



Soroptimist International of Manchester

President: **Sue Underwood**

Spring  
2023  
Issue 83



Dear Club Members,

I started compiling this at the end of March on my return from a week in Cornwall and I soon realised what a busy first quarter of 2023 we had had! My thanks to those of you who have written articles, but you will see that for too many events I have relied on photographs and your brief comments on social media..... I hope that it is still a good read!

Now, my challenge to you all is that you should contribute at least one article each for the Summer edition, either emailed or hand written. If you need help with photos then please ask. It is your Newsletter!

**Sue Underwood**



### President's Message – President Sue Underwood (IV to V)



So, here I am again, I'll be hogging the front page for another year!

Life as your President has been busy and varied so far this year. It was my pleasure to attend the Charter Lunches of SI Leigh & District, SI Liverpool and SI Southport (Jeff was determined to attend this one!) Always a very pleasant way to spend a Sunday lunchtime, catching up with friends and coming home with a delightful floral table decoration, a real President's treat.

Our own 97<sup>th</sup> Charter Lunch was a great success! A little less formal, it was enjoyed by all as you will see in the photographs later. (There are many more photos available!) Lorraine Worsley-Carter was the ideal Guest Speaker and I hope that we will hear more from her in the future. Did you notice that, following a suggestion from Alison, we had used just Gypsophilia for simple, elegant table decorations? In the absence of thunderbolts, we believe that Yvonne approved! Attending Presidents went home with a beautiful yellow & blue bouquet. I'm now looking forward to hosting our 98<sup>th</sup> Charter celebration.

SI Widnes held a Presidents' Party to celebrate the year of their two Presidents with the theme of 'Soroptimist Travels'. We were encouraged to take any memorabilia from our travels and dress accordingly. It was hard to choose between conferences and conventions held in Barbados, Malta, Istanbul or Kuala Lumpur so I settled on my time in South Africa and meeting the Johannesburg Club. Liz Aniteye accompanied me honouring her ties to her native SI Accra.... Liz was resplendent in Ghanaian dress and I did my best in my kaftan from 'Presidential' frequented by Nelson Mandela. Sadly we didn't think about photographs.

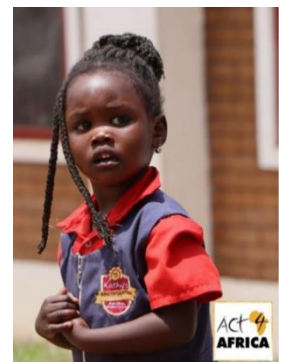
We had talked about entering a team for Act4Africa's 'Curry & Quiz' night but in the end it was just me so I joined the Trustees team – I have to admit that we made better work of the Curry than the Quiz, my face doing a good impression of this little girl from Kathy's Kindergarten! I was called on to toss the coin for the 'Heads or Tails' version of 'last man standing', no pressure seeing as it didn't matter whether I caught it or not!

Unfortunately I couldn't attend our special visit to the Pankhurst Centre so instead I

booked for their event the evening before – 'The Great Miss Lydia Becker, Suffragist, Scientist & Trailblazer' a talk by the author of the book, Joanna M Williams. How did we not know about this amazing woman?!? I now have the book so she's likely to be the subject of my next article!

So, here is to another Soroptimist year, looking forward to our social and fundraising events, catching up with old friends, meeting new friends, enjoying being a Soroptimist!

**President Sue**



## Remember Our December 'Hug-in-a-Mug Packing?

We packed over 100 mugs with sachets of tea, coffee, hot chocolate, biscuit & chocolate. Each mug, wrapped in biodegradable film, to be delivered to the Women's Aid Refuges.



One of the mugs will be given to any woman entering a Manchester Refuge escaping domestic violence

..... A Hug & a Mug of her own

#littlethingsmakeadifference



I delivered the Hug in a Mug's this morning (14<sup>th</sup> December 2022) They were thrilled!

Thank you so much ladies. They say it really makes a difference to a new lady coming into a Refuge to have something to call her own.

**Susan Hollick**

## & Remember Our Collections and Donations for Emmeline's Pantry?



Rose, Liz & Val all set to help at Emmeline's Pantry on 22<sup>nd</sup> December

Best bit is recognising the PJ's and cakes from our members and who received them and appreciated them!

