



Autumn
2020
Issue No 75



President: **Rosemary Steven**

Dear Club Members,

Welcome to the Autumn edition of your Newsletter. Many thanks for all of your contributions. You'll find some familiar topics and some that are a little bit differenthopefully all for you to enjoy!

Sue Underwood

President's Message – President Rosemary Steven

From May: We have now been in lockdown for over 3 months which has presented us all with unprecedented challenges. Anxiety, loneliness, financial concerns, worries over future employment and overall anticipation regarding ongoing lifestyle changes when eventually we face the post pandemic future in the world. Postponed events and celebrations, rescheduled holidays and visits, the inability to have social interchange with family and friends, the effect on the education of children and those in higher education, the list is endless. The extremely bleak economic forecast is something to be considered by us all with much trepidation as to the effects not only to us but future generations.

As Soroptimists, how can we possibly give service, fund raise to support the vulnerable in society as well as supporting each other provides yet another agenda with additional challenges? As an executive team a major focus has been to ensure ongoing communication and support to club members. We have kept in regular communication via WhatsApp and telephone also holding Zoom Executive meetings; our June club meeting focusing on Programme Action went ahead by Zoom and we plan to continue and adhere to future club meeting dates via this method until a time we can resume actual meetings. Our AGM is provisionally scheduled for October this will be confirmed as soon as possible.

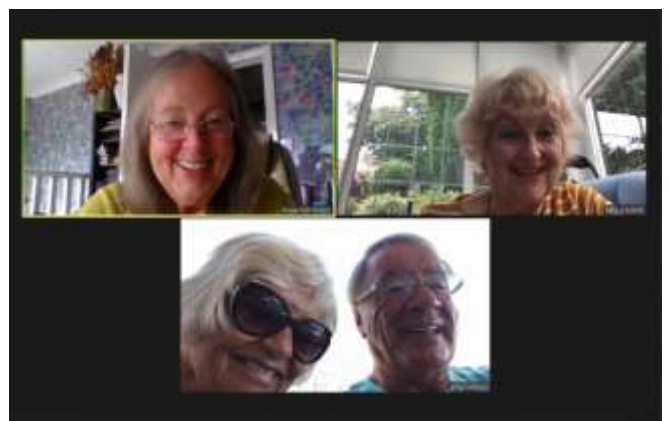
(AGM Thursday 15th October 6:30 for 7pm on Zoom)

Regular telephone calls and thanks to Rose initially and Sue Underwood in latter weeks have given the opportunity to join via Zoom in social regular chats. We have been joined on occasions by Kathleen Beavis in Anglesey and Val Moss in Morecambe and it has been great to have Stella (with support from her Carer and friend Agnes) joining us. This casual contact has provided all who have been able to participate with friendship and communication. We remember always members who are working at the forefront throughout these challenging times and look forward greatly to meeting up as soon as we are able.

Keep safe until we have light at the end of the tunnel.

& now October: We enjoyed an all too brief Summer of less restrictions, were able with care to visit hair and beauty salons, restaurants, bars, shopping malls and non-essential outlets reopened and we felt somewhat easier. However it hadn't gone away and gradually with easing came a return which has recently hit us particularly badly in the North West with a renewed spread and ever rising numbers. Again we have local lockdowns which continue to prevent our club members giving service, or fundraising to support our chosen charities, or meeting together sociallyall have been impossible.

Thank goodness for Zoom, I even managed during my visit to Skiathos in September to Zoom from a Fisherman's wharf (whilst enjoying delicious seafood meze), a taverna in the mountains with an amazing view and from the lounge of our villa as it was too hot on the patio.



As I come to the end of my extended Presidential term of office I thank you all for the support and friendship you have extended to me in such unprecedented times.

President Rosemary

Rallying Call to S I Manchester Club Members – from our Lifetime Honorary Member Kathleen.

From your AGM papers, you will see that there are vacancies for various Officers and Executive Committee Members. If you feel you can help or are approached DO PLEASE allow your name to go forward for election.

Everyone is busy with work and family as well as Soroptimism and other interests but getting involved is what life is all about and I am a firm believer that the more you put in to a project, the more you get out of it.

Don't feel that you don't know enough none of us does. The step forward is the beginning of a learning curve and there is always help available. If you need it, you have only to ask someone who has done the job before but you can do it your own way!

The Club needs your active support, so please offer it - you joined to serve and make a difference – the friendships and fun are the bonuses.

I am not sure whether the following poem will encourage or deter you but I hope that, at least, it will amuse you.

Kathleen Beavis

Ode To Committee



At the beginning of the meeting

We compose and propose, we support and oppose
And the points of procedure are fun,
But though various notions are brought up as motions
There's terribly little gets done.

We resolve and absolve, but never dissolve,
Since it's out of the question for us.
What a shattering pity to end our committee,
Where else could we make such a fuss.

Author: Unknown

Oh! Give me your pity; I'm on a committee,
Which means that from morning to night
We attend and amend, contend and defend
Without a conclusion in sight.

We confer and concur, we defer and demur
And reiterate all of our thoughts,
We revise the agenda with frequent addenda
And consider a load of reports.



At the end

(Members of longstanding will have seen this poem before but it is still very applicable!)

