

# The Garden Party in Photographs











# THANK YOU

Susan, David, All helpers  
& a Cat  
seeking  
peace!



Susan at the end of the CostCo shopping trip!





## An Australian Visitor

This August 2023, Manchester hosted the World Para Swimming Championships and welcomed people from all over the world. Chris Knight from SI Moreton North Club in Australia arrived in Manchester in order to attend the events at Manchester Aquatic Centre and meet Manchester Soroptimists. She was hosted by Malgorzata Kmita.



On the 4th of August Chris and Malgorzata attended the Para Swimming Championship in which Lakeisha Dawn, member of SI Moreton North was taking part. It was Lakeisha's dream to win the Gold Medal after many years of dedicated training and years of her love for swimming.

It was an amazing experience to celebrate Lakeisha's win of the Gold Medal in Manchester on the 4th of August 2023. She was cheered and supported by her Mother, Sherryn Patterson who travelled all the way from Australia to see her daughter win in the World Para Swimming 400 heats,

free style competition. Chris Knight and Malgorzata was also there to provide support and recognition of this long awaited dream that came true.

The event in Manchester was beautifully organised and brought many tearing moments when we watched the dedicated support members from the Aquatic Centre giving their attention and care to those who participated in the swimming events.



In the late afternoon of the 4th of August, Chris Knight met other members of SI Manchester, the President Sue Underwood, Fiona Spencer and Elaine Loader.

Chris was proudly introduced to the monument of Emmeline Pankhurst and the history of women suffragettes and suffragists in this amazing city in the North of England.



We had a lovely time sipping coffee together, eating lovely cakes and discussing ideas from across the world whilst enjoying the company of women United by the experience of being Soroptimists and world travellers.



This visit of Chris Knight was a very special experience brought together by the Para Swimming Championships and the Gold medal that magnified the experience of this memorable visit. Thank you Chris for visiting us and thank you Lakeisha for your incredible hard work and the Gold medal to remember Manchester for a long time. Well done to All.

**Malgorzata Kmita**

## Chris Knight posted on her Facebook Page...

So what do you think this gorgeous girl was up to today after seeing Lakeisha Dawn win her 400m freestyle... well she is in Manchester after all.. and is having a wonderful time with her SI Best Sister Malgorzata Kmita...

Of course we needed to visit one special suffragette (Claire Moore) and to meet Sue and Fiona from SI Manchester Club and have a delicious cappachino / tea at the Black Sheep Cafe... and then to end the evening with supper and an opportunity to meet Elaine too...

A very full and exciting day discussing SI - Gender Equality - Special Interest Groups and using our expertise to improve the lives of women and girls... via technology... watch this space 🙏❤️😊



Big bonus was Lakeisha (Lucky) winning GOLD in the 400m freestyle - what a legend Sherryn Patterson you have raised and a very talented daughter and I am so proud that our SIMNI & SI Best Sisters from around the world were cheering her on.



Yes you guessed it... it's just another reason that I love being an International Soroptimist



Chris spotted apposite advice under her coffee cup!





Following a very interesting and enthusiastic presentation by a member from the Northern Region members from SI Manchester decided to support the women entrepreneurs promoted by the Lendwithcare charity. £240 was allocated from club funds towards this project. It was agreed that loans of £15 would be made to chosen entrepreneurs who would all be women.

Lendwithcare manages financial loans made to female (and male) entrepreneurs worldwide who request small amounts of money to improve their businesses and household incomes. They live in less wealthy countries and are assessed in country by CARE charity. This means that we can have trust in the women having money lent to them. The arrangement is formal and the women have to agree to and abide by the conditions of the loan.

A club member was delegated to administer the fund through the club treasurer. In conjunction with 2 other members a list of criteria was created to identify the entrepreneurs whom we wanted to support.

- We wanted to spread the loans round the world and for a variety of businesses.
- We wanted to know how many people would benefit from the loan
- and whether any previous loans had been repaid as agreed.

It is important to regularly visit the Lendwithcare website as the entrepreneurs quickly receive the total loan they have asked for. Our contributions of £15 are added to by hundreds of supporters worldwide, including from other Soroptimist clubs.

To date we have loaned the full £240 allocation from the club and have supported 29 entrepreneurs, helped 238 people and created 3 jobs.

We are now receiving loan repayments and have received enough to support another entrepreneur with £15.

Some women we have supported:



Luz America from Ecuador for her arts and handicrafts business



Nid from Thailand for her cattle farming



Chimphondwe 0206 Group for farming of groundnuts

Next time I plan to choose an entrepreneur and tell more of her story.

