last week the parcel of Cards arrived - safely - THANK YOU. Easter is drawing near - thinking of you. Time calms and comforts us."

So, to let you all know how they are coping, here are some of Eliazar's recent Facebook messages.

22nd March

Keeping our children safe - I JUST GAVE THEM A 'HINT' THAT MASKS WERE EXPENSIVE. Jeevan Jyothi looked in Cloth room to find 'breathable cloth' as the girls called it. They make a team and produced masks. Distributed to all in Community to anyone who comes from nearby village - free.. This makes Ruth so pleased. Initiative. P Sai and Srinu took empty water bottle made 2 small holes in lid, diluted water with surgical spirit - low cost sanitizing for hand washing (commercial prices tripled!) - Had to explain to JayKumar that 'the cows are safe and wont get it!. Its raised many questions. Seniors have said now they know why washing hands and cutting nails important. So far all safe in our area but city has 8,000 beds - yes 8000 ready for use if need. India is on total lockdown today Sunday. Nothing on roads, no bus, trains stop. The Government is serious. Our girls are serious about it and this awareness is what we dream of as part of their learning in life - teak you for all who support and who sponsors child - Thank you Tailoring Girls - Eliazar and Ruth



27th March

Squares drawn at vegetable markets in Andhra Pradesh to ensure social distancing

Squares have been drawn at vegetable markets to ensure citizens maintain a distance from each other while buying items in the wake of the novel coronavirus.....(from 'India Today')



&

Yes all well and

safe here - You will see 'more safe' with this Facebook. Our Nurses in training have come home as its lockdown - all Hostels closed. Our three in training have 'checked' all health status, temps taken morning and evening, dewormed, been teaching 'real proper' wash hands, cut nail, wash feet, drink etc. Checked records- One boy said 'It's like being in Hospital now here if they put their uniforms on' I have to nod with the comments. Ruth heard at meals a prayer that included by one small girl "... for hens to make more eggs..." ahh New Hope children. There is no school and it's good to have this both as a safety and a learning and keeping them all involved. We have all been reading as an information post from John Hopkins Hospital is very informative.

28th March

"I can boil an egg." Many may have read or heard me say that - as Ruth is such a great cook and too many cooks spoil the curry - my excuse. I am thankful to Anil who can cook and boil eggs - And that is what he is doing as of now. The real homeless are in the bus shelter. There are some come and go part time begging semi homeless BUT now with the lock down only the real homeless are there. Anil used influence and got several 'trays of eggs', explained why he should have a double allocation of banana from the 3 hour morning open authorized vegetable places across the city - got biscuits. Anil told me that a Policeman (they are patrolling) stood in 'awe' and watched. The people had sanitizer for their hands. They thought that was great. He thinks by the way they looked at the eggs many may not have has that luxury for a long time. - One aged women said are you some relation to Ramu New Hope? Anil nodded. (Ramu is self isolated with wife and new baby). The Government has extended the lock down until April 14th so somehow Anil will cross city and do it daily. Anil's plan is to do a Noodle pack every few days too - variety . . THANK YOU ANIL. P.S Only a pic of material he got . Couldn't cope even with a selfie eggs, banana, biscuits - and all of the persons talking to him with many questions. (I smiled because Anil is a Selfie guru!!)



7th April - HOW ARE WE INDIANS COPING WITH THE SITUATION?



India is usually confusing hassle and bustle. Lockdown. Calm, understood,. Primeminister asked us Sunday night 9pm, turn off lights, go to window or balcony, light candle or use torch. This couple like millions and millions did it. Niraj and his wife are friends, he is our patient generous Website guru and much of what he does he does as a contribution to our charity. Without his patience the Love Bundle appeal wouldn't happen . .So this simple act by the population created a calmness we all feel. New Hope children did it - candles. No one saw it but they saw it in their minds as all being united with our nation. Total quietness. Yes we also know loss of people is a great sadness - we will come through and hopefully all be more aware of living each day, being more aware of the earth as our mother in the environment sense - This

is from my inner thinking that I usually just keep but I share to say thank you for so many things done for New Hope over these many years. We look to the future in a different way - **Eliazar Rose**

