



Soroptimist International of Manchester

President: **Sue Underwood**

Summer
2022
Issue 81



Dear Club Members,

I'm not sure that I ever expected to declare that a heatwave delayed your Newsletter, but there it is!

At last, Jeff and I are off to the South of France for most of September, our first visit since 2018, so I have decided to combine the Autumn and Winter editions this year.....you now have 3 months to share your articles before the deadline of October 30th! That will also include your 'Christmas Greetings' please, by the November Club meeting. Thank you for your contributions, I hope you enjoy your Summer read.

Sue Underwood



President's Message – President Sue Underwood IV



So here I am, President again, hogging the front page! It's been a varied three months. Sadly we had to bid farewell to Stella Kay and to Mary Kelly, both of whom loved their Soroptimism. Your 'Memories of Stella' are testament to the full life she led. I can't remember Stella without smiling, I enjoyed all of the time spent in her company. I realise that only a few of us remember Mary, but it was the portrait of her as President 1995-1996 that she chose for her funeral. Maybe we can tell you more about her in the future.

I enjoyed S I Southport's 90th Charter Celebration Lunch at their new venue, Hillside Golf Club on a sunny afternoon in May and S I Ashton-Under-Lyne's lunch on another sunny afternoon in June. Jeff is enjoying getting back to his 'Soroptimister' duties!



Apart from our interesting Speakers and other activities reported later, I was invited to the opening of the Dianne Oxberry Rose Garden in the heart of Media City. I wasn't sure whether I was invited as a Soroptimist or as a neighbour, so I donned 'the jacket' and played it by ear. The first person I saw was Debra Curtis,

Past President of S I Liverpool. Debra had chosen the Dianne Oxberry Trust as her President's charity so she was the invited Soroptimist! We made sure we had some Soroptimist photo's as we enjoyed the ice cream specially made to go with the rose (photo above)



Dianne Oxberry TRUST Spread the **WORD**

Can you help us spread the WORD about the symptoms of ovarian cancer?

Weeing more often
Overly bloated feeling
Reduced appetite
Dull ache or pain in the pelvis or tummy

Sharing now could save a life.

Please share this post with at least three friends – it could save their life.

www.dianneoxberrytrust.org/word

The Dianne Oxberry Trust are on a mission to 'Spread the WORD' on ovarian cancer symptoms

I couldn't make the Car Boot Sale or the Fresh Air Walk but I did have an afternoon in a windy park helping

out on the Act4Africa stall at the Sale Lion's Day in Worthington Park!

President Sue

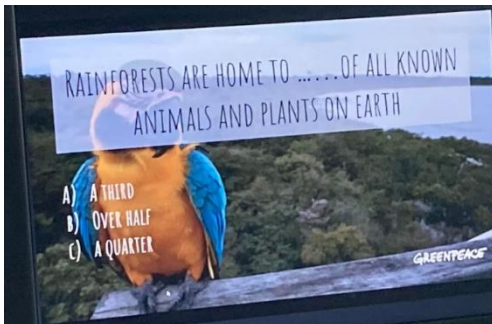


Club Meeting Speakers

May – Gemma from Greenpeace on Sustainable Farming

Gemma, a farmer from the Lake District and a [Greenpeace](#) volunteer, spoke at our May meeting (via Zoom) about the organisation's current aim – to protect the Amazon rainforest from industrial farming.

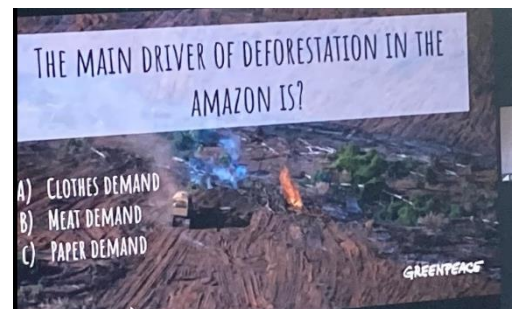
She gave us a very interesting talk on sustainable farming and asked us some searching questions regarding the Rainforests:



The answer is B) Over half of animals and plants have their home in rainforests

B) Meat is the main driver.

Soya is grown for feeding animals In the UK chicken and pork are the main animals to be fed on soya.

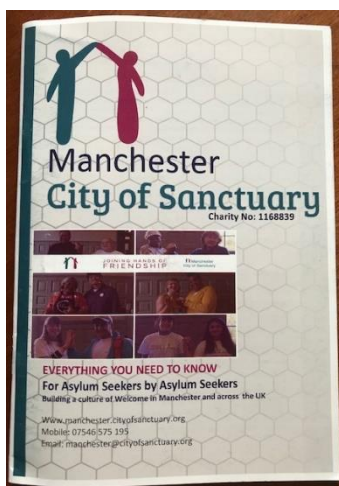


Gemma confirmed the 'Changes We Can Make':

- Reduce ultra-processed food
- Shop according to the season
- Buy locally
- Don't waste food
- Produce your own

June – Liz from Manchester City Of Sanctuary

Liz Hibberd, Manchester City of Sanctuary's Strategic and Partnership Lead, spoke at our June Club meeting.



Manchester City of Sanctuary is part of a network of organisations across the UK. Their mission is to make Manchester a welcoming place for refugees and asylum seekers – most of whom are women. This is achieved in a number of ways – social events, physical activities such as yoga classes, and opportunities to learn new skills. Local organisations are supported to be better able to understand sanctuary seekers. Liz is the only staff member, there are currently 5 Trustees, everyone else is a volunteer. We were pleased to be able to make a donation



'Everything you need to know' For Asylum Seekers By Asylum Seekers. <https://manchester.cityofsanctuary.org/>

Liz left us with a copy of 'Words Of Wisdom' a collection of poems, stories and thoughts by Manchester's Sanctuary Seekers which closes with

*And finally, always remember.....
Life is like a camera
Focus on what's important
Capture the good times
Develop from the negatives
And if things don't work out
Take another shot*

Plastic Free 'Show or Tell' at the July Club Meeting.