It was a pleasurable and humbling experience, we thoroughly enjoyed being part of a team that brightened peoples day/lives!

Happy to repeat ..... not on a wet cold day!!

**Liz Aniteye**

I happened to be in M&S in Walkden early yesterday and bumped into Rose who had a trolley piled up with

wonderful cakes..... she had already tried other supermarkets Tesco, Aldi etc without success so good old Marks turned up trumps. Well done Rose for all of us!

**Rosemary Steven**

Also delivered cakes bought by Njideka and Lego sets from the toys donated by Tesco, Sale thanks to Liz's efforts.

**Rose Marginson**

## March Club Meeting Speaker: The Medaille Trust

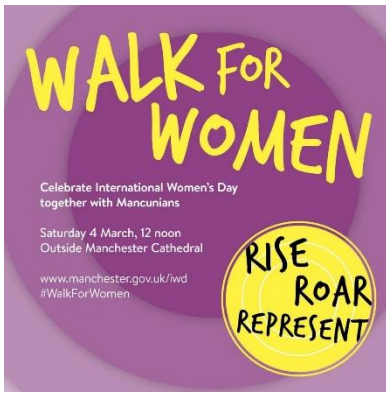
Our speaker in March was Petra from the Medaille Trust. The Medaille Trust provides refuge and freedom to victims of Modern Day Slavery supporting them as they rebuild their lives.

Petra talked about the 'Moving on Project' which particularly supports women victims and also the 'Victim Voices Project'. The 'Victim Voices Project' involves training staff to gather evidence by interviewing victims which is admissible in court to support the prosecution of modern slavery perpetrators. They do great work.

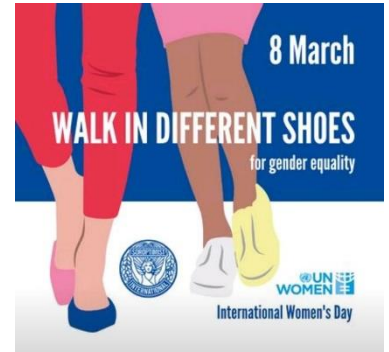
**Rose Marginson.**



Manchester's 'Walk for Women'



On Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> March, members Sophie, Elaine, Sue ,Olive, Malgorzata and Rose missed the Region meeting to join the 'Walk For Women' in Manchester.....Olive even managed to 'Walk In Different Shoes'!



They joined many other inspirational Women's organisations including the Pankhurst Trust to mark International Women's Day (March 8<sup>th</sup>)  
[#walkforwomenmanchester](https://www.instagram.com/walkforwomenmanchester)



A great day for spreading the Soroptimist word! Our Banner was included in the evenings BBC's North West footage and the Manchester Evening News App, as well as being clearly visible in the Twitter feed video on @ManchesterIWD (which we shared far and wide on Facebook!)



& a fitting photo bomb.....the black banner declares

**WELL BEHAVED WOMEN RARELY MAKE HERSTORY!**

International Women’s Day 2023 #EmbracingEquity

The theme for this year’s IWD was ‘Embracing Equity’...we struck the pose both at Club & Region meetings



Also, UN Women’s theme, Walk in Different Shoes



Thanks to Sophie’s new found poster design skills, each of our Friendship Links were sent greetings....



“Every girl, no matter where she lives, deserves the opportunity to develop the promise inside of her”  
Michelle Obama.  
Happy Women's Day 2023!

[#InternationalWomansDay2023](#) [#embraceequity2023](#)  
[#IWD2023](#) [#Act4Africa](#)



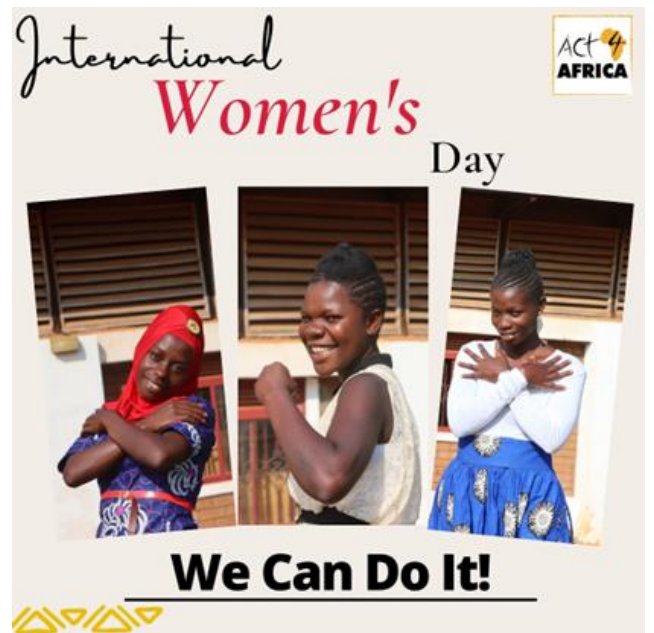
We bombarded Facebook all day on International Women’s Day, March 8<sup>th</sup> .....