9th April



New Hope children see news and it saddens them when they see countries where they know friends of New Hope are. They worry and ask Ruth and I about the friends. Australia worries them - no full lock down, England so many passed away. NIIGATA



JAPAN -Home of the Jeevan Jyothi Katagiri School Mr Katagiri san and Mrs Katagiri san. People-friends in Niigata gave incredible support to the school -The news that Niigata was a 'hot spot' shocked seniors in particular four of our children went on a study tour there. The Bird symbol aligned to all Katagiri work has its own story. NOW I tell children - The birds must stay home in the tree. They all got it and smiled and nodded. We are deeply concerned for all who are our friends overseas - but you know that. Hugs to Grandfather and Grandmother Katagiri – **Eliazar Rose**

12th April

The children here all kinds of frightening news from across the world and know that we have donors and sponsors all across the world. - In the Memorial Garden - and on the Rainbow Tile Wall - children have gathered and lit candles. Two senior girls have said that this will make them live different when they grow up and marry! Save and have 'emergency money' - always have provisions and first aid boxes - this was made a lecture by the Nurses in training who are 'home' here too. **Ruth**



17th April

Well done Srinu- In the Norwegian Garden back side - Out of season and with 'cunning' watering and care - Bees have their eyes on it as it just keeps blooming. All the children have their eyes on the Corn - Hopefully we can eat and freeze some too. Some girls have their eye on Srinu too. (He is super busy - Beekeeper John is 'lockdown' in adjoining State (long

story) Ramu who is so keen on the bee project cant cross the lock down 'border') - We are getting some support from the local village 'council'. Our financial outlook will be seen hard if the lockdown goes into mid May. Children are well. Nurses are supervising health. Ruth and I are happy that the children are occupied and happy!



On World Kidney Day (March 12th) Manchester Soroptimist Hilaria shared her story to raise awareness.....



MY KIDNEY JOURNEY

My journey started 10 years ago when I had a miscarriage at 22 weeks which quickly deteriorated to Septicaemia, multiple organ failure and two cardiac arrests. I was in a coma for two weeks. This happened both in 2008 and 2010. When I recovered, I had lost both my kidneys and I had to go on haemodialysis through a temporary central line for about 3-4 months. It was a horrible experience but necessary to keep me alive.

DIALYSIS TRAUMA

I was on dialysis whilst they were making a decision which treatment was best for me in the long term. I was taken off dialysis for a short time until my condition started deteriorating really fast and had to be put back on dialysis. I had a needle phobia so I opted for peritoneal dialysis but that failed after a while and I found myself on haemodialysis using a fistula. It wasn't easy to start the treatment and I had to go through sessions with a psychologist to get over my phobia but I managed to, with the help of an amazing Renal psychologist.

TRANSPLANT WOES

I was attending the Renal unit for haemodialysis 4 times a week and 3 and a half hours per session excluding set up times. I later moved home on home haemodialysis (HHD). Meanwhile, I was on the transplant waiting list, my family had tested and no one was a match, my high school friend, Buchi, had also come forward to be my donor on the paired scheme but again we were waiting a long time for a match for me because of the high percentage of my antibodies.

SAVED BY A HERO

I got my transplant early 2018 and I can't thank my donor family enough for taking the decision to donate their loved one's organs. It has given me a second chance at life. I have made it my life's work to continue to campaign for people to consider becoming organ and blood donors. I waited for so long because I come from the BME community whom from time immemorial do not understand the importance of organ donation. This is the reason we have a lot of BME people on the transplant list.



MAX AND KEIRA LAW - 20 MAY 2020

I welcome the new law (Organ Donation: Deemed Consent otherwise known as Max & Keira Law), with a lot of hope for the future of organ donation. The law is set to ensure everyone who needs a transplant doesn't wait as long as I did. When it comes in, people aged 18 and over will be deemed to have given consent for their organs to be used to save or improve other people's lives. Your family will still have a say in what happens with your organs and if they refuse, nobody will force them to change their minds.

