



President: **Rosemary Steven**

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Spring Summer Autumn 2019

Dear Club Members,

As you see, this is a bumper 'Three Season Edition'! .... I'm afraid that a work project hijacked most of my time. I hope that 'better late than never' applies and I promise to strive to get back to an issue for each season!

**Sue Underwood**

### Outgoing President's Message April 2019

Oh my goodness, where did that year go!

If you'll forgive the cliché, it's been a real rollercoaster! We've celebrated 80th charters with our daughter clubs, been disappointed at missing out on the SIGBI project again (although winning the Best Practice award for HEAL Malawi was some consolation) and of course had the sadness at the loss of dear friends.

But my overall feelings at the end of this year are of pride and achievement. We are a relatively small club that does a lot of what seem like small things, but we should not underestimate the big difference they make to the recipients.

It is the enthusiasm, passion and hard work of all of you that makes it happen. Thank you, everyone, for your support

**Immediate Past President Barbara**



### Incoming President's Message April 2019 – President Rosemary Steven

As the newly installed Club President my initial thought is, Barbara will be a very hard act to follow. I am very proud and honoured to once again hold such a privileged position within SI Manchester a club I have been associated with since 1986 when our then club president and now honorary member Kathleen, first welcomed me as a new member. I remained an active member for six years when regrettably owing to career interference I left. Following early retirement from the NHS I rejoined in 1999 and once again Kathleen was at the helm to reintroduce me to the club. Thank you Kathleen for all the support and guidance you have given me over the years.

I can hardly believe it is 18 years since I was initially installed as club president in 2001, there certainly have been many changes in Soroptimism, our club, and my own personal circumstances during the intervening years. We are now a small club in numbers with a very big heart. We undertake many small projects which make a very big difference, a small group with huge enthusiasm, energy and commitment.

SIGBI continues to lead us in ever changing agendas. We have now moved from Educate, Enable, and Empower to People, Prospects, Partnerships, Peace and Planet. A lot for us to decide on our rebadging agenda, my personal goal is to continue to develop our work with our current partners and to strive to establish working partnerships with other clubs to maximise the influence and impact of Soroptimists.

We are already planning in our club programme an event to take place in October with the theme of "Think on it" as requested to be a focus by Sue Williams our SIGBI President and Showcasing Soroptimism, another SIGBI initiative will be well demonstrated in May as the models at our charity luncheon will include several Soroptimists.

I am extremely fortunate to have the support of a dedicated and excellent Executive team with the pertinent skills and abilities to move our club forward. I look forward to the year with great optimism, and thank you for supporting me in my new role.

**President Rosemary**

## Visit to Dunham Massey (September 2018)



I'm a volunteer for the National Trust at Dunham Massey and arranged to show some members around. The weather was lovely and Rose, Olive, Elaine and her Mum and myself went for a walk around the gardens which as usual looked terrific, the deer are very good at keeping the lawn in order!



We then decided to visit the house and were lucky enough to have a guide to show us around and inform us of some very interesting facts about the house, its occupants and some of the history including Dunham Massey's 'Women and Power' event which told the stories of the women (and men) who fought both for and against female suffrage. We also heard about three women who have shaped Dunham's history – Lady Mary Booth, the first and only woman to inherit and run the estate, Penelope Lady Stanford who made the decision to open the military hospital during the First World War and the longstanding housekeeper, Mrs Isabella Collins.

When we had finished it was lunchtime so we made our way to the Stables and had a delicious lunch.

**Sue Harris**

## The Unveiling of the Statue of Emmeline Pankhurst



It was a great joy to walk with so many women to St Peter's Square in December 2018 to see the Statue of 'Our Emmeline' being unveiled. Over 100 years ago women in England and in Europe struggled to have their voting rights recognised so they could contribute and improve living and working conditions of many women who were excluded from the citizenship process, from voting and having such rights like holding a job, having a pension in older age or being able to buy a house.

Walking with Rose, Susan, Elaine and connecting with many other Manchester Soroptimists was a great event in history and a great joy. Joining Helen Pankhurst was an added bonus. All the speeches at the unveiling were vibrant, celebrating many victories of women but not forgetting hardships.