“Here’s to strong women:  
May we know them.  
May we be them.  
May we raise them.”

We shared posts from our partners.....

..... Act4Africa



..... New Hope, Orissa, India

The women of TOMORROW need support today and our Care and Education project is that. WORLD WOMENS DAY IS NOT ONE DAY A YEAR AT NEW HOPE.



WORLD WOMENS DAY The Indian newspaper adverts have turned it into a cosmetics good look day - sadly. This pic is what I call 'a Happy New Hope Women's Day. I don't think you can buy one cosmetic item in Australia or UK for \$20 – That's what gives women in this pic meals every month.

(The senior women don't know it but they are getting chocolate cake in the TEA room this afternoon)

*Eliazar T Rose*

Even a comparison of us in our Sunday best & our new 'get noticed' polo shirts!....



But the 'Last Word' went to the Pankhurst Centre....



## International Women's Day Gifts.

The Programme Action Committee agreed to distribute the remaining 2021/22 budget of £761. 69 by donating £40 to each of our 4 local charities (Emmeline's Pantry, Manchester Women's Aid, MASH & WomenMATTa) and £300 each to our 2 international charities (Act4Africa & New Hope Orissa, India) as part of IWD activities.

- **Emmeline's Pantry** asked for the £40 to be spent on beans, sugar & tuna
- **Manchester Women's Aid** spent the £40 on a counselling session for a service user
- **WomenMATTa** used their £40 for food and other items for service users to celebrate IWD.
- **MASH** we are waiting to hear details.
- **Act4Africa** used their £300 to buy another sewing machine for vocational training for the Adolescent Mothers. As you see, this takes place in one of 'our' tents!



- **New Hope Orissa, India.**

Eliazar's replied .....YES! - we have a senior girl – a young person who has written her entrance examination for a grade of Nursing. It's called ANM. Auxiliary Nursing Midwife. It's an old name that has never been changed. It was traditional for these trained women to attend births in areas where there were no Hospitals. Now they work in Hospitals (except Operating Theatre type situations). They are sought after by the Government to work in Clinics and approved Dispensary places. New Hope for example is now an approved centre for dispensing Anti Retro Viral drugs as used by HIV+ persons.



It took us a time and energy to get her admission as she is HIV+. However - well we managed it with a little pressure that made it happen! In real terms of course Pavithra is interested because she knows that when qualified she will have a full time 'job' with New Hope - As our Clinic cum Dispensary are recognized for the ART drug distribution she will be paid for by the Government and have Provident Fund and other 'benefits'.

We have been associated with her whole family for a long time - going back to when her mother 'joined us with two small children' \*

**£300 will cover Pavithra's 2 year Nursing course and also her uniform during training and the text books.**

Ruth and I are so happy for this girl - but her mother is beyond words as you may well imagine.

We are really thankful to the Soroptimist group for the Sponsorship

***Eliazar, New Hope Orissa***

\*See **Pavithra's Story** on Page 27

## WomenMATTA – Donations & Service

WomenMATTA is a charity that SI Manchester has supported for the last few years. During our annual review the PAC chose this as one of the several projects that we would support again throughout 2022/23.

The project supports Women in Manchester and Trafford who have been affected by the criminal justice system by providing Trauma informed, in depth 1-2-1 support, including a Specialist Domestic Abuse service for women dually affected by both domestic abuse and criminal justice system involvement. They provide a weekly 'drop in', including free lunch, craft activities and a rolling group work programme of structured and therapeutic workshops. The women have access to free clothing, toiletries and an emergency food bank.