However, there has been fake news scaring people on social media about this new law. The government will not own your organs, nobody will do! Your family will still have the final say or decision and keep your wish if you're signed up. If you do sign up, don't keep it to yourself, have a chat with your family and closest friends, and tell them your wish so when you're unable to, they will.

ALL HEROES, BOTH LIVING AND DECEASED

Rest in peace to all deceased donors, and to all living donors, may God bless you all for your selflessness, saving and improving a lot of lives and giving others another chance at life.

To find out the real facts about organ donation, please contact the NHS Blood and Transplant on 0300 303 2094 or text chat on 07860 034 343 or go to <https://www.organdonation.nhs.uk//uk-laws/organ-donation-law-in-england>.

Hilaria Asumu

The 'Fabric of Protest' Workshop

Every second Saturday of the month, people come from all over Manchester, and from further afield, to [The Fabric of Protest workshop](#) at People's History Museum - the national museum of democracy. What started as a special workshop for International Women's Day 2016, has grown into a safe and creative space for people who want to share ideas and for those who want to learn new skills. What do we do? We chat and put the world to rights over a brew. And we make 'stuff', inspired by the talented Helen Mather, Artist-Educator. Sometimes we take inspiration from exhibits in the museum, sometimes from current events and our own experiences. Recurring themes are discrimination, human rights, violence against women, the climate crisis and pollution. They sound familiar to Soroptimist ears, don't they?



Sometimes we work together on a common project - one of our first was a banner to celebrate the **Bryant & May Match Girls' Strike of 1888**.

Last year, we got a lovely surprise as it was displayed in the [2019 Banner Exhibition](#). It felt so odd that we couldn't touch it, when we are literally part of it - if you look closely you can see the evidence of our needle-pricked fingers!

Often we work on individual protest pieces. Such as the decorated, stuffed suffragette arrows - here you can see protests against inequality, austerity and pollution.



Another project was **liberty caps**, some of which were paraded by SI Manchester members on last year's march commemorating the **200th anniversary of the Peterloo Massacre**.



In 2018, we were invited to create our own pieces of art on the theme of clothes of protest. The highlight for us was that summer, when we were invited to display some of our work in our very own [exhibition](#).

Why do we do it? It's been said that "craftivism is a way of looking at life where voicing opinions through creativity makes your voice stronger, your compassion deeper and your quest for justice more infinite".

But it's also for the fun of it. To meet new people and catch up with those who come along regularly or who can only make it now and again.

Many people say that it's a form of 'therapy' and they would probably be interested in the work we're doing with our wonderful **Butterpillar project** and the **Apronmania event**.

If you'd like more information about the workshop or would like to come along, please let me know.

Elaine Loader

(Photos, apart from Soroptimists & friends displaying the Liberty Caps, are courtesy of "The Fabric of Protest at the People's History of Museum")

Clicking on the blue underlined hyperlinks will take you to the web pages for more information

President Rosemary's Burns Night Supper



On Saturday the 25th January we met our SI Konstanz friend, Antina Deike-Munstermann from Germany. Malgorzata, our Friendship Link Coordinator met Antina for coffee prior to the event in Celebration of Burn's Night where many enjoyed the Haggis with neeps and tatties. Antina loved the food which we thought compared well with the German Wurst sausage.....Antina also enjoyed the dances and chatted with so many of us. Thank you to our President Rosemary and her husband Gus for an excellent and lively evening. This contributed well to Antina's use of the English language which she also came to study at an advanced level in Manchester. Although her English was excellent, being a woman of the "Press" requires her to brush up her

English regularly for the writing and communication purposes.