Plastic Free July is an international campaign started in Australia. We had a “show or tell” session at the club meeting to explore this topic.

As there are so many different types of plastic, it is difficult to identify, separate and recycle successfully. Even if you sort your waste correctly, other people’s mistakes may contaminate the batch, preventing it being recycled.

Most plastic waste goes to land-fill, dumped on land or at sea. It is often burnt producing greenhouse gases and toxins. Plastic waste from the UK has been found in Turkey – we are exporting our problem !

We’re already aware that plastic harms animals, sea-life and is accumulating in our food-chain.

The only way to be sure that you’re not contributing to this harm, is to not buy items in single-use plastic packaging.

There are some “old school” swaps – toothpaste in metal tubes again and butter in blocks, rather than tubs. I also showed how ‘Wild’ deodorants work – these are sleek containers with gorgeous scented re-fills.

I use the amusingly named “Who Gives a Crap?” paper-wrapped loo roll, as they donate to water charities but Aldi sometimes stock a cheaper version.

Everyone present suggested solutions such as washing powder in cardboard boxes, buying unpackaged fruit and veg, unpackaged meat/fish from deli counter/fish van, milk and yoghurt in returnable glass from milkman, yoghurt in recyclable glass jars, unpackaged bread from bakers, buying food staples (and lots more) from zero waste shops, refilling shampoo bottles at Oxfam and soda-stream soft drinks. We also talked about using reusing prescription bags and glass jars for storage and reusable alternatives to cling-film.

We kept coming back to the subject of plastic recycling. But the point of this campaign is not to buy single use plastic because, despite your best efforts, it might still end up causing harm.



For more easy swaps and information try googling “Plastic Free July” or you're welcome to borrow my book on this.

Elaine Loader



SI Manchester – AgeUK Salford Boat Race

On Saturday 21st May, seven members of SI Manchester (and a friend) took part in the annual Age UK Salford Boat Race on sparkling Salford Quays.

We are 'land-lubbers' so the first year we ran the refreshments stall, the second year the tombola and this year we did both!

The club's involvement is due to our Daisy Cross (Soroptimist) Trust. This is a small charity, whose Trustees must be members of the club. The remit is to help elderly people who are in distress.



So when given the opportunity to volunteer, as well as making a financial donation, it seemed a perfect fit. The organisers are always grateful for our help. Of course we didn't waste the opportunity to showcase Soroptimism!

We took our new 'SumUp' card reader for a spin too, to the relief of the many people who were tempted by the delicious cakes, baked by Age UK staff and volunteers. There was the usual stampede for the famous Carr's Pasties.

The stalls raised over £700 for Age UK Salford and Daisy Cross donated £100 on top.



As you can see from the photos, we were fully branded with banners, bibs and sashes, raising the profile of our club and giving us opportunity to talk about who we are and what we do. Unfortunately President Sue couldn't find her 'Ask me why I'm a Soroptimist' Tshirt and never quite had time to don a sash!

Some of the Soroptimist team insisted on a photo with Emma from AgeUK Salford and a member of the winning boat team from 'Healthwatch Salford'

Our only involvement with the raffle was buying tickets... Rose won the star prize of a Food Hamper & Sue won the second prize of a Chocolate Cake!

(I took that straight home & gave it to neighbours! Sue)



It was a great day enjoyed by the participants and ourselves. And there was cake to take home too!

Elaine Loader

Car Boot Sale

Sunday morning at 6.30 am it must be car boot time!

Rose, Cath, Elaine and John were delighted to make over £200 for our charities.



Soroptimist Manchester Arena Memorial Award Presentation

Following the horrific terrorist attack at the Manchester Arena in 2017, the club wanted to do something in memory of the victims. It was decided to help a local young girl to achieve her dream of a career in the performing arts. We give an award each year to a [Pendleton Sixth Form College](#) student nominated by the college's Performing Arts Team.

This year, President Sue and Rose presented the **Soroptimist Manchester Arena Memorial Award** certificate and cheque to **Yna Montarde** at Pendleton College.

Yna was chosen by the college staff and has achieved a place at the **Urdang Academy** in London to study for a Professional Dance and Musical Theatre Degree.



<https://theurdang.london/> "Urdang Academy is united in the fight against systemic racism and injustice across all parts of the world. We stand for equality and inclusion and believe in doing what we can to create a better life for everyone. We fully support our staff and students and strongly believe that Black Lives Matter"

The pledge of the Urdang Academy is "Say It Loud!"

It was such a pleasure to meet her and we wish her great success.

Rose Marginson & Sue Underwood

Fresh Air in Mental Health Week

Alison, our Programme Chair, arranged a two mile walk for five members – and four dogs.

We started in Monton village then followed the 'loopline' – the old route of the Roe Green railway line – before returning along the Bridgewater Canal to Monton for a pub lunch.

Many thanks to Alison for a most enjoyable morning.

Pat Usher

Cath, Rose, Pat, Carole & Alison & Poppy!



A great thing to do, enjoying the outdoors in Mental Health week.

Rose Marginson

SIGBI Belfast Conference – 'Climate for Change' – 27th to 29th October - <https://sigbi.org/belfast2022/>

Those of you heading for the Belfast Conference may well find that Irish Soroptimists use the 'Soroptimist Pledge'

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 and defend these ideals for a larger fellowship in home, in society, in business and among the peoples of the world

Elaine Reviews Her Soroptimism:

'When' and 'Why' did you first get involved?

It was in 2015. I wanted to make new friends and to make a contribution to society.

How have you seen SI evolve over the last 10 years?

I'm not sure that SIGBI has evolved but SI Manchester certainly has. When I joined the project work wasn't very focussed on women and girls, with the notable exception of The Pankhurst Centre.