I was so glad to be there, why? Because I do not

want our future generations of women to lose these great privileges and to suffer more hardship as a result of political disempowerment. My motto is "Nothing about women without women" so we must stand for all the past achievements but be always ready to improve women's circumstances so they may have a better future, these were the hopes of many women 100 years ago. So .. to another 100 years of improving women's and girl's lives. The example has been set, let's make it real again.

**Malgorzata Kmita**

.....afterwards at 'Clink' for lunch



## Leeds Literary Prize

Browsing through my Soroptimist News back in August, I came across an article from my very first Club, SI Leeds, about their Literary prize. It's a biennial award for unpublished fiction by UK-based Black and Asian women and they were looking for Soroptimist volunteers to read the short-listed manuscripts and vote for a Reader's Choice. Knowing that I would have some free time during our September road trip, I decided to put my name forward. At the end of August, I duly received my 6 manuscripts and started to read. The settings for the works ranged from Birmingham to Egypt, from London to South Korea. Each one told a moving story, and I found myself immersed in each one, the culture and the atmosphere. The advice for readers was that you didn't have to complete every manuscript – the first 40 pages would probably be enough to judge how much you liked it. I read every one from beginning to end – all 2411 pages!

On September 26, I duly submitted my score sheet and awaited the results, which were to be announced on October 3 at an awards ceremony at Ilkley Playhouse. I did receive an invitation to attend but it was Steve's birthday that day so I decided not to go. The Reader's Choice award went to **Omega Douglas** for *Hibiscus, Rose, Jacaranda* – which was second on my list. But I'm pleased to say that my own Reader's Choice – *Say Goodbye to Her* by Shereen Tadros – won the overall award.

It was a great change from my normal choice of reading but hugely enjoyable. If you are a keen reader, I strongly recommend volunteering for the 2020 award! More information on the award can be found at:

[www.sileedsliteraryprize.com](http://www.sileedsliteraryprize.com)

**Barbara Blaber**

## The Pancake Party

On a Saturday in March SOROPTIMISTS and friends once again greatly enjoyed the hospitality of Fiona and family on the occasion of what has become an annual event in our social calendar 'The Pancake Party'.

This well supported event well demonstrated our goals of food, fun and friendship. The food was plentiful and delicious, we had great fun competing in a quiz, and a warm spirit of friendship pervaded.

We raised in excess of £400 for club charities.

Once again grateful thanks to the Charlton family.

**Rosemary Steven**



## WHAT CAN I RE-CYCLE?

You may not be as nutty as I am about recycling (some might say obsessive!) but if you are interested, a great website is [recyclenow.com](http://recyclenow.com). It gives you lots of good information but also allows you to check your postcode for what your local council **will** accept.



For example, Pringles tubes and crisp packets cannot be recycled anywhere yet, though Kelloggs are working with a company called TerraCycle and you may soon be able to post the tubes to them for recycling! (Cannot imagine this will be very popular.)

Foil, of course, is recyclable but what we might consider to be foil, eg crisp packets, is not. If you crumple it in your hand and it bounces **it is not foil** and so I'm afraid it goes into the non-recycling bin.

Am sure you will all find this terribly exhilarating and cannot wait to check it out!

**Maureen Heywood**

[Editor: Watch this space as members report back on their research into current recycling opportunities!]



## A Soroptimist Charter Lunch to Remember

I had a great honour to attend Soroptimist International Manchester, 93<sup>rd</sup> Charter lunch which was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2019 at the Swinton Park Gold Club – Manchester.



The lunch was very well attended by members and other dignitaries including the Lord Mayor of Manchester Councillor June Hitchen, our President Barbara Blaber, the South Lancaster Regional President Sue Underwood and Gail Heath from the Pankhurst Trust.

The lunch was very well organised and well managed. I was also very inspired by the way members organised it .The presentation of flowers that bear the colours of Soroptimism, also in memory of our deceased member Yvonne, who must be so proud where she is resting

We had an interactive and enjoyable afternoon learning a lot from experiences of members old and new. Each member I spoke to had literally Soroptimist principles flowing inside their veins. I felt so passionate knowing that we educate, empower and enable women and girls. This gives me pride as a woman member .