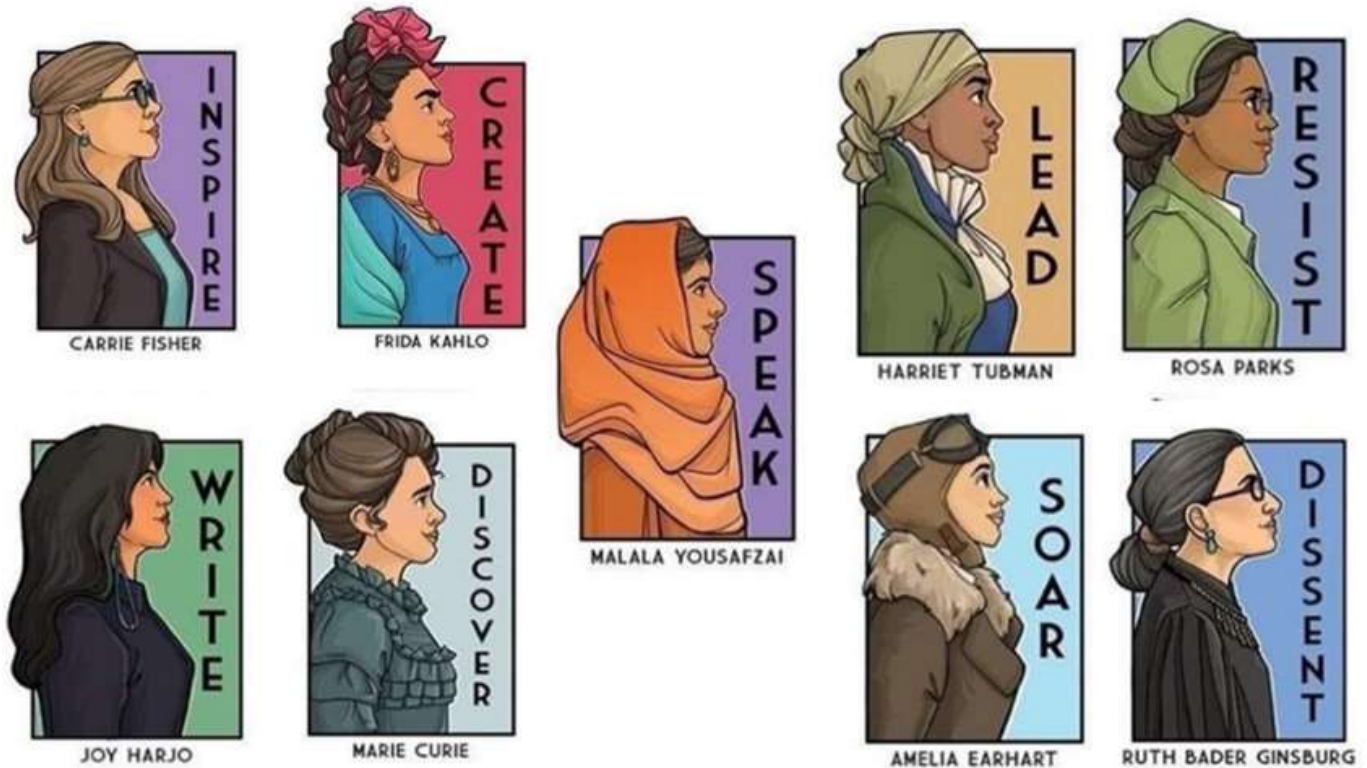
Kathleen, you can run but you cannot hide!

For our newer members, Kathleen now lives on Anglesey – spotted here on Facebook....

SI Anglesey a small group of members met for afternoon tea, a catch up, making donations and contributions for rough sleeper packs and other charities.



Do You Know All About These Inspirational Women?....see below If you missed the Quiz!



1	Who said – “Stand for something or you will fall for anything.”
2	Who, moments before her wedding ceremony, gave her future husband a letter politely outlining the conditions of their marriage..... she wished to continue to lead her own life & the petty confinements of a ‘medieval code of faithfulness’ were not the means to such freedom. If in a year they had not found happiness as a couple, she further stipulated, they should go their separate ways.
3	Who coordinated the use of diagnostic X-rays during the First World War?
4	Who am I describing? Her stark, almost savage beauty, accented by thick, wing-like eyebrows and the suggestion of a moustache, is instantly compelling!
5	In the American Civil War, who worked for the Union Army, first as a cook and nurse, and then as an armed scout and spy..... The first woman to lead an armed expedition in the war, she guided the raid at Combahee Ferry, which liberated more than 700 enslaved people. Later she was active in the women’s suffrage movement.
6	Who is the incumbent United States Poet Laureate?
7	Whose strategic advocacy extended to word choice, favouring the use of "gender" instead of "sex," after her secretary suggested the word "sex" would serve as a distraction to judges?
8	Who wrote several semi-autobiographical novels, including one made into a film in 1990 starring Meryl Streep, Shirley Maclaine and Dennis Quaid?
9	What was the title of this book & film?
	Now for a question on the only ‘Inspirational Woman’ not yet covered.... Does that help I wonder? On 12 July 2013, her 16th birthday, Malala spoke at the UN to call for worldwide access to education. The UN dubbed the event "Malala Day".. It was her first public speech since the attack, leading the first ever Youth Takeover of the UN, with an audience of over 500 young education advocates from around the world.
10	Who’s shawl was Malala wearing?
11	Who was born first?
12	Who was (if deceased), or is now (if still alive) the oldest?

Feel free to research further! - Answers in the next Newsletter

President Rosemary – Worsley & Skiathos

Lockdown, for us all, has been something we could never envisaged as we celebrated in early March our 24th Charter Dinner. What a challenge we have faced, in my 70's I am classed as vulnerable, however my husband has so many health issues to protect him I have also stayed at home with the exception of short daily exercise. I have gained the reputation as a social butterfly with normally a packed social diary involving seeing friends, weekend breaks, visitors staying with us and frequent lunches out, dinner parties, shopping trips and Soroptimist activities. What a shock to my system, my wings have certainly been clipped.

For over 30 years, since first visiting and falling in love with the beautiful Aegean Island of Skiathos, we have never failed to spend a considerable proportion of Spring and Summer in Greece. The bluebell woods of Worsley, our garden blossom trees, and rhododendrons in bloom have replaced to some extent the poppies and wild roses, jasmine in blossom, bougainvillea, hibiscus and orange, lemon and the olive trees of our Greek garden. However nature has been kind and the glorious weather of April and May has enabled us to appreciate our English garden as never before.

Staying at home has, once all possible cupboard cleaning and DIY tasks were completed, allowed me to concentrate and contemplate on what really matters. Health and kindness, family and true friendship, have headed my list instead of the choice of restaurant and social planning. I have at last realised I cannot ignore social media. I had never heard of Zoom and rarely used Skype, how essential these communication lifelines have been for us all. Yes, lots to miss, but overall time flies week to week. Did we really clap on consecutive Thursdays for ten weeks at 8pm in support of our fantastic NHS, oh and what day is it?