Now, we have re-claimed our heritage and purpose and finding links to local organisations who are delivering.

If YOU were to be president next year – what would be on your agenda for the Club?

To get the most of our membership, it's good to get involved in some way. So I would encourage all members to think what they could do, taking into account their financial, health and time commitments.

There are things that you can do that will only take a couple of hours a month. This would reduce the workload for the officers who are spending many hours per month. It would be appreciated.

Financial support for fundraising and every donation, small and large, is appreciated. We welcome your small change!

Supporting social events counts for a lot too, for those who are able.

(.....contributing to the Newsletter as Elaine usually does! Sue)

If YOU are/were to be an officer next year – what would be on your agenda in that role for the Club?

My second term of Treasurer ends February 2024 and this will soon come around. I benefited from helping Barbara when she was Treasurer, so would be ideal if our next Treasurer does the same.

If anyone is interested in this role and would like further information, then please let me know.

Elaine Loader

Your S-O-R-O-P-T-I-M-I-S-T words?

I think Gdansk pretty much have it nailed. And in a second language too!

Elaine Loader



'Virtual Trees'

In Spring 2021 Carina introduced us to [TreeApp](#) to plant trees. It is completely free – you watch an advert and can plant a tree a day. (Carina had 'planted' enough trees by then to offset her entire carbon footprint – so for 2021 she was already carbon negative!)

Some points from the [TreeApp](#) website:

- There are planting projects all over the world – you can choose where you would like to plant your tree
- Trees are planted by local non-governmental organisations which “create local jobs opportunities, reduce air, water and soil pollution and bring communities together”
- More information [here](#)

As at 30th June 2022, our total so far is

1,908 in 14 locations:

TREES PLANTED as at 30 th JUNE 2022 by Sue U, Rose, Sue H, Pat, Barbara, Val & Elaine = 1908				
Conserving and restoring threatened ecosystems in Brazil Erosion Control	99	Providing landslide protection and economic growth in Kenya Erosion Control Biodiverse Habitats	125	
Rehabilitating species-rich lowland forests in Burundi Erosion Control	110	Bringing marine life back to the coast in Madagascar Erosion Control Riparian Restoration	125	
Taking action against desertification in Ethiopia Community Impact Soil Stabilisation	111	Rehabilitating native animals & forests in Madagascar Species Restoration Biodiverse Habitats	217	
Combating Climate Change in Guinea Community Impact Climate Stability	101	Restoring degraded coastal areas in Mozambique Erosion Control Riparian Restoration	114	
Cultivating sources of nutritious fruits in Haiti Community Impact	116	Anchoring mountainous soil to prevent disasters in Nepal Soil Stabilisation Climate Stability	377	
Rebuilding marine wildlife along shorelines in Indonesia Biodiverse Habitats	95	Supporting farmers' reforestation efforts in Peru Erosion Control	107	
Preventing flooding disasters in Indonesia Erosion Control Community Impact	99	Supporting local farmers through mountainous reforestation in Tanzania Biodiverse Habitats Community Impact	112	

Act4Africa – An introduction from Justin Packman – Operations Manager

Firstly, I'd like to offer an introduction to you all. My name is Justin Packman and I'm the newly appointed Operations manager at Act4Africa. I joined the charity in the middle of May and am really excited in joining a charity undertaking such fantastic work with adolescent mothers and the wider community in Mayuge, Uganda. I have recently returned from Uganda on a two week visit to see first-hand the projects we run, and to meet the team based in Uganda face to face.



water source the community had used for years, providing fresh, clean water.

I was also amazed by the level of engagement of the communities I visited. The whole community turned out for a session focusing on how the parents and care-givers support the adolescent mothers in their community; a testament to the engagement, dedication and focus our two community session workers' daisy and Harriot put into the sessions. As mentioned, it was a huge privilege to see first hand and now back in the UK, I'm telling as many stories as I can to engage our UK team.



Patrick discussing the 'Grains For Growth' project with Peter and Justin (blue shirt!)

(& have you ever seen the WHO Grain Silos in the same room as our SIGBI mugs?!?)

Firstly, I was privileged to be part of sessions being held in 7 communities across Mayuge district ranging from health & wellbeing, mental health and gender based violence sessions.

The team and I also managed to visit Buwolya where Act4Africa raised funds to construct a community water pump, replacing the stagnant



It's a pleasure to join such a fantastic charity, and if you have any questions or would like to know more about any of the projects Act4Africa undertake, please do get in touch.

Thanks, Justin.

Justin.packman@act4africa.org



June Region Programme Action Meeting

As a new member of SI Manchester I was delighted to have the opportunity to find out about the **Act4Africa** charity which is supported through Programme Action.

Despite the speaker having to cancel, and problems with the technology, Sue and Barbara were able to give an overview of the organisation's valuable work which I found very informative and interesting.

Programmes are designed to reduce grassroots poverty through

HEAL - Health, Education, Agriculture and Livelihood

projects in Uganda. Work in the communities is constantly evolving due to changing priorities locally e.g. Grains for Growth and the need for the recently provided huge tents.

In addition Elaine and Sophie set up a stall selling lots of goodies from our partner charities, Tea bags from **New Hope*** in India, crafts from **Act4Africa** and bags sewn by Jesmin. Proceeds to the appropriate charity.

Well done to Manchester Soroptimists for raising awareness of this important charity. I found it all most enlightening.

Carole Swarbrick



*New Hope Organic Tea Bags

This 'trial' towards income generation is undertaken by the seniors at New Hope. We had only received four boxes of the Tea Bags so another 'senior' decided to break down the boxes into 'Taster' packs containing one of each of the six flavoured tea bags to sell at £1.

'Blue Peter' skills were resurrected, cutting the box up and transferring the relevant information panels onto an A4 sheet to be formed into an envelope! Not only did we sell all 20 Tasters, but Elaine had an enquiry about buying an empty box!