The sisterhood atmosphere of the event gave me the understanding of the genesis behind innovation of many successful activities of the movement .

All our speakers were amazing!

The brilliant performance of 3 Students from the Pendleton School of Theatre made the event much more colourful and enjoyable.

Another brilliant determination to assist young girls to achieve their potentials was demonstrated . As a result of the horrific attack of the Manchester Arena in 2017, the club wanted to do something in memory of victims and committed to give an award each year for at least 5 years



to a student studying at the Pendleton College to enable them to attend audition. I was delighted to learn that in just the first recipient of the award has got a place the Urdang Academy in London. This was a great success in just 1 year.

For me, attending this lunch made me feel enthusiasm , passion and pride to be part of sisterhood organisation that makes a difference in the world ..Soroptimist international !!

**Lillian R. Kyampaire**

## Mug Packing

We had a fun evening packing 100 mugs for the Women's Refuges.

Each woman who arrives at the Refuge after a very stressful time is given their own mug with sachets of tea, coffee, sugar , hot chocolate and a biscuit This time we had some of our newer members and prospective member Soo helping .

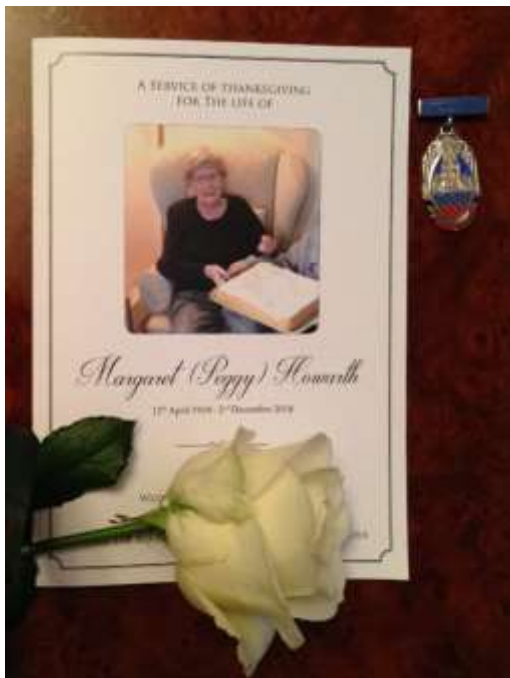
We all enjoyed the evening and loved doing something small that hopefully gives pleasure .

**Rose Marginson**



## Memories of Members – a Place to Share Our Stories of Members No Longer With Us

### Peggy Howarth



To many newer members Margaret (Peggy) Howarth, who died in December a few months before her hundredth birthday, was just a name on the membership list.

For several years Peggy had been in a Care Home but still retained her interest in Club activities. She was meticulous in all that she undertook (a perfect example of Soroptimist's high ethical standards) and a knowledgeable person to chat with.

I hope that the following anecdotes will bring substance to the name for those who did not have the pleasure of knowing Peggy.

There was one occasion when Peggy was taken ill shortly before a Club Function for which she had offered to make a trifle.....I told her not to worry, I would provide a trifle.....

She insisted that she had all the ingredients and gave me detailed instructions as to how the custard was to be made, how to arrange the Amaretti biscuits and even the dish to put it in. Never before nor since have I made a trifle with my fingers crossed!! But Peggy had promised the Club one of her special trifles and worried about letting people down.

Her only sibling was a younger brother and he and his family were very important to her. Peggy mentioned that for their 25th Wedding

anniversary she intended to get her brother and his wife a sundial. The epigrams of Hilaire Belloc sprang to mind as he had written several on the subject and on hearing them she decided she would like to enclose one with the gift.....Peggy's choice was: "Save when the sun is shining I am only here for fun" .....although "I am a sundial and I make a botch of what is done far better by a watch" ran it a close second.

Prior to age and ill-health taking their toll Peggy supported all club activities and always valued her membership of S.I. Manchester.

**Kathleen Beavis**

### Yvonne Mullen



Received from her friend Vi....