Keeping safe, valuing friendship and neighbourly support and not forgetting constant cooking are my new priorities. We all will retain our own memories of the effect on society of the pandemic and I am sure will have reassessed what is really important in life as we remerge in a changed world.

.....& September Locked Down on Skiathos!

The Agapanthus in full bloom.....Outside – what a view!.....



.....& Relaxing in the cool!



Rosemary Steven

Rose's Lockdown – the May & September reports

May

It's been a strange couple of months . On the whole I would say I just got on with each day but sometimes it suddenly hits and I have a down few days . Never any particular reason more the uncertainty and missing family . I'm sure it's like that for everyone else .

On the plus side I've enjoyed cooking more and trying new recipes and resurrected old ones I had forgotten about. I've started to learn Spanish with the app Duolingo and am pleased to do my 15 minutes each day . I feel I'm progressing .

Zoom 2 months ago - what is that ? Now it's the way to have social meet ups with our club members and do quizzes with family and friends .

I'm fitter , walking every day with the dog . Most days before this I would be in and out of the car and rarely get a walk in .

Thanks to small free seed boxes from M&S, acquired before lockdown and a grow your own veg Christmas present, we are now growing vegetables . The main question where to put them all as they grew. The initial excitement of thinking free veg was outweighed by the cost of compost and planters .



We have been lucky with our weather during this time . I've loved seeing all the birds particularly early morning on the golf course and seeing rabbits, heron and geese .

Our clapping on Thursday nights has brought a camaraderie to the street .

At this stage I can't wait to start meeting up with friends and family again but feel very lucky too .

All praise to all the front line workers in this difficult time particularly our members working for the N.H.S Fiona, Fii, Lilian and Catherine N .

Till we meet again .

September

We've still not been able to meet up in groups. Generally life had improved and I felt better .

When the normal shops other than food re-opened and the restaurants, I couldn't imagine going . I gradually started going and embraced the COVID rules , happy they were in place .

Our veg grew, some successfully (courgettes) others not too well (tomatoes and carrots) . We probably won't be doing it again next year but it gave much needed pleasure this year .

I'm still continuing Spanish and enjoying it .

Unfortunately now the COVID rates are going up we have increasing restrictions in our lives .

We are still zooming thanks to Sue and it is good to see Stella and Agnes and many of our members who have the time to join in . We have three new members in lockdown and more interested . We can't do the work and fundraising we normally do but will look forward to the time we can .

I'm so looking forward till we meet again .

Rose Marginson

Sue Harris 'What I've been doing in Lockdown'

I read about '**Knit for Peace**' in the Sunday Times magazine and looked online and was very impressed. I'm always buying wool when I see it reduced. I really enjoy crocheting and it has helped me stay calm throughout lockdown.



www.knitforpeace.org.uk

Sue Harris

.....& now for something completely different.....you may need a fresh brew!

Liz PHONE A FRIEND.....Make a Story

I am a member of **The Royal Exchange Elders Company**, during lockdown the elders engaged in a story making project where 2 elders together would chat on the phone, one would come up with a story!

The following are my 2 stories!

The second story, "**In A Different World**" is based on my experience. I've changed the names of characters and some of the places.

I hope you enjoy reading them!!

Liz Aniteye



FRIENDSHIP BLOSSOMING By Liz with Jacquie

Brenda looked across the road towards the Coffee Shop from her seat on the bench. Like most of the other shops in the Village, it was closed. She missed her afternoon coffee and a cake, which was always homemade. She was thankful there were none of those chain coffee shops in Ashton Village. It was unnaturally quiet, pleasantly peaceful you might say, but Brenda missed the daily bustle of the passers-by. Some people were still out and giving polite nods in greeting, and one or two even stopped for short chat before they continued their daily exercise. She had strolled out later in the day than usual, to miss the heat of the sun, and had paused to rest for a while on her favourite bench. It stood outside the florists. That too was closed, but a tub of cheerful begonias was on the pavement outside the door. Someone still cared.

Jack was taking his daily walk, always at four o'clock, along the High Street. He favoured later afternoons when the Village was usually beginning to quieten down. At ninety-two years, he had the inevitable slower movements that came with older age, but his walk was smartly upright. Despite the heat he wore his tweed jacket, a shirt and tie, and his flat cap.

Jack came to the bench outside the florists. He always stopped here to rest for a while. Seeing a lady sitting at one end of the bench, he sat down at the other end.

He lifted his cap and said 'Good afternoon'.

Brenda smiled back at him, 'Got to keep our distance'.

They looked at each other and laughed.

'I could say do you come here often?' said Jack.

Brenda laughed again. They sat quietly for a few moments then,

'Strange times,' remarked Jack.

'Yes indeed,' sighed Brenda.

'I was thinking about when I was a teenager, and the War', said Jack, 'and remembering the glowing skies over Manchester, and the droning sounds from the planes, and of course the bombs.' He gave an involuntary shudder.

'I do remember the noise, and the fear', replied Brenda, 'but I was very young then and I can't remember a lot about it.'

'I was thinking to myself that at least we could see and hear the enemy. We knew where it was. Were warned when it was coming... so many lives lost.' He paused, then, 'The enemy we have now is invisible, soundless, and can strike anyone, anywhere, without warning'.

Again they sat quietly for a while, thinking.

Then Brenda continued, 'I remember being frightened of the noises overhead, and my mother would pick me up and hold me close until I felt safe'.

'We can't even hold each other now' responded Jack. 'No human touch, not even for the dying.'

Silence

Brenda broke it, saying cheerfully, 'This won't be forever. Look it's a lovely day. The sun is shining; we have a clear blue sky. We should make the most of it while we can'.

'You're right of course,' he responded, sounding more cheerful himself, and looked directly into her face. He regarded her closely for the first time, noticing the neat row of pearls on the navy jumper, the powder pink coat reflecting a flattering glow onto her cheerful face. Soft grey hair immaculate with its curls and hint of blue.