Antina was also invited for supper at Malgorzata's and Kelvin's home. We enjoyed talking about German Art of Sieger Koder, and compared how Soroptimists function in Germany, in Europe and the UK. We concluded that Soroptimists' role to share friendship amongst women internationally, to advance Human Rights and to support women in all circumstances was a very valuable and worthwhile role in every country.

Antina was very interested in the events of the Brexit process and visited many Manchester venues, including pubs where many were awaiting the 11o'clock decision of the UK leaving the European Union on the 31st of January 2020. We enjoyed our meeting and we hope to hear from her in the near future.

All the best to all our SI friends in Germany.

Malgorzata Kmita

I had the pleasure to attend a **Scottish Burns Night Dinner** celebration that took place at the Swinton Park Golf club on 25th January.



It was well attended and a colourful evening that was crowned with serving of the haggis, a traditional Scottish meal, and later entertained to a Scottish dance which was amazing .

It was my first time to experience the touch of the Scottish culture.....the dress code of Men that comprised of a kilt skirt and bow tiethen the reciting of poems and then the Haggis is stabbed with a long knife and then supper is served!

Although I and my friends were baffled on what the taste

of haggis could be like (stuffed sheep stomach mixed with oatmeal) it was an experience of the year!

Thanks to the organisers we had a fantastic time.

Lillian Ruzindana



Photographs & Reports of The Pancake Party – hosted by Fiona & Paul.



We had a great evening at Fiona and Paul's pancake party. As usual great fun, food and games including a very difficult pancake quiz.

President Rosemary also took the opportunity to present Fiona with a certificate celebrating her 25 years as a Soroptimist.

Over £400 was made on the night which will go to the charities we support. Thank you Fiona and Paul.

Rosemarie Marginson



This was our first social event with the group and we really enjoyed it.

Fiona and Paul were great hosts and all the group were very welcoming.

We were in awe of Paul's art work and talked about it for days.

The pancakes were delicious and the games were fun. We did find the pancake quiz very taxing but we learned a few new facts.

It was a lovely evening and a great way to raise funds for the club.

Cath Green (& Soroptimister Rob)



Club Donations – ‘Women MATTA’ & ‘MASH’

The time of year has arrived when our club has taken decisions which charities we would financially support this year. It was a great honour and pleasure as club president to visit two local and extremely worthwhile charities.



On Friday 14th February, Rose and I visited the headquarters in Hulme of ‘**Women MATTA**’ and presented to Hannah, the centre manager, £250 of £10 vouchers which they had identified as an appropriate and flexible currency. We also delivered clothes and bras which were gratefully accepted. This charity strives to enable women to adjust into society having left prison. Our donation was very gratefully received. *(Women MATTA provide intense holistic support to women affected by the criminal justice system and those at risk)*

On Monday 17th February we travelled to inner city Manchester, near to Piccadilly station, to present a varied donation of items which the operations manager,

Tina, of ‘**MASH**’ (Manchester Action for Street Help) as being most useful. Barbara our Programme Action Lead had sourced a variety of items including hand warmers, gloves, umbrellas, toothpaste and toiletries, an extensive of much needed supplies.

(MASH is a charity providing a range of confidential and non-judgemental services to women working in the sex industry in Greater Manchester)

Tina gave us a most educative outline of the breadth of this charities’ work. She had recently returned from Romania working in conjunction with the Modern Slavery team as the centre had identified the expansion of the work they were involved with young Romanian women which has now required the employment of a Romanian interpreter. She told us of the significantly growing problem in our city regarding sexual harassment of homeless women.

We had the opportunity to tour the centre which has an impressive list of facilities including a relaxing lounge, coffee bar, and most importantly a health facility. We met the nurse practitioner who carries out screening tests relating to sexual health and is totally committed to this role. We were informed that the women using the centre also are able to access showering and laundering facilities at another charity we support, **Cornerstones**.

The two charities we visited are striving to improve the life of vulnerable and exploited women and our visits were very enlightening which I personally found emotional and thought provoking .

President Rosemary



Thankyou! Thankyou! Thankyou!