We have ordered more boxes!

Sue Underwood

June Regional Council Meeting

SI Manchester was very well represented at the RCM with 6 members in attendance.

Regional President Dorcas welcomed everybody to the meeting hoping that this would be the last meeting without offering Zoom facility for those members unable to attend in person. She, also, congratulated members who had received awards either in the Queen's honours list or from within Soroptimism. She encouraged us to keep looking at our Region website in order to keep up to date with information on members and dates of events.

Members were encouraged to consider putting their names forward for one of the regional job vacancies: Vice President, Treasurer, Membership and Programme Action minutes secretary. We are invited to support the International President's Appeal "Opening doors to a bright future". Special badges costing £25 have been commissioned to raise funds - order forms will be circulated to clubs.

The Federation Councillor reported that discussions were needed to clarify the roll of the councillors. It is intended that the councillors provide a link between the membership and the federation board. However, the councillors do not feel as if the board is consulting them. They are especially worried about the lack of support for clubs perceived as failing. There is worry that up to 50% of clubs in the South Lancashire region are under pressure and believe that it is difficult to justify working to attract new members.

Members are encouraged to complete the media survey so accurate details of members are recorded. These would help in the planning of hybrid meetings. Also, good technology is needed to facilitate these meetings. Improved media presence would showcase our work and advertise to potential new members. Clubs working on projects together could make a bigger impact.

Concern was expressed that Number 63 was not up to the usual standards of facilities and welcome. Members were encouraged to report where there were failings.

The RCM finished on a very positive note. President Dorcas was congratulated on a very successful conference in Liverpool. She and her team were thanked for all their hard work in promoting a very interesting programme about how women are trafficked and abused and in inviting excellent speakers. Members were encouraged to consider attending the conference which is being planned for 2024 for which details will be available in due course.

Val Jenkins

Junior Royal Northern College of Music Prizegiving

What a privilege it was to represent President Sue at the Prizegiving of the Royal Northern College of Music Junior School. The Concert showcased ten very accomplished performances on trumpet, horn, violin, flute, clarinet, piano and voice and the works as varied as Chopin, Samuel Barber, Gabriel Faure and Fritz Kreisler, played and sung by the amazing young people between 11 and 16 years old.

The following prize giving always takes the form of Afternoon Tea at which you get to meet the recipients and chat with them. David and I were seated with two singers, a singer/composer, a classical trumpeter, jazz trumpeter, horn player, pianist and a modern composer. Though starting quietly, once they got to know us and each other, the organisation of lessons is such that they meet a limited number of other students, the conversation was a great deal of fun for us all, covering Whit Friday Brass competitions, aims and aspirations, Opera, Jazz, Musical Theatre, Glastonbury, and Sport.

It was breath taking to be in their company!

On behalf of you all, I presented The **Helen Latto Soroptimist Prize for Singing**, to **Soprano Alex Wilkinson**, who is thinking she would like to stay in the classical field for now.

I also presented **The Ellis Prize** for singing to **Josie McEvey**.

They were all very excited to be performing in their 'end of term' concert in which some would be working with others and invited us to come.

It never ceases to amaze me what talented children and young people we have in our area and the fact that some travel large distances to be taught by the wonderful staff at RNCMone girl we met travels from London with her Mum, every Friday and goes back on Sunday just to be there! I made careful note of their names as I look forward to seeing their continued success and 'their names in lights' in years to come.

Susan Hollick



Karen Humphries MBE, Head of the Junior RNCM, passed on this email from Alexandra

Dear Mrs Hollick

I hope you're happy and well!

I would like to email and say thank you once again for awarding me the Helen Latto Soroptimist Prize for Singing.

The Junior Royal Northern had given me so many amazing opportunities and helped me develop skills that I know will be transferable throughout my life - which is always a bonus!

I have created so many memories and learnt so much which I know will last in my heart forever, and being very kindly awarded the Helen Latto Prize truly made my heart sing.

Thank you once again. I wish you all the best.

Kind regards,

Alexandra Helen Wilkinson

Helen Latto was President of S I Manchester in 1980-81. She was an Aberdonian, trained as a pharmacist in Scotland, then moved south and opened her own pharmacy in Moss Side. Helen was introduced to Soroptimism by Ivy Roberts, lecturer in pharmacy at the University of Manchester and Club President in 1941.

During Helen's Presidency she organised a charity event at a music school in Whalley Range which had a link to the Royal Northern College of Music. The singing of the children during this event enhanced Helen's love of music and led to her involvement with the JRNCM when it was formed some years later. On her death she left a bequest to the school for a prize for singing.

Helen's legacy was donated to the **Junior Royal Northern College of Music** for investment, the interest to be used annually to award a prize for singing.

Our President is invited to attend the prize-giving each year.

.....& If Helen is watching from her cloud then I'm sure she'll be delighted that Alex shares her name!

Suffragette Sundays Are Back At The Pankhurst!



I was delighted to be back volunteering at the Pankhurst on a Suffragette Sunday with a Garden Party in celebration of Emmeline Pankhurst's birthday. We had 'Suffragette Selfies', 'Feminist Fizz' (Elderflower actually!), cupcakes, graffiti on the sunniest Sunday of the year!

Good to see Susan back behind a bar!

I had a nice chat with the High Sheriff Lorraine Worsley-Carter braving the heatwave in suffragette green velvet' when introduced to her as one of the longest serving Volunteers.

It was wonderful to see Malgorzata, looking a lot better,

come to visit too. It gave me chance to tell the other Volunteers about her being one of the amazing group of ladies who fought tirelessly in the nineteen seventies and eighties to save the centre being bulldozed by the Hospital by holding rallies, carrying placards, making lots of noise and 'squatting' the centre 24hours a day until was finally saved by Preservation Order. Truly in Suffragette fashion!