**Val Jenkins**

## Soroptimist Orange Cafés

Soroptimists observe the 25th of each month as "Orange the World Day" as designated by the United Nations in its campaign to raise awareness and take action to end violence against women and girls.

As part of this campaign, we meet at a café on the 25th of each month and wear something orange. As a bright and optimistic colour, orange represents a future free from violence. This is a social time and an opportunity to find out more.

You are welcome to join us on the 25th of every month and learn more about this campaign and what Soroptimists do.



### July 25<sup>th</sup>- Didsbury Good Neighbours Coffee Morning

Carole and I joined Didsbury Good Neighbours regular Coffee Morning, along with the banner, leaflets and our brand new bookmarks!

We gave a short talk about the history of Soroptimism and our Club today, Carole mentioned our tree that could be seen from the window, we made a good double act!

A couple of the volunteers were interested and a couple of others were 'willing to help'.

We had intended to visit the Pavilion Café next door but ran out of time – Manager Josie said that we are welcome any time, just let her know so that a table can be reserved.

### August 25<sup>th</sup> - The Mess Café, Sharston

We had a lovely morning at the Mess Café in Sharston on the 25th of the month, the day we raise awareness of Domestic Violence against Women and girls.

Spacious venue and ideal position, we were stationed on the route to the toilets! WE spoke to a few people and handed out leaflets and bookmarks.

Fiona and Rose took the opportunity to visit 'Early Essentials' Coffee, tea and food were excellent.



### Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October – Sainsbury's (next to John Lewis)



This was planned as a joint event with SI Stockport seeing as both our catchment areas are covered.

Unfortunately Sainsbury's communications had broken down so we had to make do with a draughty foyer, but a few more people are aware of Soroptimist International!

*Sue Underwood*

Next Venue:

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November networking event at the Metro Bank, Market Street, Manchester, to mark the start of '16 Days of Activism' **All members welcome!**



## My First Soroptimist International Convention (SIC)

On Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023, I travelled to Dublin to join Soroptimists from across the globe gathered at the Soroptimist International (SI) 2023 Convention in Dublin, Ireland. This was to be my first of hopefully many conferences, celebrating Soroptimists' friendship and projects supporting women and girls. As well as I and four other members of SI Manchester we joined 1700 Soroptimists from all 5 Federations. I was able to meet many members from so many countries – Iceland, Australia, Germany, and more.



Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> July was to be the first of two very full-packed days with keynote speakers from around the world as well as workshops and events to attend and I must point out it was extremely well organised - we even

had an App to download with interactive content, very impressive. The highlight for me on day one has to be the Keynote Presentation given by Mary Robinson an Irish politician who was the 7th President of Ireland, serving from December 1990 to September 1997, the first woman to hold this office. Finally, after a full day, we enjoyed a well-earned glass of wine or two at the Friendship Evening.



Day two of the conference was once again jam-packed and started off with Ma Ying-jeou (Chinese: 馬英九; born 13 July 1950) a Taiwanese politician who served as president of the Republic of China from 2008 to 2016. Previously, he served as justice minister from 1993 to 1996 and mayor of Taipei from 1998 to 2006. During his time in office from 2008 to 2016, Ma was recognized by the international community for his advocacy of women's and children's rights, and for promulgating the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights.

Another highlight from day two (28 July) of the Soroptimist International Convention 2023, came from Jim Gamble, CEO of INEQE Safeguarding Group and an expert in child protection. The premise of his talk emphasised why the dangers regarding online safety and the safeguarding of children online are not about the technology per se, but instead, the people that use the technology.



Also of note was the unveiling of the new Soroptimist International logo, and the introduction of the incoming 2024-2025 SI President Siew Yong Gnanalingam from Malaysia. More than 100 posters in the Exhibition Hall were submitted by clubs and regions on their project work to showcase successful Programme Action initiatives from all five federations. As the Convention came to a close an announcement was made about the next convention in 2027. It will be one with a difference, a 'Wave of Change' Royal Caribbean cruise to Alaska.

We then enjoyed a gala dinner where we enjoyed traditional Irish dancing, music, and singing. Sadly, it was then time to say farewell to Soroptimist friends, old and new, and head for home.

**Alison Forster**





## Male 1 / Female 43 on the Yorkshire coach

Soroptimists from Yorkshire arrived in their coach at Holyhead where the customs officer asked the coach driver how many on board. Reply was 1 male and 43 females!

The coach had picked up passengers in Scarborough, Wakefield and Hartshead Moor Services. We were delayed at Hartshead because the driver of the feeder minibus from Ilkley had slept in! Then there was another problem - the rear wheel steering mechanism on the coach had failed and there were doubts as to whether the captain would allow us on the ferry. But all was well in the end.