Last month I asked for your support for **Act4Africa’s Global Giving Project**
[Ugandan girls thrive](#)

Well, as a result of your donations and many from around the region, Act4Africa not only raised nearly £1,900 from the appeal but also reached no 14 on the leader board because of the NUMBER of donations received.

The top 15 then went into a ballot to choose 3 charities who would be the beneficiaries of Global Giving’s 2020-2021 Girl Fund campaign. This fund supports highly effective GlobalGiving projects providing education, legal protection, health care, and access to training and job skills so that girls can thrive - making a difference in their lives and their communities. And guess what - Act4Africa is one of the chosen charities! This could mean up to £10,000 of extra funding over the coming year.

So, on behalf of all Act4Africa’s trustees, staff and volunteers both here and in Uganda, and of course the young women and girls that we support.....**Thank You!**

Barbara Blaber



On a personal note, I am delighted to announce that I now have the honour of being a Trustee for Act4Africa!

Also, Barbara and I are disappointed to have had to postpone our visit to Kathy’s Centre in Uganda planned for June – but we hope to be able to rearrange in early 2021!

Sue Underwood

International Women's Day March



Over forty Women's organisations marched in Manchester in recognition of the International Women's Day.

SI Manchester was represented by Elaine Loader, Soo-Rose Cook and Malgorzata Kmita. The atmosphere was electric with chanting, music and drumming. Women are facing many challenges in the modern world but the March showed how together and supportive they can be. The March led us from the Cathedral Gardens and all the way St Peter's Square, culminating in the Central Library where we were invited to some show, stalls and information about women's health and empowerment.

Elaine Loader



"Ladies Who Lunch" – or if at first you don't succeed.....

Our 'daughter' club Bolton's President Carole organised a lunch on International Women's Day to celebrate the tremendous work of 'ordinary' women in our area with guest speaker Gulnaz Brennan, author of "100 Women, 100 stories".

On Monday March the 9th Sue Underwood and I accepted the invitation from SI Bolton to attend a ladies luncheon to celebrate International Woman's Day at Bolton College's Signature Restaurant. Enthusiastic students to the fore, the Mayor of Bolton attending, interesting speakers and completely sold out, we were both greatly looking forward to enjoying being 'Ladies who lunch'!

We arrived, I went to order our drinks, Sue asked if she could take my coat and the alarm bells rang!! Fortunately (unlike some other poor ladies) we still had our coats and handbags, as the entire campus had to be evacuated. It was cold and blowy, no one knew what was going on, and we were surrounded by hundreds of puzzled shivering ladies, students and staff. No fire engines or ambulances arrived so were completely in the dark. Eventually after about an hour students and staff were told to go home and our event was cancelled.

It transpired that a bomb threat had been received and the college principal had no choice but to close the college to safeguard the staff, students and of course ourselves. The students were extremely disappointed as they had been in earlier than usual in order to prepare and staff, in conjunction with SI Bolton, had been planning the event for many weeks. *(But not before, during coffee with the speaker Gulnaz Brennan, Rosemary had been recruited as a judge for Gulnaz's 'She Inspires' Awards! Sue Underwood)*

Cold and disappointed we were travelling home when we received a message from President Carole from Bolton informing us that Councillor Hilary Fairclough the Mayor of Bolton had kindly offered the town hall for a rescheduled date for the next Monday the 16th at Bolton Town Hall. As Sue so rightly said, "Now that's impressive rescheduling even for Soroptimists".



Therefore the next Monday we once again travelled to Bolton Town Hall where we were met and escorted to the magnificent banqueting suite and had a delicious buffet lunch. The speaker Gulnaz Brennan, author of '100 Women 100 Stories', had also been able to reschedule and gave an inspiring presentation featuring many of the women in her book, commencing with Sue whose chapter was entitled 'Working for women with the Soroptimists', which made me feel very proud to have such obvious exposure to our organisation.

Well done SI Bolton for all your efforts, Soroptimists overcome adversity, even a bomb hoax!