Susan Hollick



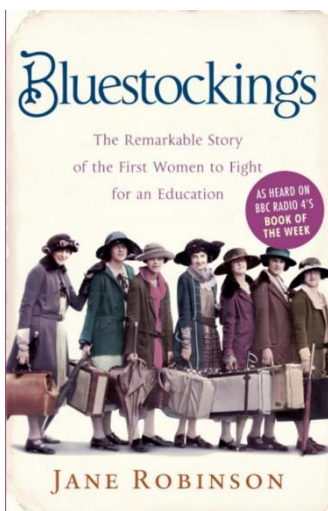
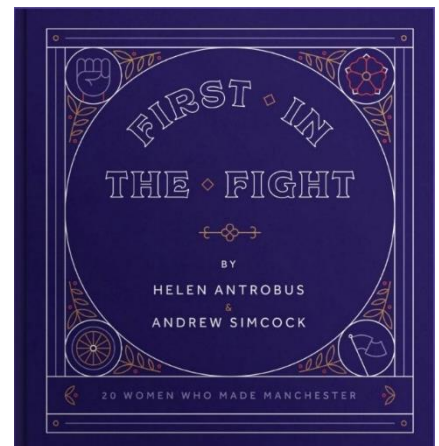
In July 2019 several of us helped celebrate Emmeline's Birthdaywith lots of cake! (Susan – Rose – Sue U – Barbara – Malgorzata)



'Book Club': The Pankhurst Centre Recommends.....

20 Manchester women we should know about.....

Emmeline Pankhurst stands proudly in St Peter's Square, but she stands for so many more. In **First In The Fight** by Helen Antrobus and Andrew Simcock, get a glimpse into the lives of the twenty women who all made Manchester first in the fight for freedom, and feminism.



& We've all got a lot to thank them for.....

In 1869, when five women enrolled at university for the first time in British history, the average female brain was thought to be 150 grams lighter than a man's. Doctors warned that if women studied too hard their wombs would wither and die... 🙄

Jane Robinson's **Bluestockings** is the incredible story of the fight for female education in Britain.

Both Titles are available in the Pankhurst Centre Bookshop

GM4Women2028

@GM4Women2028 held their first in-person event (since February 2020 the photo shows Malgorzata representing us) in collaboration with 'GMCA Women & Girls Panel' on Saturday 2nd July. It was billed as "the place to be if you want to influence GM priorities and have conversations about how to make Greater Manchester a better place for women and girls" IPP Rose attended and gave this report...



The event on Saturday was really enjoyable. I met some interesting women and the discussions were really worthwhile. It was a good networking experience.

Helen Pankhurst, amongst many others, welcomed us all. (Helen Pankhurst – Gail Heath – Claire-Marie Boggiano)



There were different breakout sessions.

I chose the 'Poverty and Homelessness' in the morning led by Lauren from Invisible (Manchester)

Invisible (Manchester) is a social enterprise that trains people who have experienced homelessness to become tour guides in Manchester. The tours are all designed by the guides themselves. 100% of the profit goes towards supporting those affected by homelessness in Manchester.

She had 3 topics that we discussed all suggested by the women who have been homeless.

1. Period Poverty - cost, stigma, embarrassment, lack of support network. As well as homeless people it affects those in the prison services, those with mental health problems, refugees, some religions, refugees and asylum seekers, men who have periods. Sanitary products should be visibly available.
2. Socks and shoes - There is a project '48 hours in your shoes in Schools' – Pupils are asked to wear the same socks and shoes for 48 hours and then share their feedback!
3. Make-up - It can make someone feel a lot better. It helps self-esteem in some cases therefore not a luxury.

The second session I went to was called 'Urban Spaces'. It was led by Eve Holts.

There were 2 speakers - Rose who is part of a group called 'Run the World based' women in Monton, Salford. It's an all women running group which allows women to run in safety as part of a group. It's particularly important in winter.



The other was Susannah who spoke about Make Space for girls - an organisation that campaigns for facilities and public spaces for teenage girls. Most parks cater for boys with skate parks that often if girls are interested in skating girls they don't feel comfortable to be there. Again other facilities encourage boys only. They want the design of parks to change to give more facilities for teenage girls and allow them to feel safer. Again an interesting discussion followed. It certainly made a difference all meeting together as the monthly meetings are on zoom.

Rose Marginson

.....& there was cake!



Five countries in one week!!

As most of you know by now, I love the freedom and exhilaration of motorcycling. I have only been riding for 6 years but have already clocked up about 50,000 miles. Kevin and I love to holiday on our bikes, often over to the continent but as I am on a sabbatical over the summer I thought I would take myself off on a solo trip over to the island of Ireland to visit friends and take in the beautiful scenery.

I set off from Manchester and headed north to Stranraer in Scotland. The weather was dry and warm enough for my summer suit, all my luggage was packed into two small panniers but as the weather was forecast to be warm I had simply a couple of summer dresses and some T-shirts and skirts. We rarely ride on the motorway, preferring the smaller more scenic routes but as I never miss an opportunity to stop at the farm shop at the Tebay motorway services on the M6 I stopped and enjoyed some



creamy porridge with homemade rhubarb and ginger compote.

The ferry over to Belfast was quick and uneventful and I was soon disembarking and arrived at my friends in plenty of time for dinner and a nice glass of wine. The next couple of days were filled with catching up with friends and family and attending an Irish Christening, always good fun! My friend and I then headed down to Ardglass, near the town of Newcastle



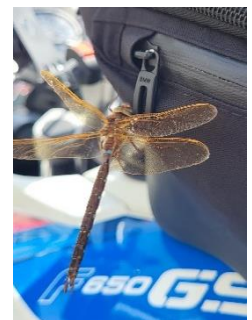
on the coast, to stay in a caravan on the beach for a night. This was close to the Mourne mountains and a walk along the beach gave spectacular views. The following day I was up early to head further on down the coast riding between the mountains on my right and the sea on my left and got the Carlingford ferry to Southern Ireland.