When President Sue was delivering 250 diaries to the charity, along with £150, before Christmas we realised that their clothes bank was running very low.



We committed to seeing if we could help and so, following a wide appeal to the club and on Facebook, over the last couple of months we have collected around 50 bags of clothes for the Clothes Bank at WomenMATTA.

We dropped half of these before Christmas when most of the women would be attending and receiving a Christmas goody bag with the diaries that we had collected (thanks to many supporters across the region) and enjoying a hearty Christmas lunch.

Then when we dropped the other half in February and, having realised how much work delivering so many clothes was for them, 3 of our members spent a couple of hours volunteering at the Clothes Bank helping them to sort all the clothes that we had delivered.

***Sophie Kennedy***



## New Member Cathrine Holland Introduces Herself:

### About me!

I'm not from Manchester but I have called it my home since 2005 and I have never regretted settling here. I'm from Guernsey in the Channel Islands but since going to University in the late 80s, I've moved around the UK for work before reaching my final destination.

I studied medicine and after a year as a newly qualified doctor started a long training programme in maternity and gynaecology before narrowing down my field of interest to gynaecological cancer diagnosis and surgery which is what I now do full time. For a time, I worked in sexual health services during my training, working with and providing health care to street workers. I enjoyed the work a great deal and felt so appreciated by the women I treated and supported that I nearly changed career plans, but gynaecology cancer work was ultimately my calling and that is where I stayed.



When I'm not working, I'm generally to be found swimming in lakes, running (\*see below for a chance to sponsor Cathrine running for MASH!), playing hockey, scuba diving, ski-ing, participating in triathlons, growing my own veg, community litter picking and generally enjoying the outdoors to the max. I'm happiest when I'm active and out in the fresh air. I love to travel and experience other cultures and cuisines. I'm well supported in my enthusiastic, but sometimes below-average endeavours, by my long-suffering partner, Charlotte, who in turn is comforted by our 2 rather pampered cats. My one claim to fame is that as a teenager I was on a popular teatime Granada TV quiz show called "Connections".

Although I've always been interested in promoting equality of opportunity for women and girls and supporting women's causes, I'd never heard of Soroptimism before I met Sophie (Kennedy). As President Sue told me at my first (Zoom) meeting, "we are the largest organisation that you've never heard of!". How I met Sophie is a whole other convoluted story but in short Kevin, Sophie's "Soroptimister", is my step-brother and one evening over a delicious meal and more red wine than was good for any of us, I heard about charity race nights, Women MATTAs and numerous other events and initiatives with which Soroptimists are involved. My interest was piqued and having long been hoping for an opportunity to contribute to and support women's causes, it seemed that opportunity knocked. So here I am.

As a Soroptimist I think I'll be able to contribute to the various causes supported and to use my voice and efforts to promote the status of women as part of a collective of similarly committed and like-minded individuals. As a health care professional, I know that when the status of women is improved and their health and education promoted, this benefits the whole of society. This applies as much to disadvantaged women and girls in Greater Manchester as it does overseas.

I'm early in my Soroptimist journey with a lot to learn but I'm looking forward to many years of friendship and service.

**Cathrine Holland**

### \*Cathrine's Manchester Half Marathon for MASH Great Manchester Run Half Marathon on May 21, 2023

I'm running for MASH because I want to support the important work they do



As a young doctor I spent some time providing health care to women who sex worked. I saw first-hand how they are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised women in our society and can experience increased violence, poor health outcomes, homelessness, financial hardship and substance mis-use. Every woman deserves somewhere safe to go to where they can get help and support.

MASH (Manchester Action on Street Health) is a charity that provides a safe, welcoming and non-judgemental space for women who sex work as well as projects supporting women experiencing homelessness and other big life challenges like ill health, fleeing violence or substance misuse.

You can donate to my JustGiving page by clicking here: [https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cathrine-holland?utm\\_source=Sharethis&utm\\_medium=fundraising&utm\\_content=cathrine-holland1&utm\\_campaign=pfp-email&utm\\_term=1a72c66d57c04c7691684af2c69a563b](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cathrine-holland?utm_source=Sharethis&utm_medium=fundraising&utm_content=cathrine-holland1&utm_campaign=pfp-email&utm_term=1a72c66d57c04c7691684af2c69a563b).