President Rosemary

A Challenge for you.....

The table cards for Bolton's International Women's Day lunch reminded us of more 'Inspirational women' These were chosen by members of S I Bolton.....

The Queen

for a lifetime of devoted service to the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth

Malala Yousafzai

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for promoting the education of women and children and her human rights work

Joanna Lumley

human rights activist, supporter of various charities. Recently agreed to be Ambassador for the SIGBI Project "Empowering Girls in Nepal"

Rt Rev Libby Lane

Diocesan Bishop of Derby, who was the first Woman Bishop in the Church of England.

Sister Rita Lee

a nun who has worked in deprived areas in the North West through Caritas, ending poverty, promoting justice and restoring dignity.

Michelle Obama

served as a role model for women, an advocate for poverty awareness, education, physical activity and healthy eating and nutrition.

Christine Koch

took part in the first 'all female' space walk and completed the longest space flight of a woman.

Serena Williams

in spite of media controversies, injuries, racism and sexism, she embodies what it means to be a strong and empowered woman.

Dame Sue Campbell

former Chair of UK Sport. 2018bDirector of Women's Football.

Melanie Reid

journalist who writes the "Spinal Column" articles about her life after falling from a horse and becoming tetraplegic.

Baroness Newlove

former Victims Commissioner and recently appointed to the Boards of Bolton University and Bolton Lads & Girls Club.

Julia Gillard

Australia's first female Prime Minister, who now promotes education for women and girls.

Shirley Williams

a thoughtful, caring and honest politician.

Felicity Goodey

Leader of the team who funded the Lowry Centre and devised the concept of Media City.

Dame Tanni Grey Thompson

one of the most successful disabled athletes in the UK and Patron of many charities.

Marie Louise Hatungimana

Bolton Soroptimist who supports and helps those struggling with a wide range of problems.

So,

Who would you add to the list?

Tell us why in 20 words or less!

Greater Manchesters New Coalition

Led by Helen Pankhurst, we are a coalition of change-makers committed to seeing a better future for the women of Manchester.

As a region that has always led the way and flown the flag for women's rights, our first initiative, the Pankhurst-Fawcett Scorecard will once again see Greater Manchester leading the charge to bring progress and accountability for women's rights.

Pankhurst-Fawcett Scorecard

Our scorecard is named after Emmeline Pankhurst and Millicent Fawcett, two iconic figures who were among the first leaders of the campaign for women's suffrage.

The scorecard will be used to conduct annual reviews of gender equality data with the goal of achieving equality across all areas by 2028 - the centenary of equal franchise.

Changing the Future for Women in Greater Manchester



“One hundred years on, women in Greater Manchester still face significant inequalities, yet the region is proud of its progressive and feminist history. This pride can be turned into concentrated action and, with this in mind, the group backing this project will champion the important discussions needed around education, work, safety, participation and culture.

We are calling on organisations, institutions and the community of Greater Manchester to support and become involved. The 2018 indicators show that our message is still the same
– we need **Deeds not Words**”

Helen Pankhurst



Malgorzata represented us at the workshop and launch of GM4Women2028 back in February, seen here arm in arm with Helen Pankhurst!

We look forward to further reports – or you can visit the website www.gm4women2028.org

In Memory of Beatrice Leigh



"If I Should Go" by Joyce Grenfell

If I should go before the rest of you,
Break not a flower, nor inscribe a stone,
Nor, when I'm gone, speak in a Sunday voice,
But be the usual selves that I have known.
Weep if you must,
Parting is hell.
But life goes on,
So sing as well.

(Chosen by Beatrice)

Beatrice Leigh joined S I Manchester in 2010 following the closure of both Salford & Wilmslow Clubs where she'd been a member. Beatrice and I became friends when she travelled with me to Soroptimist meetings, she had already retired from her last post of Hospital Chaplain at 'Hope & Ladywell Hospitals', now 'Salford Royal'.