'Make the most of today', he thought to himself. Out loud he said, 'Perhaps we could meet again tomorrow for a chat and a stroll?'

'I'd like that '.

'Four o'clock here?'

'Yes that will be fine.'

They both stood up and he watched her for a while as she walked away. He took his pipe from his pocket, tapped it on the back of the bench and put it in his mouth. An old habit and a comfort, and something he did when he felt content, although he never actually lit it now. Then he read the familiar text neatly inscribed on the bench, 'Friendships Blossoming'.

He thought, 'Once all this is over perhaps we'll sit closely side by side on this bench. After all we are never too old to have Friendship Blossoming into love.'



It was a clear sunny morning and Grace was sitting on her favourite couch clutching a steaming cup of coffee, looking through the large picture window into her garden. The sky was unusually cloudless and she watched the birds and the bees and the multi coloured butterflies flitting from flower to flower. The radio was playing in the background. She had just retired from work and was wondering how she was going to deal with this new phase in her life. A song came on the radio, "I'm in a different World" by the Four Tops. She loved that old soul music and her mind wandered back over the decades to a smiling 18 year old in a bright summer frock, kissing goodbye to her folks, ready to board a plane at Kotoka International Airport, Accra.

She was travelling with her friend Cecilia, two bright eyed, willowy girls preparing to train as nurses in the UK. It was a first flight for both of them and they were bubbling over with excitement and youthful enthusiasm. They had come from happy homes and the peace and beauty of a calm seascape and a glorious daily sunrise and sunset were a given in their existence so far. They had such high hopes for their new lives.

The frantic scene at Heathrow came as a shock but they managed to make contact with the nursing people and they were escorted to stations in central London to continue their journeys. They were surprised to find themselves on different stations headed for different trains, Cecilia at King's Cross and Grace at Euston. They were destined for Huddersfield and Warrington respectively. On the large scale map of the UK it looked as if these two towns were next door to each other but the reality was a little different and it seemed unlikely that they would be seeing much of each other in the near future.

Arriving in Warrington, Grace was given her uniform and allocated a room in the Nurses' Home. Her reception, rather like the weather, was cool and the grey skies were reflected in the long corridors of her new surroundings. However, being the outgoing, happy go lucky character that she was, in her naivete she assumed that things would only get better. How wrong she was!

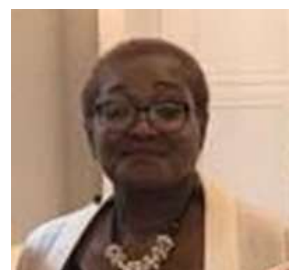
She excelled in the classroom but her reception on the wards was very different. Many of the patients had no compunction in declaring that they didn't want to be treated by a black nurse even though they didn't consider themselves to be prejudiced in any way for some reason. On the bus she would often find that people chose not to sit next to her or move if she sat near them. Some of the student nurses were friendlier than others but she was rarely invited to join their expeditions or parties. She was often ignored or kept waiting in shops and although she loved her studies, life was pretty grim. She began to despair and even thought of returning home to Ghana. And then, in bounced Marjorie, a 35 year old mature Scottish student who had married an Englishman. Their family was growing up and she had decided on a late career change in nursing. She immediately endeared herself to Grace and reminded her that there were still kind and decent people in the world. Despite, or perhaps because of, the age gap, they became firm friends. Grace was invited to share in parties and celebrations with Marjorie and her family both inside and outside her home, and she began to make friends beyond the realms of the hospital. Their lunches out and shopping trips into places like Southport gave them both much pleasure and they often found themselves giggling like schoolgirls. Marjorie's loyalty helped Grace to rise above the cruelty and indifference that she was subject to on an almost daily basis and she began to thrive in her life and her career.

So now, decades later, her children grown up and successful and her grandchildren embarking on the challenges, both great and small, which are part and parcel of all young lives, she was beginning to think more about how she could continue to contribute to society.

The soul music was still playing on the radio and the garden continued to be a hive of nature's activity. She reflected on how lucky she had been, despite all the setbacks and how rich her life had become. She rose from the couch, her empty coffee mug in her hand and bopped her way back to the kitchen. She could still throw a few dance moves to that wonderful music even though the hips didn't sway quite as freely as they had done in the 1970s.

She had arrived in the UK full of naïve hope as a young grub ready for her journey through life. The caterpillar stage had been less than easy but her strength and determination had enabled her to survive all of that and eventually the butterfly in all its glorious colours had emerged and soared off into the sky. There was still time left and she was going to use it wisely and well by continuing to help the community in any way she could.

Liz Aniteye



Hilaria's Organ Donation Week Asda Tannoy Takeover



The idea for a supermarket tannoy take over in Manchester, to promote and raise awareness of organ and blood donation to the African-Caribbean people, was one of my numerous ideas on how to reach out to my community and change minds.

Promoting organ donation, particularly, now that the law has changed, is even more important because I believe, there will be more opt outs now than when the law was an opt in. This is mainly because of the build-up of distrust for the system in the black community, as a result of various issues surrounding the community's negative experiences with the system and myths around organ donation.

Brainstorming with my friend, Yemi, we felt that targeting large supermarkets in predominantly black areas to take-over their tannoy (1 hour) would hopefully encourage more of our people to be "hope bringers". I know, in my role as volunteer ambassador for organ donation, through training and research, that there is simply not enough of us on the donor register, which means more people die whilst waiting for a donor. Hopefully, with more campaigns like mine, the story can change!

Deciding which of the big stores around Greater Manchester to approach was easy, there is Big Tesco, Sainsbury and Asda in the target areas which were Salford, Moston, Cheetham Hill, Hulme, Mosside, Manchester etc but getting a store to agree to the request was a different challenge. We approached Sainsbury in Salford but they said no and referred us to their head office. I was discouraged at first, but Yemi, who is also a founding member of our charity, WSH BME Network, encouraged me not to give up. I summoned the courage to approach Asda in Hulme, my trusted friend, Yemi, was with me filming the whole interaction.