I then rode across country to Newcastle, Oldcastle in County Meath (from one Newcastle to another!) and was surprised when I arrived at my friends, that I had picked up a hitchhiker, a beautiful



dragonfly was hanging on to my tank bag. Southern Ireland was filled with pints of Guinness, agricultural shows, swimming in the local lake on the hottest day of the year (the lake looked like something out of a Benidorm beach in August!) and spending time in small pubs with Irish musicians that looked like they had just been sent down from central casting!! After a few days of relaxation I headed back from Dublin to Holyhead where Kev met me half way from Holyhead and we had a lovely dinner at the Bod Erw pub/restaurant



in St Asaph.

As we always say, Soroptimists are everywhere and low and behold, as I was sat eating dinner, I noticed a lady at the bar that I had sat next to at the recent Climate Change conference in Llandudno. Pearl was pleased to see me and explained that their club was there for their monthly social so before I left, I popped my head in and said hi, a very friendly bunch!



After riding through England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Southern Ireland and Wales my bike needed a good wash when I got home but it is now back to its gleaming self and looking forward to the next adventure 😊

Sophie Kennedy

Memories of Stella Kay, A True Soroptimist.
(14th January 1928 – 5th June 2022)
President 2014-2015

To begin with the member who has known her for over forty years:

We shared a birthday, Stella was one year younger.
I joined S I Manchester in 1980, Stella followed me in 1981.
We worked together in all things Soroptimism.

I remember Stella as a very caring person who loved to travel.

Stella was totally committed to whatever she undertook.

Stella was fiercely independent to the very end.

Kathleen Beavis



Stella in her own words

You may have heard Stella talk about 'The Boys'. I remembered that Stella had written an article about them so I dived into my Newsletter archive and was delighted to find this!

It was in the Winter 2004 edition – it made me laugh now, just as it did then..... it is so 'Stella'!

END-OF-SEASON BLUES

"Now you know us" they said, patronisingly, "we're easily pleased and don't fuss about things over which we have no control." We were, all three of us, at the airport in mid-September on our way to the Adriatic coast of Italy and I had merely remarked that the five-day weather forecast for Venice was decidedly 'iffy'.

My two friends, Chas and Frank, both widowers, early and known as "the Boys" are sterling characters. Though any shared interests, we have fallen into the habit of taking



30's vintage we have hardly a holiday together

each year and the arrangement has worked quite well. Chas likes to relax, taking a morning constitutional before settling down around 11am with 'The Times' and a coffee and cognac, whilst Frank is a Bridge fiend and 'doer' who takes photos and likes the beach.

Well, for once, the Bologna in a downpour, down and east to our impression of Italy was spirits throughout the



weather forecast was correct and we arrived at which continued with increasing ferocity all the way seaside destination near Pesaro. 'The Boys' first unfortunate but they kept stiff upper lips and good journey.

For the next two days we were marooned in the hotel whilst non-stop thunderstorms and torrential rain of viridian noise and fury blasted their way down the whole of the Adriatic coast, round the heel of Italy, surprising Sicily and Rome before flooding Naples, after which they whimpered to a very damp finish.

Finally, released from the claustrophobic confines of the hotel which, though very comfortable, wasn't built for guests staying indoors during the day, we were able to get to know our surroundings. We were all smitten with the beauty of the place and didn't give much thought at first to a smattering of closed hotels, shops and bars, nor to the fact that the bagni owners were all cleaning their deck chairs and awnings with some intensity. Once the truth dawned on me, I decided to say nothing at all.

The next week was bliss with perfect weather but each day more bars, hotels and shops closed down. 'The Boys' seems content with their various pursuits but Chas mentioned more than once that everyday there was less choice of bars for lunch-time snacks and that he was down to only two where he could be certain of 'The Times'.

Taking the coward's way out, I escaped to Urbino for a day away where the season was still in full swing. On my return there were more stories from my friends of closures, inability to buy things and definitely petulant overtones in reminding me of the limited permutations to be had from sandwich fillings of mozzarella, prosciutto and tomato. Catching the local bus to Pesaro the next morning, I congratulated myself on once again escaping what was fast becoming a litany of complaints from 'the Boys'. Needless to say, I was paid back in full for such smugness when, after arriving in the ominously quiet town centre, I found the Tourist Office shuttered and very obviously closed. One of the passing locals informed me quietly (as though speaking to an invalid) that, as this was the town's patron saint's day, most places were naturally closed. Only Rossini's house was open as well as a few bars – their owners impatiently waiting for 1pm when they, too, could close.



During dinner that night, I felt no qualms of conscience in casually remarking that on my way back I had noted that the bar of 'him' round the corner (a genial soul named Claudio) was now closed for the season. The effect was immediate shocked silence, then ... "I was in there this morning and HE NEVER SAID..." from Chas on a rising note of dismay and betrayal, followed by "You could be mistaken" from Frank. (OK, so blame me!)

It was then that the mini-tornado struck our part of the coast, doing considerable damage, lasting all night and the next day. Lunch that day was a bit hit and miss and we had to brave the storm to reach the least favoured but last remaining open bar, opposite the hotel. The frustration of my companions in deciding what to order from the inevitable cheese, ham and tomato sandwich list was eased when Chas hit on the idea of asking for hamburgers. The ensuing scene after our waiter promptly announced that "amburgers ees feenis" was worthy of the best Fawlty Towers and tempers only eased once persuaded that tomato sandwiches with chips and beer was acceptable – and different!

When climbing onto our coach to the airport the next morning, one of the just-arrived guests actually asked if we could recommend any decent restaurants in the resort. "You must be joking" didn't seem an adequate reply in all the circumstances.

I don't know where we're going next year!

Stella Kay



More travel tales:

[Skiathos 2015 – It's A Small World](#)

Seven years ago some when English friends of ours honeymooned in Skiathos, Gus and I invited them, as a wedding gift, to dine with us at the Skiathos Princess Hotel.