The coach journey was quite long but we had our own entertainment and our mascot Rosie the pink Welsh dragon. It started with a glass of Prosecco! Leaders Susie and Linda had organised a quiz about Yorkshire which my friend and I won – a full bottle of Prosecco! Then we sang the ditties which Elizabeth has been writing.

Example sung to the tune of “Zippadee DoDa”

*We're looking further, we're looking far  
You will find us where the challenges are  
Our Soroptimist wagon is hitched to a star  
We're looking further we're looking far  
Our faith is in each member, Are you ready and willing?  
Soroptimist hopes fulfilling*



We all stayed in the Camden Court Hotel which was very comfortable and were taken to conference each day and picked up which was a real treat including being taken to the Gala Dinner in our best ‘frocks’!



Before I had registered on the first morning I had met Rose, Rosemary, Alison and Sue from SI Manchester which was great. A miracle to find each other among the 1,700 delegates.

We enjoyed most of the speakers but especially Mary Robinson and Jim Gamble who were both very thought provoking.



Once the convention had finished we had 2 day trips into the countryside. Sadly the sunny weather had finished and we were dodging the downpours. First of all we went to Kilkenny to a tour round the castle which was very interesting followed by a train ride round Kilkenny city.



Next day we had a visit to the Wicklow Hills to the beautiful Mount Usher Garden Tree Trail with its wonderful collection of colourful hydrangeas. We then went to the Avoca village and mill with its links to ‘Ballykissangel’ We stopped briefly at the

Glendalough monastery before returning to Dublin via a superb drive through the Wicklow Hills

Tuesday was the day to return to Yorkshire with a 6am start from the hotel. Needless to say that the coach going home was a lot quieter than the one coming as Yorkshire Soroptimists recovered from an excellent convention and visit to Dublin full of interest, fun and friendship and late nights!

**Val Jenkins**







Rose photographed with the Taiwanese delegates .....also spot Margaret Emsley!

### Friendship Night – Find Felicitas!

All delegates attended the Friendship Night, spread over 3 levels with drink stations and finger food circulating, we eventually managed to meet up with Felicitas Guntrum from SI Essen Victoria, one of our Friendship Links!

How did we do it before WhatsApp?!?

Later we adjourned to the River Boat Bar and joined several other German Soroptimists.



*(Small world – one curates the castles on the Rhine and grew up opposite Kamp Bornofen where I spent my holidays with Mum & Dad!)*

A wonderful Friendship Evening catching up with old friends and meeting new ones – we distributed our bookmarks, complete with a Bee, to Soroptimists from Iceland, Kenya, Norway, New Zealand and many American states to name but a few, as we received pins, badges, keyrings etc in true Convention tradition.



Flashback to Felicitas meeting Barbara on a previous visit to Manchester when Barbara was President 2018-19.







## Ann Thomas- 50 Years (Almost) As A Soroptimist

I had attended many events as a guest or helper prior to becoming a member of SI Manchester. Joan Sharp held the category of 'Home Economics Advisor', on her retirement in 1975 I took her place as the 'Active' member in that category\*

Business Meetings took place at Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, one each month. I was on trial, my details and qualifications circulated to the 50 or so members of the Club. I also had to answer questions, then two weeks later attend a Social Meeting, also one a month. Afternoon Tea was served at the Grand Hotel in Manchester, followed by a speaker on a topical subject of Club interest.

I must have passed the test as here I am, 48 years later, at Brooklands!

I transferred to Altrincham Club in 1983, held several posts including President in 1986. Sadly SI Altrincham has to close in 1993.

I returned to SI Manchester, to find things had changed a little, but in many ways stayed the same.

We are now looking forward to the celebrations to mark 100 years of SI Manchester, Chartered in 1926.

**Ann Thomas**

*\*Categories – back in the day, a Club was limited to one 'Active' member of each 'category'. I remember when I joined 30 years ago that we had to be 'creative' with the categories to admit as many members as possible! Sue*



## Lunch with Kathleen



On a sunny Friday in July, Jeff and I headed to Anglesey to have lunch with Kathleen Beavis our Lifetime Honorary Member.

Kathleen was on good form, straight into 'settling up' including this year's Christmas Greetings donation.....in July?!?

Hilary prepared a delicious lunch for us including her famous Sticky Toffee Pudding, Jeff even brought some home!

Kathleen dictated her article to me, never one to shy away from a challenge.....

## Advice To A Soroptimist

It's the little things that matter, but remember that you can only get out what you put in – so be committed. Also remember that you can do it your way.