Thankfully, Asda were ever so gracious in saying yes. We met one of the managers, Paul, who took my details and said he would ask head office and get back to us. I had given up that they would not agree to it because of my experience with Sainburys but another manager, Angela Mackintosh, called and told me it was okay. I was over the moon. However, we did not have enough time to check with Tesco.

Planning what to do on the day was straight forward; get the fliers from NHS BT, plan what to talk about, and just turn up.

Thank goodness, the training and briefing we receive with the

ambassador programme and bi-monthly meetings with the National BAME Marketing Manager, Geraldine, came in handy planning for the event. I had only a few days to prepare. Well if only...

I thrive on multitasking but on this occasion, my multitasking skills were stretched thin, almost to breaking point. I had several projects going on simultaneously, I was making guest appearances on different forums including radio shows, reading for my masters dissertation, shooting, editing and scheduling organ donation interview videos for social media, days before the superstore organ donation promotion which meant I had very little time to prepare. We even hit a snag with the leaflets but between Geraldine, and some others from the ambassador programme, they all managed to get the leaflets to me before we ran out of leaflets.

The day, 11th September 2020, dawned bright and early and I woke up with trepidation, the leaflets had not arrived. I was calm for some reason. I was supposed to be at the store for 11am but was ready by 10am and went to where I store my organ donation materials. I found some sign up forms and some promotional items from previous campaigns which I packed into a box, in case the leaflets didn't arrive on time I called Yemi to ensure she was okay to meet me at the store. She had taken the day off work to help out. My husband was home so I asked him to help drop off the leaflets when they came and left for Asda.

I got to Asda and took all my stuff in, Yemi was already there, waiting with her daughter, Eniola. Angela, the store manager, came to welcome us and show us where to set up. Then, went to get us a table for our promotional display and the tannoy. I had never used a tannoy before. It was nerve-racking. I asked Angela for advice and she told me what to say.



I spoke every 5 -10 minutes interval with various organ donation snippets and messages including messages in patois, pidgin English, Zimbabwean language etc. The reaction to the messages was uplifting to see. The patois and pidgin ones were particularly well received. A Nigerian woman walked past and said, "Well done". That made my day. The security guy even asked me what it was about. I told him about the new law and how it affects our community and he agreed it was important and promised to sign up.



Whilst I was talking, Yemi and her Eniola were busy outside, sharing leaflets and taking to shoppers coming out of the store. They actually had one sign up to the register and a potential support case for our charity work.

Everyone was onboard to make the event a success. With the help of Yemi and her lovely daughter, Eniola and huge support from my husband and children, Asda's manager, Paul Heller who sought permission from head office and on the day Angela, shift manager who helped us set up, Geraldine, Katy, and others from NHS Blood and Transplant, we pulled it off.

I had been filled with trepidation as this was a first for me but I am pleased to say that the day was a big success. Next year, we will be targeting all the supermarkets in Greater Manchester.

Hilaria Asumu

By the bye, 'Word' hadn't heard of Tannoy System, so I looked it up to check the spelling!

tannoy | 'tanoɪ | British

noun trademark

a type of public address system.

verb [with object]

transmit or announce over a tannoy: the news was tannoyed one afternoon.

& for a future Quiz?

ORIGIN

1920s: contraction of *tantalum alloy*, which is used as a rectifier in the system.

Look What I Found!As SIGBI Conference is upon us, looking back to my first in Harrogate....

SIGBI 73rd Federation Conference Harrogate 1st to 3rd November 2007.

..... or Confessions of a Virgin! I'm thinking of writing a book, but for now I'll just tell of titbits to tantalise you!
In 15 years of Soroptimism I'd never made it to a Federation Conference, hence I was a 'virgin' for the weekend!

On opening the Programme I was faced with the Soroptimist Pledge:

I pledge allegiance to Soroptimism and the ideals for which it stands

The Sincerity of Friendship

The Joy of Achievement

The Dignity of Service

The Integrity of Profession

The Love of all Mankind

*I will put forth my greatest effort to promote, uphold & defend these ideals for a larger fellowship in home, in society,
in business and among the peoples of the world.*

I renewed that Pledge without any qualms, but came to realise that I've barely started!

The Opening Ceremony - The Flags of the countries of the Federation filed in, accompanied by their Delegate – How far had they travelled? Never again will I complain about the inconvenience of lack of parking. (Something to think about? Some Clubs pay the Conference fees for an African Delegate)

The Annual General Meeting - I stepped in as Voting Delegate for Margaret, so had a front row seat. I chatted to Jean from Taunton on my right, but when I introduced myself to the delegate on my left, all I learned was that she was from Harrogate – I found a quiet Soroptimist!

To test the electronic voting Handsets we had to vote on the proposal for G&T instead of Tea for the interval refreshment so we now know that 87% enjoy Gin, the rest must prefer Vodka!

I duly voted for the Motions as previously directed by the Club, and as I believed the Club would wish me to vote on the 'Motions of Urgency'.

As a Conference Virgin I was invited to Coffee with Federation President Hilary-Kay. We talked about the Rededication of our site at the National Memorial Arboretum: we moved from our first corner to make way for the Armed Forces Memorial. (Did you see the programme about this on Sunday 4th November? Saddest of all is that we need to leave so much marble space for future names) I also had a few words with International President Margaret, definitely a force to be reckoned with!

The Speakers

Vera Bohle was a TV journalist filming in Somalia when she felt '....I ought to be distributing food there, instead of thinking about how to edit the film we shot'. Now she trains locals how to disarm mines the one word that she insists they understand before any practical training is 'STOP'!

Isla Rogers-Winarto SI Jakarta, with 10 other Jakarta Soroptimists, ran the project to rebuild Lamreh Village in Aceh after the 2004 Tsunami. Initially they set out to provide emergency aid, raising \$1,000, but the project grew and 'those Soroptimist women' brought a \$1,750,000 project to completion.