I have known Yvonne for almost 50 years, both as a colleague and friend. Since our retirement, we have enjoyed many social occasions with lots of memorable dinners and lunches. More recently it has been get-togethers over a cup of tea. My daughter, Pauline, would take me to Yvonne's, make us a cup of tea, then go off shopping, leaving Yvonne and I to chat. Now Pauline, being of a younger generation, the tea would be made with a tea bag in a mug and milk straight from the fridge. Yvonne politely accepted it that way. However, on our last visit, just a few days before she was admitted to hospital for the last time, the routine changed...a tea trolley was already set on which there was a linen tray cloth, two matching china cups, saucers and plates, a small milk jug, a tea pot and two plates of delicate biscuits. The linen serviettes were embroidered and lace edged. I commented on how lovely they were and Yvonne said, "Why should I use paper ones when I have these pretty ones?" I stupidly replied, "Yes, but Yvonne, you wouldn't have to wash and iron paper ones!" At that remark I got 'the look' which we all know so well! I will never forget that tea trolley because it said to me, "Vi, this is the way to

serve afternoon tea, NOT with a tea bag in a mug!"

Right to the end this incredible lady maintained the highest standards, from wearing her makeup to setting her tea trolley! I will miss her terribly.

**Violet Allen**

Do you remember Judith Rolfe?

Judith now lives near Cleckheaton, so, from our 'Foreign Correspondent' .....

### Memories of Yvonne and Soroptimism

What is there to say about Yvonne and Soroptimist International?

Many of you will know her much better than I and for a much longer time than I did.

Yvonne was one of the first people I met when I was introduced to Soroptimism by Pam Bower back in the mid 90's. She was steeped in all that Soroptimism involved. Between her and Kathleen I'm sure they knew every rule in the book.

*[Editor: .....particularly relevant as we study the Resolutions for the Federation Conference!]*

In getting to know her, it soon became clear why she had made a success of not only her nursing career but all she had done for the Manchester club and the region. She was so organised and had an aura of competence about her. She could be quite formidable at times, especially when some of we 'younger' ones wanted to make things a bit less formal and a little more relaxed but she would also take time to consider any suggestions and to make constructive criticism.

When I was asked to consider becoming President I felt I hadn't been a member long enough and certainly didn't know enough about the Manchester club, let alone the national and international aspects. Although Yvonne wasn't the only one who encouraged me, it was her who gave me no end of support. She met with me regularly throughout my year of office and made sure I didn't make any major faux pas especially at my first Conference.



*[Editor: Judith was our 2004-2005 President, following on from my first stint as President. I must say that Judith gave me vital support as President Elect, always ready to step in if I was away from home with or without notice – thanks again Judith!]*

I guess I'm not the only one who had so much help and support from her and she will be missed but I'm sure there will now be others in the club who will be mentoring new members.

When we moved to Spain, I was lucky to find there was a Soroptimist club near Benidorm, only half an hour from where we were living. Things were very different there. Apart from the meetings being in Spanish, which I found difficult to follow, there was very little structure, no minutes, no membership cards or receipts for subs but the same friendship was noticeable especially from the other members who were not Spanish.

When we returned to England, I was welcomed back to Manchester. It was a delight to be back and it soon felt as though I'd never been away. However, it wasn't for long as Paul got a job in Blackburn and I was welcomed into the Blackburn club, a daughter club and a chip off the old block as far as welcome and friendship was concerned. Sadly, when the time came for another move and we relocated to West Yorkshire, I never felt the same affinity with Dewsbury as with Manchester or Blackburn and as we were away for much of the spring, summer and autumn I decided to resign. I'm sure if we were still in Manchester, I'd still be a Soroptimist now.

### **Judith Rolfe**

*[Editor: I found this photo of Judith in our archives kept by Yvonne – it is from the Joint Regional Conference in May 2004 (apologies for the quality but it is a photo of a photo!)]*

*Some history for the newer members: Each year we used to have a 'Joint Regional Conference', our South Lancashire Region with the North West England and Isle of Man Region, with each region taking it in turns to organise and locate.....now each Region still has a Regional Conference but on alternate years! Each Region still likes to attend each other's Conference.....the next South Lancashire Regional Conference is on May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020 in Southport.*

*The Joint Regional Conference used to be a full weekend, from supper on Friday evening to lunch on Sunday. There was a dinner on the Saturday evening and a Manchester tradition was that all Manchester members at Conference would contribute to a corsage for their President to wear at the Dinner. We would congregate in Yvonne and Kathleen's room for 'drinks and nibbles' for the presentation – the photo shows Judith wearing her corsage!]*



## Peterloo Commemoration

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Peterloo members and friends joined in the celebrations on 16<sup>th</sup> August. It was a great day to get together, meet other people and groups interested in social justice, human rights and the environment.....& to talk about Soroptimism!