**Kathleen Beavis**

### Beware of the Committee!

Oh, have some pity, I'm on a committee  
Which means that from morning till night,  
We attend and amend and contend and defend  
Without a conclusion in sight.

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

We compose and propose, we suppose 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 we 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!



## Letter From Eliazar, New Hope, Orissa, India

Attached is from Eliazar. Good to know one of the ways in which they share our used greetings cards, which Pat so painstakingly collects from our members and posts off to New Hope.

**Maureen Heywood**

Dear Maureen,

We had a Face book Appeal for Mothering Sunday. Ramu who 'battles' the Post Office and regulations to send tea packets manages a project, He gives to street women. Its Mothering Sunday May next Sunday. He has been giving our a Sari to women we support who are homeless and aged.



WITH EVERY SARI GIFT EACH WOMAN RECEIVES A CARD SENT TO US FROM SOROPTIMIST (YES the cards are used)

I will attach it all for you to see.

kindest regards.

Eliazar

## Act4Africa from their October Newsletter: Grain for Growth: A Heartwarming Story of Improved Food Production in Mayuge, Uganda

Over the past years, Act4Africa's Grain for Growth programme has been instrumental in enhancing food production within the Mayuge Community in Uganda. This community, plagued by dire poverty and the perpetual threat of hunger, witnesses



approximately 29% of its children grappling with malnutrition. The programme has provided crucial training to local farmers in diverse agroecological farming practices, resulting in significant improvements in food production within the region.

A recent follow-up with these trained farmers revealed remarkable progress. Their yields have surged due to the implementation of proper pre-harvest handling techniques. This surge in produce not only reflects increased agricultural output but also translates to enhanced family nutrition. Act4Africa's aspiration, through the Grain for Growth initiative, is to empower farmers to not only feed their families but also to generate surplus yields for sale, thereby breaking the chains of poverty.



For instance, Mary's maize harvest has doubled, jumping from 300kg to 600kg compared to the previous year. She is enthusiastic about continuing to apply these newfound skills to further boost her yields. Joshua, who previously reaped 70kg from his small plot, managed to double his yield to 140kg through the knowledge gained during the March training. Sam reported a harvest increase from 3 to 6 rice bags, while Esther's yield also rose from 500kg to 700kg, attributing this success to improved produce handling learned from Act4Africa's training.



We extend our heartfelt gratitude for your unwavering support in assisting these hardworking farmers to break free from the shackles of poverty. Thank you immensely.

## Skiathos Revisited!

We arrived in Skiathos on August 28th looking forward to a peaceful and enjoyable 5 week visit after the illnesses and accidents of our Spring visit. Everything was lovely and a day later 2 friends arrived for a week. We enjoyed 5 fabulous holiday- type days visited 4 beaches, enjoyed delicious food at different restaurants and on Sunday 3rd September were guests at a wonderful Greek night with traditional dancing and Barbecue, great.

Rain had been forecast from Monday so we decided to spend a relaxing day in the villa before they flew to Kefelonia via Athens on Tuesday.

It was very windy on Sunday night reaching 46 mph so suddenly and then it started!

Thunder and lightning which was terrifying. Torrential rain never stopped and by the early evening of Monday the 4th all flights and ferries were cancelled, the Island had no internet or electricity and many people were moved to stay at the airport as very soon many hotels and accommodations were flooded.

Klaxons were sounded on mobile phones that were still working, declaring a curfew and no vehicles apart from medical emergencies were allowed on the roads. It was absolutely terrifying and our friends opted to stay on sofas in our lounge as the feared they would have to run for their lives.

Our villa is situated in the mountains and the overnight experience of September the 4th was terrifying with the constant booming of thunder all night and the electric lightning was constant. Trees were being blown down around us and the latest new villa and diving complex adjacent to our land, 150 meters away, was completely covered by a mud landslide and they literally ran for their lives.

For 3 days we dare not (and we're not allowed by police) to venture out. When we arrived a week earlier I shopped for a few basic essentials as we had an intensive programme planned I had to be an extremely imaginative hostess to provide 3 meals a day for 4 adults. The freezers and backup cupboards were raided, and we were in danger of running out of essentials, including bottled drinking ware. We were fortunate as many hotels were full of residents with no water or electricity most bars and restaurants were devastated. So many holidaymakers were sitting on top of wardrobes cold wet and hungry unbelievable.