Anne MacDonald is SIGBI Quadrennial Liaison Officer for Project Sierra – A Family & A Future. Sierra Leone, one of the world's poorest countries, is in our Federation. Anne introduced the project but we need to know more. (Something to think about? SIGBI Federation Conference will be in Manchester in 2010, can we offer hospitality to Sierra Leone delegates?)

Claire Bertschinger, "Humanity before Economics" is her hope & belief. I remembered her from TV news, but never knew her name.....what can I say?..... Michael Buerk endorses her book; *"The story of the woman who inspired Live Aid, one of the true heroines of our time. Claire is the dyslexic tomboy who grew up to spend her life patching up humanity's self-inflicted wounds, working with the wounded, the sick and the dying, in the battlefields and famine camps of the late twentieth century; a life often lived beyond breaking point that threatened to destroy her. An ordinary woman who did extraordinary things and really did move mountains"*

Bob Geldof introduces her as *".....the girl who started it all"*

..... you'll just have to read the book! (I will donate a copy to the Club)

Michael Buerk had to follow that, but we were on his side, because, after all, it was his BBC Ethiopian Famine report that brought us Claire! He said that, thanks to some of his inane questions, Claire thought he was a 'pratt' ...but he thought she was an 'angel'....& they were probably both right! He took a hard look at the future of journalism & broadcasting, recalling a past when Kate Adie was still behind a camera & Martin Bell wore dark suits!

Closing Ceremony & Change of Insignia

President Hilary-Kay shared a photo review of her year (we're on the trail of the picture of Yvonne!) & handed over to new Federation President Marguerite Woodstock-Riley.

We applauded our **Val** as she became **Regional President for South Lancashire**.

Finally we were invited to 2008 SIGBI Conference in Barbados.

Gala Banquet 1360 Soroptimists & guests gathered for a Banquet under the stars. Food & company were excellent, a true Soroptimist 'do'!

The accompanying music to the Conference was the haunting "Only If" by Enya
*If you really want to, you can hear me say
Only if you want to will you find a way
If you really want to, you can seize the day
Only if you want to will you fly away*

Did I enjoy my first Federation Conference? Well, I never intend to miss another one Yes, I'm going to Barbados!
Sue Underwood

Maureen thought this might amuse!



"WARNING" by Jenny Joseph

When I am an old woman I shall wear purple
With a red hat which doesn't go, and doesn't suit me.
And I shall spend my pension on brandy and summer gloves
And satin sandals, and say we've no money for butter.
I shall sit down on the pavement when I'm tired
And gobble up samples in shops and press alarm bells
And run my stick along the public railings
And make up for the sobriety of my youth.
I shall go out in my slippers in the rain
And pick flowers in other people's gardens
And learn to spit.

You can wear terrible shirts and grow more fat
And eat three pounds of sausages at a go
Or only bread and pickle for a week
And hoard pens and pencils and beer mats and things in boxes.

But now we must have clothes that keep us dry
And pay our rent and not swear in the street
And set a good example for the children.
We must have friends to dinner and read the papers.

But maybe I ought to practise a little now?
So people who know me are not too shocked and surprised
When suddenly I am old, and start to wear purple.

But why wait till you're an old woman?

Maureen Heywood





Presentation to SI Madurai's Climate Change conference. September 2020

The following presentation was delivered to a Climate Change conference facilitated by our Friendship link club SI Madurai and attended by over 100 members from across all 5 Federations.

It is a pleasure to be taking part in your Climate Change conference and humbling to hear the wonderful work that is being carried out by clubs across our Federations.

SI Manchester hasn't really focussed on environmental projects over recent years, but we have started to challenge each other to make individual changes to our lifestyles – to reduce, reuse and recycle. But there are also bigger challenges in our area that we could be involved in.

Like many great cities around the world, the city-region of Greater Manchester has a strong industrial and commercial heritage, from the early days of the cotton industry through the development of major engineering, through to the current focus on service industries and the media. But this does all come at a cost – there are not enough homes close to where people work, not enough public transport or other infrastructure for those who don't want to use their cars. As a result, our air quality is extremely poor, impacting our health, and although we have targets for improvement, these are not in accordance with WHO standards

THE ISSUE
"We estimate in Greater Manchester that air pollution is the biggest environmental cause of poor health. Up to 1,200 deaths each year are contributed to by poor air quality"
ELEANOR ROAF, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH FOR AIR QUALITY



THE CONTEXT
A city built on industry and commerce, but
• Not enough homes
• A reliance on the car for travel



THE PLANS
"GREATER Manchester leaders are unveiling a clear single vision supported by three complementary plans that will accelerate the city-region's 2038 zero carbon ambitions, build a greener economy and deliver a long term plan for development"
GREATER MANCHESTER COMBINED AUTHORITY



THE REALITY
• Reduction in greenbelt land
• Building new roads
• Destruction of trees, peat bogs and natural habitats
• Risk of flooding
• A planning process that favours developers



There are plans for the region which cover tackling climate change through initiatives such as Clean Air Zones, and providing a transport strategy that doesn't focus on the car. The objectives set out in these plans - to drive towards a zero carbon ambition and to build a greener economy - are just what we want to hear. But when you get down to the detail - the nitty, gritty plans at a local level – things are very different: local plans to build large housing estates on carbon-capturing peat moss tearing down thousands of trees in the process; to provide

roads for more cars rather than sustainable transport and cycle routes etc, etc. How these plans fit in with the fine objectives set out by the Greater Manchester Leaders is totally beyond us!

But what can we do about it – as Soroptimists or as individuals? We can raise awareness, lobby for alternative, sustainable, solutions, protest, and plant trees (or prevent them being destroyed). There are local groups in our area working on a variety of climate change and environmental issues and we could work with them – to challenge our leaders when their plans don't meet the objectives they have set out and to hold them to account for their decisions.

What we cannot do is sit back and let it all happen around us. We all need to take action now!

Barbara Blaber

(Barbara is happy to discuss in more detail any of the issues raised in this piece)

ACTION IS NEEDED NOW!