Altrincham Garrick theatre was a very big part of her retirement life, working as front of house head until health problems prevented her from standing for any length of time. She was also a very proficient pianist and played for many groups including the Gilbert & Sullivan Society in Sale. Another love of

hers was ballroom dancing and she was a regular at several local Sale venues.

Sadly when ill health came to Beatrice, first her eyesight faltered and then she had many problems with her legs, both these things did mean she was unable to go out alone, so taking from her the two hobbies she loved most. Despite her limitations, she was always very cheerful and loved a visit or a long chat on the phone. I would update her on Club meetings and social events and she remained interested until the end. I visited her at Christmas and had a long chat with her in January so the news of her death came as a big shock.

Anne Thomas



A letter from President Rosemary

We are all facing the most serious health issue unprecedented in our lifetime. Some members are owing to their age (myself included) dealing with self isolation for 12 weeks and others have health issues to cope with and of course some we rely so much at this difficult time as they are NHS employees.

The Executive as you are aware have already taken the decision to cancel meetings for the immediate future including postponing our AGM initially scheduled for April. After discussion (by telephone) we are of the view that the AGM should be rescheduled for the beginning of October. I will therefore remain as club president until this time when our President Elect, Rose Marginson, will be installed. She will then serve as president until the AGM of April 2022 (an 18 month period). Should any member have reservations regarding the executives proposal due consideration will of course be given, our aim is to ensure continuity during this stressful time.

Keep safe, stay at home as much as possible and keep in touch.
We have established a network of support in the interim period.
Any member needing specific help we will strive to respond.

In friendship

President Rosemary

Pam Ayre's Poem – "Time for Us Girls"

I'm normally a social girl, I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here we can't go out the gates.
You see, we are the 'oldies' now, we need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while, they'll think we've upped and died.
They'll never know the things we did before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook so not everything was told.
We may seem sweet old ladies who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s - If you only knew the truth!
There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll, the pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied and were quite outrageous flirts.
Then we settled down, got married and turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana...Who on earth did we become?
We didn't mind the change of pace because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead is like a red rag to a bull!
So here you find me stuck inside for 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again, then I had to close the door!
It didn't really bother me, I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family but I've got no flaming flour!
Now Netflix is just wonderful, I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris or some random sexy killer.
At least I've got a stash of booze for when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin if I'm feeling suicidal!
So let's all drink to lockdown, to recovery and health
And hope this awful virus doesn't decimate our wealth.
We'll all get through the crisis and be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide to fit through the flaming gates!



Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by **Sunday, 31st May**, please.

Personal anecdotes always welcome.

How are you managing 'Lockdown'?

Tell your 'Stay At Home' story!

What have you learned about yourself & others?

Send in your 'Memories of Members' and 'Last Words'

New Members please introduce yourselves!

Sue Underwood

Last Wordsusually from Women, and a bear, who could/should have been Soroptimists!

But in these times, a poem written by Matt Kelly:

**I'll tell you a tale, that's been recently written,
Of a powerful army, so Great it saved Britain.
They didn't have bombs and they didn't have planes,
They fought with their hearts and they fought with their brains.
They didn't have bullets, armed just with a mask,
We sent them to war, with one simple task.
To show us the way, to lead and inspire us,
To protect us from harm and fight off the virus
It couldn't be stopped by our bullet proof vests,
An invisible enemy, invaded our chests
So we called on our weapon, our soldiers in Blue,
"All Doctors, All Nurses, Your Country needs you"
We clapped on our streets, hearts bursting with pride.
As they went off to war, while we stayed inside,
They struggled at first, as they searched for supplies.
But they stared down the virus, in the whites of its eyes,
They leaped from the trenches and didn't think twice,
Some never came back, the ultimate price.
So tired, so weary, yet still they fought on,
As the virus was beaten and the battle was won.
The many of us, owe so much, to so few,
The brave and the bold, our heroes in Blue
So let's line the streets and remember our debt.
We love you, our heroes
Lest we forget.**