However the Greeks have for centuries been an extremely resilient nation and rescue food packages were miraculously delivered. 3 days of horror and my house guests realised that in spite of the absence of International flights the small local hoppers were scheduled to run from Skiathos to Athens on which they would be able to continue their holiday in Kefalonia. At 5.30am Beverley and Michael devised a project plan to escape our devastation. They started digging mud at 6.15am in an attempt to make a way for our car to get out of drive to the main road. I rang an emergency number as a large tree had fallen on our electricity cable and another blocked the way to our home. Help arrived with men and chainsaws who removed the tree which enabled us with great trepidation to make our way to the main road which had calmed from a fast flowing river to mud bath with large puddles and abandoned cars. How Gus managed to get us to the airport remains a mystery however there was one hopper (small plane) which was leaving for Athens and they managed to get tickets.

All package flights remained cancelled until further notice and from the 9th of September no rescue planes had been able to land to take passengers home. It was an absolute disastrous decision for the Island as the season is very short (May to beginning of October) and the vast majority of people are employed in association with tourism. The infrastructure of Skiathos has been destroyed . The sea usually a beautiful turquoise Aegean is brown and orange and beautiful white and sandy bays destroyed. In September last year Fiona and her family enjoyed a week of glorious Skiathos at its best.

When we eventually managed to get to a re-opened supermarket for essential supplies it was mobbed reminding us of COVID days, no eggs or toilet rolls, vegetables or bottled water as these things are by ferry which have not been able to run as the problems with flooding in the North of Greece have been even more disastrous with many deaths and lorries are unable to reach the port of Volos to bring essential items to the Island. We are trying to be optimistic that a tremendous amount of work be done over the Winter period to enable a degree of normality to return .

Climate change is real .....all this whilst the UK basked in a glorious Indian Summer.

**Rosemary Steven**

### Our Friendship Link, SI Essen Victoria celebrated 20 Years of Soroptimism with a day full of celebrations, food and partying!





## Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 7 <sup>th</sup> November	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> November	7pm	Executive Meeting
<b>25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December</b>		<b>16 Days of Activism</b>
Saturday 25 <sup>th</sup> November	8.30 - 11am TBC	<b>Metro Bank – Orange Café</b>
Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> November		<b>Dead women Walking</b>
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> November	10 – 1 TBC	<b>Tree Planting in Didsbury Park</b>
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> November	7pm	<b>Mug Packing at Rosemary's</b>
Saturday 2 <sup>nd</sup> December	10 for 10.30am	Region Programme Action & Council Meeting
Tuesday 5 <sup>th</sup> December	7pm	Programme Action Meeting on Zoom
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> December	7pm	Club Christmas Party hosted by Fiona
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January 2024	6.30 for 7pm	Club Meeting
Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January	7pm	Programme Action Meeting on Zoom
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> January	7pm	Executive Meeting

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

Looking Forward to the Winter Edition with articles from each of you .....

### 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 or a photograph) before the **November 30<sup>th</sup> deadline**

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

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

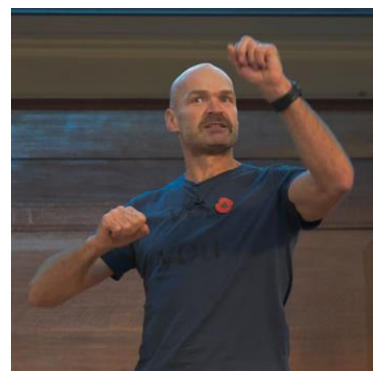
Last Words ..... from a Man who could/should be a Soroptimist!

*“Never be a princess when you can be the queen:  
swing a sceptre, wear the crown, dominate the scene.  
Don't wear crystal slippers, they'll shatter on your feet.  
Be happy in your own skin, then you'll be complete.  
Be a barefoot Amazon, be young, be wild, be free,  
And never grow a wishbone, daughter, where your backbone ought to be.”*

## Monty Halls

Monty told us that he often quotes the above extract (with a little poetic licence) from Clementine Paddleford's poem to his young daughters.

Monty stepped in as a replacement keynote speaker at the recent SIGBI Federation Conference in London – he had less than 24 hours' notice! He began by apologising for his casual attire, it was all he had with him apart from a Dinner jacket and he been unable to buy a shirt between his hotel & the venue!



Monty Halls is a British TV broadcaster and marine biologist best known for his **BBC Great Escape series** Monty Halls' Great Escape, Monty Halls' Great Hebridean Escape and Monty Halls' Great Irish Escape, during which he lived and worked in remote parts of the UK and Ireland with his dog Reuben.

He also presented the multi-award-winning series '**Great Barrier Reef**'.

Monty also participated in a ground-breaking expedition series called '**Lost Worlds**' for the Discovery Channel.

In 2018, for Channel 4's '**My Family and the Galapagos**', Monty and his family moved to the Galapagos Islands to experience the wonders and challenges of his favourite place on earth.