Working as a Soroptimist group and with local partners

- Raising awareness
- Proposing/ advocating alternative solutions
- Taking direct action if appropriate
- Planting trees!

Taking individual actions

- Walk and cycle more
- Use public transport
- Switch off that engine!

TAKE ACTION NOW!



An Update on 'ActionAid'

SI MANCHESTER has been supporting **ActionAid** for a number of years. Our annual sponsorship payment currently supports **Masoma**, a teenage girl in Afghanistan. We receive regular updates both from Masoma herself (one was included in the last Programme Action newsletter) and from the charity in general.

The most recent general update focuses on the ongoing coronavirus pandemic which, as we know, has had a disproportionately harsh impact on women and girls.

Here are some of the actions being taken....

- ✚ **In remote areas of Afghanistan** the charity is raising awareness of key behaviours to help stop the spread of the disease, including hand washing, wearing face masks and social distancing
- ✚ **In Nepal** where the charity has deep roots, they began mobilising and training volunteers as well as identifying populations most in need of help, such as pregnant women, nursing mothers and people with disabilities. As well as providing food and Covid-19 prevention kits, they are also working to stop the spread by providing reliable information and advice.
- ✚ **Ghana** has seen over 9000 cases of Covid-19 and the charity has been distributing relief to sponsored children and their families, in the form of packs that contain essentials for the family for a month.



ActionAid has just launched a new campaign **Stand With Women**.

I have no doubt that this is a campaign that every Soroptimist can support!

You can find more information about ActionAid and the work they do at their website and all the usual social media sites

www.actionaid.org.uk

Twitter and Instagram: @ActionAidUK

Facebook: ActionAidUK

Barbara Blaber

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

13th August:

FUTURE CHESS CHAMPIONS -Boys are having their own tournament in the Katagiri Library. All have 'jobs' during the day and the newly donated extra chess sets encouraged them to their own organisation. All the 'games' material we have recently received was done 'on line'. Too risky to go to city. Girls have their own jigsaw puzzle project and keep fit skipping. Ruth is so happy that under these tight living conditions the children are so organised. We are in constant weekly contact with those who were 'caught'



under the lockdown and staying with relatives. Long story but we are supporting them as the 'relatives are all distant connections and not well off - we supplement their care. Again by internet transfer!!.

15th August

NEW HOPE - P2 TRIBAL COMMUNITY CENTRE INDEPENDENCE DAY - We were



not sure how many would come down from the hills as we have heavy rains for 4 days. From the nearest villages women and children came. Staff had the function ready early morning. (We sent sets of flags and Celebration packs to all villages Monday - expecting rains would come). The villages have their own lockdown system too and rarely other than New Hope people go in. A few traders went but were turned back. The Traditional Birth Attendants have clearly explained



to all the situation. - Eliazar - New Hope (The first time in many many years that Sakuntala could not come)

27th August

SERIOUS BUSINESS – But smiles too! Since Lockdown girls have been asking for embroidery sets. (They see one that Ruth made years ago) –Impossible to get for 3 years in Vizag – shop closed no other stockiest. Received a donation and have been 'online' getting great activity materials for all here. The embroidery is 'serious business' – Challenging too. Great concentration, and smiles too. Babi our senior girl is home (Corona closed Nursery College). She is Leader for the girls. (The 'cat' one is for Ruths sister-in-law in UK). Others are already 'spoken for' – You can imagine how happy I am to see the girls able to do this hobby indoors as we have monsoon rains that keeps them out of their second 'hobby' – The Norwegian and Maggie sister garden. (Ramu is running around looking for Thimbles!!! In city)!!!. All safe and well – Trust same for all our friends. Eliazar



28th September

It's my fault. I failed to explain what 'Gran' means. I think some think it means GRAND and so any 'female' qualifies!!! Tea means 'Tea with - toast, egg, biscuit (made in kitchen), milk with a dash of tea. There are more 'staff' there than the office. Mercy - Food Management - School Tuck Shop in Charge all part of the lockdown-no schools open. The Sign took 8 weeks to get put up - Corona - No Carpenter, carpenter, hardware shops closed . Drill bit only available in city. Tea powder - YES available in Kothavalasa. Its just fantastic that this simple idea has turned into a community centre for the girls with the turmoil that Corona has



caused. Some did their embroidery there, drawing seems to go with a cup of tea too. - The building in memory of Jean Tucker - Jean must be so happy to see how it's so well utilised. (Economically interesting - they buy our milk, the biscuits made in kitchen, honey from our hives, eggs from the and Poultry project - and it has no current meter yet!!
* Five senior women take almost all of their meals there. The 'bush' in the photo is dahl growing in the next door Maggie garden.



Act4Africa - Helping girls manage through COVID-19 lockdown

The following is an unedited project report posted on the Global Giving website by Moris Kabunzugwire - Project Leader in Kasese



During this challenging time of COVID-19 lockdown, many women and girls in Uganda have struggled with starvation as they have been unable to earn even a meagre wage.

As a team, our movement and social gatherings have been restricted, nevertheless, we are pleased to tell you that we have been able to pivot our support to provide girls with vital food and hygiene supplies. The girls are so happy with this aid as the lockdown has really squeezed people.

On behalf of the girls and their families, I appreciate this support from the **GlobalGiving** community to our people here, you are indeed outstanding partners to help people in such need.

Furthermore, with schools set to be closed for almost an entire year, we have also turned our support to help vulnerable girls who have no access to learning materials, supplying them with education supplements and radios to tune into government education broadcasts.

Daphine is set to take her O levels later this year. Her guardian says:

"Thank you for the food and learning packages, they are a big relief to help us manage through this lockdown."
We thank you for standing with us and our communities in their hour of need.