Thank you

**Cathrine Holland**



## Our Tree in Didsbury Park....

During National Tree Week last December, with the help and support of Volunteers from 'Friends of Didsbury Park, we planted a 'Wedding Cake Tree'.



Here it is on December 26<sup>th</sup>, well protected from park activities and wildlife.....



.....showing signs of new growth on February 14<sup>th</sup>



..... splendid new growth by April 12<sup>th</sup>!

*Thanks to Pat Usher for the photos*

## Food, Fun & Friendship at Fiona's Pancake Party

We had a fabulous and memorable evening on Saturday 18th February.

Many thanks to Fiona, her family and the members who pulled out all the stops to make " Fiona's Annual Pancake Party " a massive success. Lovely Food, Delicious Pancakes, Games and Drinks flowing !

Lots of fun, friendship and pancakes raised much needed funds for the projects we support. I hope for repeat performance next year so all members who missed this year and non-members who fancy becoming members for the experience, can join us for Fun Friendship and Fundraising.

**Liz Aniteye**



We took the opportunity to collect our new Polo shirts!

Many thanks to Sophie for masterminding the sourcing, selection and design! Also, my personal thanks to Sophie for introducing me to a non-alcoholic gin that is a very acceptable alternative when needs must!

Pleased to meet Ivan (see Sophie' Challenge Walk) and chat about our roots in Derby, it's a very small world.

Welcomed new member Cathrine, Sophie's sister-in-law, who was a great asset to our Quiz Team!

..... we were all too busy having fun to think about taking photos until the end!

**Sue Underwood**

### A selection of comments from the SI Social WhatsApp Group:

Last night was my first SI Manchester pancake party. It was amazing. Thank you to Fiona for letting us use her house and thank you to everybody who worked so hard to make it so successful and enjoyable.....Val

Thank you to Fiona and the team for working hard to make my first Pancake Party so enjoyable and successful....Carole

Arrived very quickly and Barry and I had a lovely evening, so much work was given, especially Fiona.....Shena & Barry

Thanks Shena it was a successful evening and everyone helped so much.....Fiona

Thanks so much Fiona and family, your efforts were much appreciated .....and to Everyone who played a part as well to make the day so successful. The food was delicious and not to mention the pudding which was amazing.....Catherine

Thanks sooo much to Fiona and family, Rosemary, Alison, Sophie and everyone for such a lovely evening!

All the hard work is acknowledged and much appreciated.

The Zero calories desert was the icing on the cake! De-li-cious! Yummy .....Liz



## Our 97<sup>th</sup> Charter Lunch

What a fantastic afternoon of food, fun and friendship!

Skilfully managed by Toastmistress Alison, President Sue welcomed members, friends and guests to SI Manchester's 97th Charter Lunch.

President Sue's 'Toast to the City and Ports of Manchester' reminded us that 'In this life, things don't always go to plan....but it is how we respond to those changes that matters', closing with an Indian expression, "We can't change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust the sails!"



Barbara Blaber, MD of Act4Africa, one of the many projects supported by SI Manchester, proposed the 'Toast to Soroptimist International' and Denise Parker, President of Soroptimist International of South Lancashire, gave the response including telling us about Manchester's Civic Week in 1926.



The Guest Speaker was Mrs Lorraine Worsley-Carter, High Sheriff of Greater Manchester, seen here in her Court dress. Lorraine gave us all a very informative insight into the role of High Sheriff and shared some of her experiences in her year so far.



The 'Vote of thanks' was given by our soon to be Vice President Fiona Spencer.

We were pleased to be joined by Soroptimists from 8 Clubs: President & members of Stockport & District, Leigh & District & Liverpool. Also members of Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Lancaster, Southport and Widnes.



President Sue left the 'last words' to Honorary Member Kathleen Beavis reading from the greetings she had sent:

**"Success in all your service.  
Always remember to ensure that Manchester leads the way in these times of change!"**

***Sophie Kennedy***

*Thanks to Sophie for all of the photos, a selection of which follow.....*







My heartfelt thanks to all....  
 Alison and Rosemary for preparing the flowers for the tables and bouquets,  
 Sophie for the photos  
 and all members and friends who contributed to making our 97<sup>th</sup> Charter Lunch such a success.  
 I hope you all enjoyed it as much as I did!  
 President Sue

## Walk & Talk – Worsley Woods & Village

Thanks to Alison for arranging a walk through Worsley Woods followed by lunch. It was a lovely morning, plenty of chat and the dogs enjoyed it too.