People walked to St Peter's Fields (or Manchester Central or G-Mex as we know it!) from Rochdale, Ashton and Stockport, as people did on the day itself.....though we joined the 'short route' from St Anne's Square! Our thanks to the 'Fabric For Protest' group for making the Liberty caps symbolising freedom and democracy.



We had our say on top of the memorial ..... thirsty work so we headed to the pub!

**Elaine Loader**

*[Editor: Thanks to Elaine for the banner. Also, good to see a very organised Val Moss, now living near Morecambe, who had booked her room at The Midland many months ago.]*

## 21<sup>st</sup> International Convention of Soroptimist International, Kuala Lumpur, July 2019

### Making friends.....My First Mr Soroptimist!

Yes! Men in America can become members of Soroptimist International Clubs! Women campaigned and won the right to be full members of Rotary Clubs.....but only so long as Men could become Soroptimists! This is Lyle Parrish, a member of S I Price, Utah, in the Rocky Mountains Region. After we'd corrected all of my assumptions about him (he was not with his wife but his sister-in-law!) I asked him how he was treated in Club meetings....he said they treated him kindly, always asking his opinion with the phrase "and what does the man think/have to say?"!!



**Sue Underwood**

### Meeting old friends.....

Whilst looking for South Lancashire members at the Friendship Dinner, I spotted Leong Chooi Peng, a lawyer from Singapore. Leong used acupressure to relieve my shoulder pain at the Turkish Dinner in Istanbul, four years ago at the 20<sup>th</sup> International Convention!

I was delighted to hear that she practises her healing whenever she can, funding it by going back to being a lawyer when necessary!  
<- Istanbul 2015 ..... 2019 Kuala Lumpur ->



## Offending Women? A journey through the Criminal Justice System

On Saturday 6th April, we attended the conference - "Offending Women? A journey through the Criminal Justice System". This was held at Manchester High School for Girls and was organised by volunteers from Manchester Branch of the Women's Equality Party (including me with a different t-shirt on!). It was well-attended despite the difficult subject matter - about 70 people in all.



Barbara, Rose and Susan attended as well as Margaret Molyneux and Josie Carter from SI Leigh. We were invited to have a stall in the conference "Marketplace", alongside Women's Aid and "WomenMATTER". We took banners and literature from both our club and SI South Lancashire to showcase Soroptimism.

The main aim of this conference was to raise awareness of the topic that Soroptimist International, of course, has been working on for many years. The plan is to submit a resolution at the next national party conference for this to be adopted as a key objective.

There was a wide range of interesting speakers, including an academic, magistrate, barrister, probation officer, Women's Centre manager and two women with lived experience. The police representative pulled out due to Purdah rules regarding local elections.

We heard from Nicola who fell foul of the benefits system. She was raising young children and was in a chaotic relationship with an abusive partner. She was found guilty of benefit fraud when she failed to disclose every time he moved in and out. She received a probation order and she told us how the Women's Centre helped her get through this. Julia took us through her prison experience, again a victim of a coercive partner, she spent over a year in Styal and she described the effect it had on her and her family.

We were reminded throughout the day that there are more women than men in prison for not paying the family's TV licence, for failing to secure school attendance and for acquisitive crimes where they have been forced to fund some-one else's drug habits.

The barrister Harriet Johnson, related harrowing case studies, including a pregnant woman being remanded for what was clearly self-defence against an abusive partner. He had even admitted to police that he'd attacked her first with a hammer. Although the jury found her not guilty, her life had been severely affected as she'd given birth in prison and the baby taken from her..

