

President: **Fiona Spencer**

Dear Club Members,

Say farewell to the logo of our 90's, it is now replaced by our Centenary logo!

Kathleen Beavis, one of our Honorary Lifetime members, passed away peacefully in July. Kathleen edited this Newsletter for 17 years. Memories of her are included in this Newsletter. Please share any memories or any questions you may have about this amazing Soroptimist in future editions.

I look forward to receiving your articles telling of your Centenary experience and thoughts, please remember that YOUR Newsletter reaches a far wider audience than the WhatsApp Group!

Sue Underwood



President Fiona Spencer & President's Centenary Pledges

It is hard to believe that it is only 3 months since the AGM and we entered our 100th year as it has certainly been eventful so far! Wow, the two main events we have held have been a great success and it has allowed us to be confident that we will reach, over the 2 years of fundraising, our centenary target of £10,000. That is really brilliant so congratulations everyone, you are amazing.

For me an added benefit I feel has been a great opportunity for new members to work alongside established members and get to know each other better. I think that is why the **Centenary Suppers** have been wonderful (not to mention the great food) as a chance to socialise and catch up, so a lovely bonus as well as tucking away some savings towards our main charter dinner next March.

We definitely need to continue to create opportunities for fun and friendship together too, something we are going to prioritise at our Greek evening in October.

Last month I really enjoyed representing the club to present the **Soroptimist International Manchester Arena Memorial Award** at Pendleton Sixth Form College, and then the **Helen Latto Prize for Singing** at the Junior Royal Northern College of Music. Both occasions were lovely opportunities to help support and encourage young women and were really inspirational. They have also gone in my **Diary of Days with Soroptimist activities**. As we said we would try to pledge to do something with a centenary theme I thought I would count up the diary days from our first centenary planning meeting to our charter celebration next June. So far I am on 52 counting visits to our charities, regional conference and a recent trip with the founder of Early Essentials pitch to a potential sponsor as examples. Keep your fingers crossed that I can get to 100 in the time frame. A bit easier were my "planet " pledges as I have managed to re-home 100 books and 100 items from my wardrobe, though that is counting scarves and shoes too, not sure if that is cheating! I have to say the lady at the charity shop was rather amazed at the boxes of books. So I wonder have you made a pledge yet? Are there 100 things you could do? No pressure but are you are willing to share how you are doing as it may inspire others?

President Fiona



**President Fiona
& President Elect Sophie**



**President Fiona
& Vice President Cathrine**

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Africa Night 14th June

Planning for the event started in the winter of 2024, but came together on a glorious June evening when we enjoyed and celebrated



the spirit of Africa. Appreciations to Carole who designed a frame that was used during the whole planning and made the process so smooth. We, five African heritage members of SI Manchester wished to highlight our traditions during the centenary year and the day was filled with a wonderful mix of colours, music, dance, food and fun.



The drummers set the scene with the rhythmic beating of the djembe drums followed by the wonderful dancers. This was complimented by a beautiful colorful fashion show in African outfit with a group dance performance.



The delicious African food followed, supplemented with dishes and desserts provided by Soroptimist members.

President Fiona highlighted the priorities of SI Manchester. Adding to that, a guest speaker from The River, one of the organisations supported by SI Manchester, spoke about our great work and the positive impact on the women who access their services.



Our guest speaker shared her life experience as a victim of domestic abuse and the support received from The River. The lady's speech was emotional and hit the audience. She ended by saying people like members of SI Manchester, The River and other Charities that support women like her are not just helping but literally "Saving Lives". She was congratulated for her courage.

(See 'Living Again' where this courageous, inspirational young woman has shared her story with us.)

Two young ladies, Clarissa and her friend Katie were given an opportunity to share their experiences of summer in Tanzania working with women and girls. *(See Spring 2025 Newsletter for their story)*

As usual the customary quiz exercised minds as we were tasked with identifying the various flags of African countries followed by questions on African history.



The evening finished with dancing and the feeling that this was more than just a fund raising event but was a gathering where we experienced the rich vibrancy of heritage and harmony that is Africa.

We cannot conclude without mentioning the wonderful MC who spiced the programme with her lively sense of humour.

This event couldn't have been a success without the effort of all the SI Manchester team.



The African Team!

Fii, Catherine, Lillian, Fiona, Liz & Fabiola



Our African evening in June was such a fun, lively event. The drummers started the evening off and created the mood. We had delicious African food and tasty desserts.

On a serious note we heard from our main speaker, one of the ladies who had received help from The River Manchester Charity. She told her story of fleeing domestic abuse and how her life had changed due to their support. It was very moving to hear her story. (See 'Living Again' where this courageous, inspirational young woman has shared her story with us.)



We also heard from Clarissa and Katie about their time in Tanzania.



(Clarissa wrote about her 'Volunteering at the Perfect Vision Women's Shelter in Tanzania' in the Spring 25 edition)

I bought a lovely pink top from the shop. The evening progressed with a quiz, a fashion show with some beautiful colourful outfits and dancing. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. Thank you to all who arranged and made it such a success in particular Liz, Fii, Lilian, Catherine, Fabiola and N.J. Congratulations All.
Rose Marginson



Fun, Food, Friendship & amazing Fundraising
Over £3,000 raised!!