You can read more about this project [here](#) or, if you want to keep in touch with Act4Africa's work in general, you can sign up to their newsletter [here](#)

Barbara Blaber

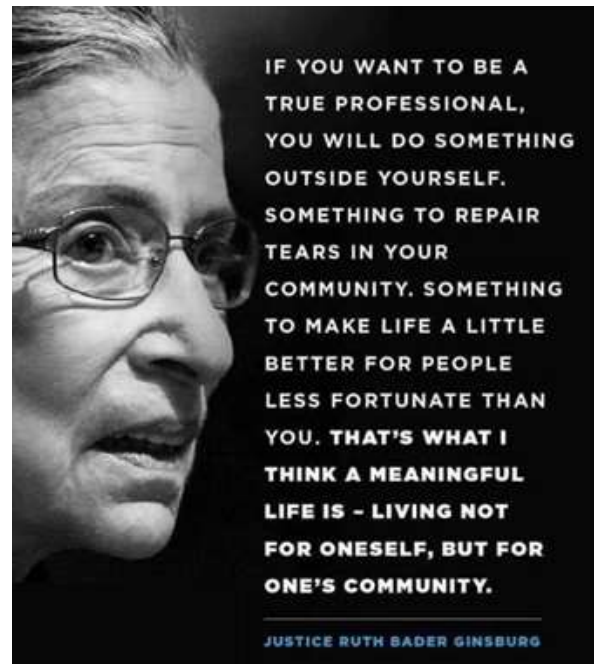
SIGP members create a Suffragist named "Ruth"

Halloween is coming and what better way to celebrate fall than planting a scarecrow in a front yard while sharing the Soroptimist spirit with our community? Co-President Ellen Chapin had the bright idea to take up The Grosse Pointe Historical Society's (GPHS) offer to create a one-of-a-kind scarecrow. The GPHS fundraiser provided a painted burlap bag and two sticks. Ellen, the Artistic Director, gathered her crew: Co-President Marya Malkovich as the living model, and new member Karen Ridgway as "structural engineer" (Karen is a real engineer). Carolyn Barth found the dress for the scarecrow, Couture Coordinator Mary Ellen Burke made a lace mask and purse for "Ruth" and Peggy Hart was an enthusiastic worker. Laura McCourt, that's me, having no discernable skills, was "management." Wish you all could have joined us but social distancing and "too many cooks" to start with kept the group small by necessity.



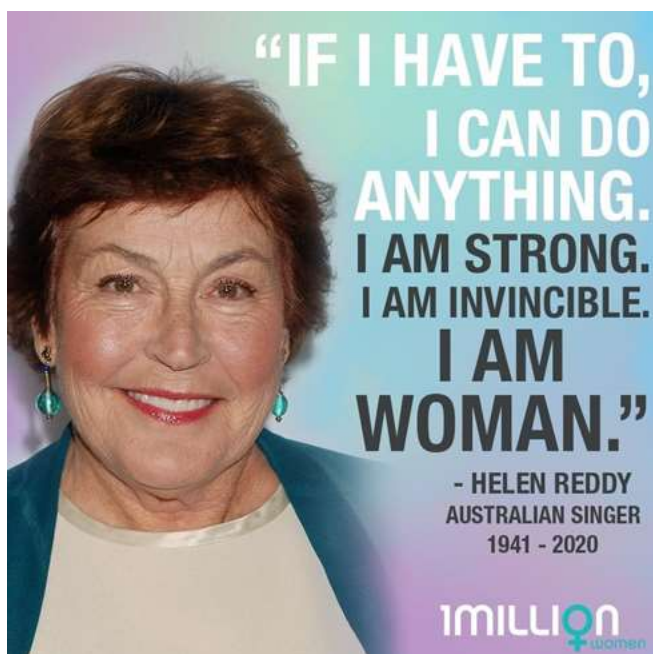
In honor of 100 years since women obtained the vote, she had to be Suffragist. Our scarecrow has been named Ruth, in honor of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who did so much to further the cause of women. "Ruth" will be posing on Co-president Ellen Chapin's lawn at 1003 Harvard, GPP through Halloween. Please stop by and see her.

NOTE: The term "suffragette" originated in Great Britain to mock women fighting for the right to vote. The original term was suffragist.



(You can see more photos of the construction of 'Ruth' in S I Grosse Point's Newsletter!)

Rest In Peace Helen Reddy – Thank You for 'I Am Woman' – Definitely an Anthem for Soroptimists!



I am woman, hear me roar
In numbers too big to ignore
And I know too much to go back an' pretend
'Cause I've heard it all before
And I've been down there on the floor
No one's ever gonna keep me down again

Oh yes, I am wise.... But it's wisdom born of pain
Yes, I've paid the price.... But look how much I gained
If I have to, I can do anything ...I am strong... I am invincible
I am woman

You can bend but never break me
'Cause it only serves to make me
More determined to achieve my final goal
And I come back even stronger
Not a novice any longer
'Cause you've deepened the conviction in my soul

ZOOMING Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 13 th October	11 to 1pm	'The Brilliant Breakfast' during the usual Social
Thursday 15 th October	6:30 for 7pm	AGM
Tuesday 20 th October	7pm	Executive Meeting
Tuesday 3 rd November	6:30 for 7pm	Club Meeting (Speaker Hilaria Asumu tbc)
Tuesday 17 th November	7pm	Executive Meeting
Tuesday 1 st December	6:30 for 7pm	Social Evening (after any essential Club Business)
Wednesday 16 th December	7pm	Christmas Party & £20£20 Raffle Draw

.....& every week

Tuesday morning	11 to 1pm	Social Coffee & Chat
Thursday Afternoon	2 to 4pm	Social Tea & Chat

Copy for the next edition of the Newsletter by **Monday, 30th November**, please.

Christmas Greetings in Lieu of Cards:

Do you wish to send your **Greetings** via the December Newsletter (and make a donation to Club Charities)?

Please send me your **Greetings** (Maximum 20 words) before the November 30th deadline

(Elaine will be happy to receive your **Donations!**)

Sue Underwood sueuhome@sky.com

Looking Forward to the Winter Edition with articles from you

Personal anecdotes always welcome

Tell your 'Stay At Home' story! ... What have you learned about yourself & others?

Tell us about your 'Journey to Manchester'? ... Newer Members please introduce yourselves!

&

Anything else you would like to share!

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