.....And so say Catherine, Fiona, Susan, Barbara (& Jamie on the penultimate leg of his 100 km Spring Stroll for Act4Africa) Lillian, Rose, Sophie, Cathrine, Cath (& Pebble who was off exploring) Pat (& Poppy) and Alison's dogs, Winston & Winnifred!

Others joined the walkers for lunch at The Delph....



Malgorzata sent greetings from sunny Sopot, Poland!

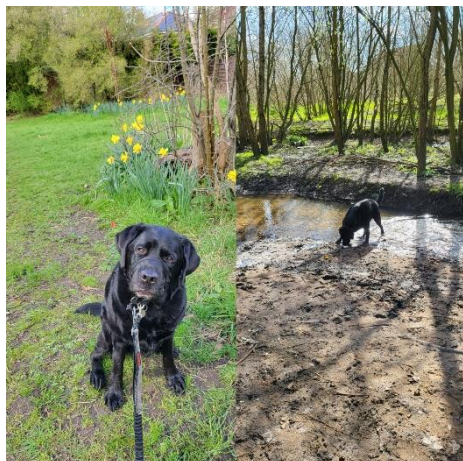
Pebble & Poppy, two very tired pooches!



Jamie's Spring Stroll with Barbara...Walking 100km for Act4Africa



From Day 1 of Jamie's Spring Stroll - a 4.8km mooch around Carrington Moss. As it was nearly his birthday, he had permission to go in as much muddy water as he could find!  
 .....Only 95.2kms to go 🚶🐕🐕



.....Day 5 Woodheys Park still nice & muddy!

.....Day 7 Passed the 20km mark today with a meander along the Bridgewater Canal and around Timperley playing fields.

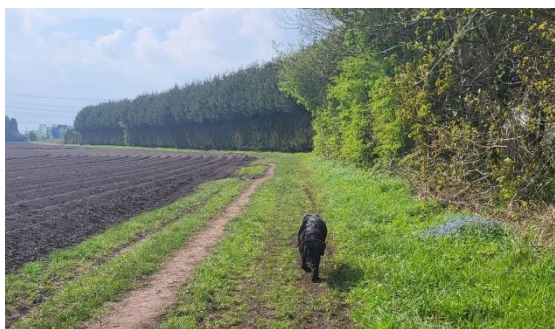
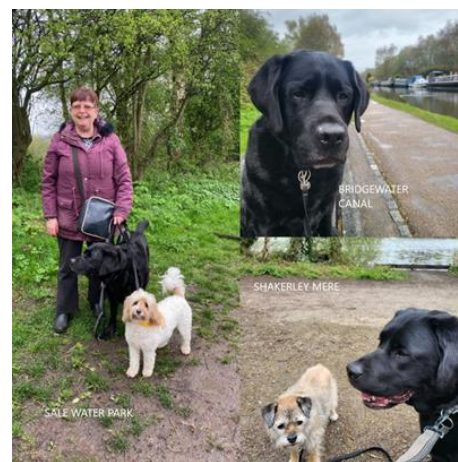


....Days 9,10 & 11

A working weekend in the East Midlands for Steve, a walking one for me, Jamie and Betty Boo\*. A stroll in Sence Valley, a VERY muddy mooch round Melbourne Pool and a dawdle round Donington Park have taken us over the 30km mark in our 100km challenge.  
 (\*Betty Boo wishes to point out that she did NOT sign up for this!)

.... Days 12-17 Over half way towards our 100km target! Mainly watery walks this week - 3 sections of the Bridgewater Canal and both sides of the River Mersey - with obligatory stops for coffee and treats.

Week 3 featured lots of watery walks (and not just because of the rain!) Thanks to Poppy (& Pat) and Betty Boo for their company.  
 .....One week and 25km to go!



Well, we did it!  
 100km challenge in aid of [Act4Africa](#) completed with three separate walks today including 5kms with Soroptimist friends on their 'Walk & Talk' and the final 4kms on Carrington Moss!

Jamie celebrated with a well-earned relaxing swim after his [Act4Africa](#) fundraising



.....It's not too late to donate!  
<https://www.justgiving.com/.../barbara-blaber...>