On the positive side, we heard that Manchester is leading the way in this field. It has a network of Women's Centres which can help women at risk of offending as well as those on probation, or after release from prison. This presentation was by Hannah Morowa of WomenMATTER, who has spoken at a club meeting, and it was good to see her again.

We heard from Scott Cowap who is a Magistrate in the Women's Problem Solving court. The court works closely with the Women's Centres to help the women with their rehabilitation. This type of court, like the Women's Centres, is not available in all parts of the country. This needs to change, as they make a difference to the lives of women and their families as well as being more cost effective than the alternative - a revolving door of short prison sentences. We learned that the government has changed the way probation is managed, meaning more people are being recalled to prison, for minor breaches, such as not attending appointments through lack of child-care. Austerity and lack of funds is also an issue - WomenMATTER, for example, is only funded until March next year.

It's clear that this is an area that we still need to focus on nationally and continue to help locally

**Elaine Loader**





Where was this taken?

What was the occasion?

How many members can you name?

Answers in next Newsletter (I hope, this is a joint project!)

### Charity Fashion Show



We held a very successful Charity Lunch and Fashion Show on 12th May. President Rosemary acted as MC and clothes by Shuff's Separates were modelled by members, friends and ladies from Shuff's. £1800 was raised for our charities.

### Manchester Day Parade



Several members, dressed as suffragettes and carrying Soroptimist banners, took part in the Manchester Day Parade.

### Emmeline's Birthday Party



A tea party was held at the Pankhurst Centre on 14th July to celebrate Emmeline Pankhurst's birthday. Several members attended to help and to enjoy the tea....



.....Caught in the act!!



## News in Brief – Please share your experiences of these events!

### Afternoon Tea



A big thank you to member Fiona and her daughter Ciara for a lovely afternoon tea. The event was for part of Ciara's Duke of Edinburgh Award and the proceeds have helped the Club to buy sewing machines for the refuges run by Manchester Women's Aid.

...here's Susan teaching women in the refuges to sew.



### Ladies who Lunch at 'Clink'



Members enjoyed lunch at the Clink Restaurant in Styal.

They were joined by Kate Green, MP for Stretford and Urmston and vice chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System

Rob Green (Mayor of Trafford) there in a personal capacity, also joined us!

### Garden Party



A very successful garden party was held in Susan and David's lovely garden on 18th August to raise funds for our charities.

Sandwiches, cakes, scones and strawberries were provided by members and the tombola and homemade produce stall were very popular.

Good weather contributed to a most enjoyable afternoon.





## DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October - Friendship Evening & Quiz at Heald Green Village Hall

Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> October - 'Think On It' event and Lunch at the Pinewood Hotel, Handforth

Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> October – SIGBI Federation Conference in Bournemouth

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November – Club Meeting at Coppice Library, Sale: 6.30 pm. Speaker: Sarah from Act4Africa

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> November – Regional Programme Action and Council Meetings at Leigh Sports Village

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> November – Tea with the Mayor of Trafford; details from Barbara Blaber.

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> November – Rose's Handbag Evening

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December – International Evening & Christmas Party at Manor Court, Sale

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2020 – Burns Night celebration at Swinton Park Golf Club

Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by **Saturday, 30<sup>th</sup> November**, please.

### Christmas Greetings in Lieu of Cards:

Those who wish to send greetings via the December Newsletter (and make a donation to Club Charities) are asked to have their messages ready for the November Meeting (Maximum 20 words)

(.....or 'Greetings' at least by 30<sup>th</sup> November at the very latest!)

*Sue Underwood* [suehome@sky.com](mailto:suehome@sky.com)

## Looking Forward to the Winter Edition with articles from you .....

Personal anecdotes

Memories of Members – they may just have moved away!

Contributions for 'Last Words'

Your Experiences on 'News in Brief' events

Sewing Project

Age UK Boat Race

New Members Lunch

New Members Introduce Yourselves!

Friendship Evening Quiz

'Think On It' Lunch

Trip to Essen, Germany

Bournemouth Federation Conference

Tea with the Mayor of Trafford

&

Anything else you would like to share!

Last Words .....from Women, maybe a Man and a bear, who could/should have been Soroptimists!