Across the lovely dining room a large table of guests were holidaying with SAGA and I suddenly saw Stella (complete with jaunty Panama hat) in the midst of an extremely jolly crowd. We invited her to join us in a toast to our friends. After dinner she came with us to a nearby taverna and we introduced her to Ouzo, a taste she certainly acquired. The taverna's owner (a personal friend of ours) invited her for a drink "on the house" each evening of the holiday duration. He so admired a lady in her late eighties holidaying on her own with such an outgoing and confident disposition, a true Soroptimist. He later confirmed to us that she had accepted his hospitality each evening!

We suggested an Island tour with us the next day, she couldn't as she was going on a sailing day followed by a visit to the two adjacent Sporades Islands, eventually in her busy schedule a free day was identified.

We toured the island and took her, amongst many places, to the beautiful Evangelistria monastery and museum. The monastery as well as religious ceremonies and baptisms every Sunday, the monks also harvest the vines and produce wines. The Greek National flag with its blue and white stripes and cross was designed and first flown there after the Greek war of Independence. She was absolutely fascinated, lit several candles and moved by the peace and tranquility of the surroundings.

We then journeyed to our villa for lunch, she was enthralled by the beauty and views of the uncommercialized hinterland of the Island.

A delightful memory of an exceptional lady.

Rosemary Steven



& again:

It's a Small World



In May 2018 Stella and I rented a holiday let on Guernsey. We picked up my school friend, Sandie, in Portsmouth and took the car ferry from Poole. Sandie went to stay with another school friend, Margaret, who has lived there since her marriage to John in the 1970's.

We had some lovely days out and meals out, and in such genial company the conversations were many and wide ranging. Sandie was chatting to Stella one day about her career and was interested to hear about her time working in the DHSS. Sandie's brother, David, had worked for the DHSS many decades ago and met his wife, Linda, there. It turned out that not only did they work in the same office but that Stella had been their boss!

David and Linda now live in Formby, and a few months after the holiday, Stella and I were invited to their home for lunch. It was quite the reunion!

The photo shows Stella having a lunch of Guernsey lobster

Val Moss

How Stella became President

I sat with Stella at a Dinner not long after I transferred from SI Wilmslow and asked her if she had ever been President. The way she said "no" so suddenly surprised me and led me to ask why. She replied "In all my years of membership no one has ever asked me". I sensed disappointment.

When I was asked if I would consider being President I asked Stella if she would consider coming in after me, so we could share the experience. I could see that she was thrilled and she set about planning the whole four years!

I became President in strange circumstances, but Stella was not deterred. She just adjusted the plans. She supported me constantly and I got to know her grit and courage so when she became President, I knew she would be magnificent, and she was.

We shared many trips to events at other clubs in my little two-seater (she just loved the bum-warmer!) and a number of worried moments on the region's motorways getting there on time through the traffic jams.

She was tiny in stature but a huge personality and I will miss her.

Susan Hollick



*Stella behind 35 Backpacks October 2014
Thanks to Molly Byrne Robinson for remembering this photo!*



2014 Junior Royal Northern College Prize Giving

I had been so wrapped up in conversation with my tea table neighbours that I hadn't really looked at the prize envelopes given to me and it was only once the distribution had started that I realised that the **Helen Latto** prize was destined for one of my table companions, a most attractive, dark girl named **Myrna Tennant**.

Myrna is 19 years old, a soprano, who was born in Holland, her mother being Dutch. Her father is from North East England and the family only moved to the UK in 2003. Myrna now claims Dumfries as home which I think is a happy coincidence as Helen Latto herself was a lady very proud to be Scottish. Myrna has attended JRNCM since 2010 but this is her gap year before she takes up a hard-earned place to continue her studies at the Royal

Conservatoire of Scotland in September 2014. Though she has many interests, Myrna says that singing is a passion for her and her hugely impressive exam results confirm this. Singing in JRNCM concerts, as well as regularly performing in local concerts, festivals and charitable events has won her a host of impressive prizes each year from 2009 to 2014. Now, having scooped yet another prize, members were able to judge her re-action as her letter of thanks was circulated at a recent Business Meeting. To quote a short passage from it, "the support and care of my tutors have been second to none and to have my passion and dedication, both for singing and for the JRNCM itself acknowledged in this way, means so very much to me".

I suggest we all remember her name and watch out for this very talented young woman.

President Stella 2014-2015

Members and friends enjoyed a celebration lunch for...

Stella's 90th birthday



Stella was born in the Victoria Park area of Manchester. She was 11 years old when war broke out and went to live in the Vale Royal area of Cheshire where she went to grammar school in Winsford.

After the war the family returned to Manchester. Stella didn't have the chance of further education and took a temporary job with the Ministry of Health. This led to a career in the civil service working in many different departments, eventually becoming Principal Manager for the DHSS and running an office of over a hundred staff.

After retirement Stella gave over 20 years' service as a National Trust volunteer at Dunham Massey. She is widely read about the history of our nation and very knowledgeable about the arts, especially opera.

Stella became a Soroptimist in 1981 and has always taken an active part in club projects. She became President in 2014 and took on the role with great enthusiasm.

I have only known Stella for 20 years – I wish I had known her sooner.

Val Moss

More Memories of Stella....

Thank you for this opportunity to remember Stella.

Despite counting her as a good friend and fellow Soroptimist, I realise that I knew very little about her as a person; even the funeral service revealed little about her.

As a good Soroptimist she was a regular attender and supporter of Club activities, never pushing herself but calmly getting on with what needed to be done.

My strongest memory is of the meeting when a self-selected group of us met, at Stella's home, to formulate the Club response to the proposed UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

We had our different experiences and perspectives but there was a remarkable and very positive unanimity about our reaction to the UN proposal, which we all welcomed. Stella I remember played a very full and practical part in that discussion, quietly but firm and positive. Thinking about it I still can't remember what her job was !

She will be sadly missed

Maureen Barber (nee Patch)

Stella was one of the first people to take me under her wing when first joined Manchester SI. She was always there to explain things I didn't understand at meetings & for that reason I always tried to sit next to her at meetings.

Judith Rolfe



One of my favourite photos of Stella, it was taken at Fiona's Pancake party in 2019 😊

..... that turned out to be her last year of socials

..... good to see her so relaxed, smiling as usual

Barbara Blaber

Visit to St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

Susan, Rebekah, Barbara, Molly, President Stella, Yvonne, Elaine, Shena & Charlotte from SARC

Such a presence and a such a personality. Steely determination with a twinkle in her eyes.

She always made me and my mother feel so welcome.

Elaine Loader

I met Stella around my first year (1993) at Soroptimists. Barry and I met Stella in the Summer time (probably at Yvonne's house for the Garden Party)

We got to know her well and she had a very bad back. She went to London to have help and found Barry's cousin at the first day. Richard and she became very friendly.

I know Stella had a very high job but I knew more about her after she had retired.

She had some wonderful holidays .

Stella was very proud of being a Soroptimist and had very strong ideas!

She became President around when she was 85 and did it an excellent job.

I have seen Stella quite a lot over the last few years and I am thankful that she had the ladies to look after Stella, especially Agnes.

Stella knew her time to go....we met as strong ladies at Sorops

Sorry, I was so fond of Stella, but it is hard to put it into words now.

Shena Cuttle



I met Stella in 2000 when I joined S I Manchester and always found her warm and friendly.

I grew to know her more closely when she started to join Val, Bill and myself on many visits to the cinema to see filmed versions of well-known ballets and operas. Of course, Stella had already seen live versions of these operas and ballets at The Metropolitan Opera in New York, La Scala Milan and Covent Garden, etc.

She was so well travelled and so knowledgeable, it was always such a pleasure to discuss these performances with her; I learned a lot. I will miss her.

Maureen Heywood



Stella was my friend.

She was President the year I joined the Manchester Club and I was amazed by her energy and drive in spite of being in her 80's.

This is my favourite photo of her, taken at her 90th Birthday Lunch.

I met her through being a member and I will always be grateful for that. She has had a difficult few years during her illnesses and slowly deteriorated but in spite of being in pain would give a smile and was interested about news from the club and also wanted to know about my family particularly my granddaughter.

I will miss her.

Rose Marginson

During 2020 Stella contributed to the Summer 2020 Newsletter...

My Journey to Manchester

I was born in Manchester and I am a true Mancunian.

I moved away during the war for 6 years to Lord Delamias Estate at Vale Royal in the village of Whitegate in Cheshire. I returned to Manchester when the war ended.

I joined Civil Service and I have lived here ever since.

Perhaps not an exciting, adventurous life but certainly a full and interesting one.

Stella Kay

Stella was also enjoying our Zoom socials thanks to her carer Agnes, but that is another story.....



A carer? Who wants a Carer? Well, perhaps no one would like to admit to wanting a carer but it can happen that anyone may, at some time, desperately need a Carer. Someone to help them through the normal ordinary functions of everyday life when it happens. One maybe elderly or perhaps not so much elderly as unfortunate. I, personally have come to a point at which I desperately needed a Carer. Having one can be most interesting experience. How are we going to get on together? What age should she be? What exactly would I want her to do for me? How are we going to get on together living in the same house and spending a great deal of time together? How do we select the ideal person? Frankly, I don't know but I think that I have been very lucky in meeting the carer selected for me by the company I contacted. It's not totally a

matter of chance but there's a certain amount of luck in who is available for selection as a Carer at the time required.

So we are enjoying this ideal life together? I can't speak for my carer but for myself, the answer would be yes. No we don't always agree on everything but we agree to differ and have so far not come to blows.

Stella Kay

Carer Agnes says.....In my 20 years' experience in England as a Carer, I've managed just a few clients slightly more difficult than Stella. In my opinion, a carer should respect the dignity of the client and help her retain her independence in her own home as much as possible.

Agnes, our heartfelt thanks for all the care and friendship you gave to Stella

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 2 nd August	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting – Speaker from MASH
Thursday 11 th August	7pm	Programme Action – ‘People & Prosperity’ & ‘Planet’
Tuesday 16 th August	7pm	Executive Meeting at Rosemary’s home
Tuesday 6 th September	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting
Saturday 10 th September	10 for 10.30am	Region Programme Action & Council Meeting.
Saturday 10th September	!*!*!*!*!*!*!	Charity Lunch & Race Day – Ticket Sales Close!
Tuesday 20 or 27 th September	7pm	Executive Meeting – date to be confirmed
Tuesday 4 th October	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting
Sunday 16 th October	12:30 – 5pm	Charity Lunch & Race Day
Tuesday 18 th October	7pm	Executive Meeting
October 27 th to 29 th	Belfast	SIGBI Conference – Climate for Change
Tuesday 1 st November	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting
Tuesday 15 th November	7pm	Executive Meeting

Further Social events are being planned – See <https://sigbi.org/manchester/diary-and-events/> - Watch for emails!

Copy for the Autumn-Winter edition of the Newsletter by **Sunday 30th October**, please.

Christmas Greetings in Lieu of Cards:

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

Please send me your **Greetings** before the **deadline or at the November Club meeting**

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

Tell your story! ... Living with the Pandemic ... Your life in 2022 v 2019

Share your **S-O-R-O-P-T-I-M-I-S-T** words

Review your Soroptimism ... Newer Members please introduce yourselves!

Anything else you would like to share? Personal anecdotes always welcome

Sue Underwood sueuhome@sky.com

Last Words from Women, a Man, a Dog, a Bear & a Tree, who could/should have been Soroptimists!