**Congratulations & thanks to President Fiona,
the African Team & all helpers!**



You can call me Maame Frimpomaa. I have two daughters, and I have used the services of The River Manchester. I got married and joined my husband from Ghana. I had left my home, job, family, friends, and the familiarity of where I was born and raised to join my husband here in England.

Unfortunately, things did not go as I expected. We had different views on marriage, which had never been apparent while we were courting. After I joined my husband here in England, he told me that my ideas of marriage were fairy tales and not real. He told me that from his background, insulting his wife was not a big deal, and I had an ego to think such behaviour was unacceptable.

I had been a professional woman in Ghana, earning a decent salary. My husband had intended for me to assimilate into my field of expertise in the UK and earn him some good money. He did not want to be held accountable for what he did with our family funds, and I was to accept whatever he said without question.

I was ashamed of my situation. I had never intended to be in a dictatorship kind of relationship, and I had not been brought up this way, so I struggled. Yet, my religion frowns at divorce, and so I tried what I could to make it work.

He seemed to be angry with me frequently for no apparent reason to me. It may be that things had not turned out how he envisioned them. I had not been able to get into my field of work here. And the big money he thought I would make him had not come.

I tried to please him as much as I could by avoiding arguments and, as much as possible, agreeing with everything he said.

Yet, he would turn around and taunt me. He would tell our child as he played with her, 'Don't grow up and be like your mother, who has allowed a man to over-run her'.

I did realise that my efforts were in vain. This was someone who seemed to know what he was doing. And he told me several times that I could not please him. Yet, when I explored my options, it did not seem like I had any viable options but to stay in this marriage:

I had left everything to be with him; if I decided to go back to my home country, how could I face the shame and humiliation? Besides, I did not have the financial means to go back at that time, and my family and religion frowned on divorce; I did not think I would have any support.

Our first child was born almost as soon as I joined him, and I did not believe he would allow me to leave with our child. Leaving without my child was something I could not do.

I was so ashamed of myself for being in the situation I was in. I kept to myself and avoided engaging, even with my old friends, because of the shame. I could not open up to my family for a long time because I was ashamed, and I also felt they could not help me.

Besides, he was very charming to my family, and everyone liked him.

I began to lose interest in many things. I had always loved to read, but books no longer held my interest. Frequently, once my children were in school, I would reminisce about my life before marriage and weep.

How did I get myself into this situation?!

I came to the conclusion that I would need a recognised UK qualification to find a higher-paid job to help me support the kids and myself so I could leave the marriage.

You see, at that time, I was working as a carer in a nursing home, and I had done the calculations on my then-wages over and over again, realising that paying for childcare alone would make it impossible, even without factoring in accommodation, utility bills, and food. Yet, to work, I would need childcare. And I knew my husband would not make things easy for me if I were to leave him. I felt trapped.

At that time, I had no information about available childcare options; I did not even know about breakfast clubs or after-school clubs. I was isolated, and the people I came into regular contact with were mostly my husband's friends. And so, I was unfamiliar with the UK system.

In my quest to pursue some form of qualification that would enable me to leave the marriage, I was introduced to an advocate for women's empowerment, who later referred me to The River Manchester. While I knew that a spouse should not treat their spouse the way I was being treated, I did not realise that it was domestic abuse. In my mind, domestic abuse had to do with being hit, and my husband had never hit me. The Advocate and the River Manchester enlightened and supported me with the psychological and emotional abuse I was living with.

When I look back at my life then and where I am now, I count myself very lucky. So many people have not been able to come out of similar situations and remain or have been unable to mend, even after leaving. While I accept that there may be scars that will stay with me for the rest of my days, I have come a long way from the deep hole that I was in.

Being able to talk about it shows me that I have made significant progress in getting myself back. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone - it does not matter about your educational background, status in society, or the kind of job you do. I mean, I had never thought that I would have crossed paths with domestic abuse, yet I lived it for about a decade of my life.

Currently, I am pursuing a degree at one of the prestigious universities in the UK, and I have a higher-paid job. I am progressing in my career while being useful and contributing to society. I have also taken a course in information, advice, and guidance because I would like to be able to assist people in similar situations (to my previous circumstance) if I come across them. I could not have achieved this feat without The River Manchester and the Women Empowerment Advocate.

The River Manchester help people fleeing all forms of domestic abuse.

They not only give food parcels to people fleeing domestic abuse; they have volunteer professional Counsellors to support such people; they signpost victims to relevant organisations, including legal clinics and citizens' advice, as appropriate. They also provide so many courses to help domestic abuse victims, and my favourite course is about living your best life.

That course gave me so much hope that I could still achieve my aspirations, that all was not lost and that I could live again.

And I do say live again because so many domestic abuse victims are only just existing, as I was, going through the routines of life - cooking, cleaning, and taking care of their children, but dying inside. I was not clinically diagnosed as being depressed, but I suspect that I may have been very close to it.

You may have heard about the proverb that says, 'It is better to teach a man how to fish than to give him fish', and that is what The River Manchester is about. They are not just about providing fish; they provide support for survivors of domestic abuse to fish for themselves, to be contributors to society, and to regain their dignity and self-esteem.

So, when next you hear of The River Manchester, do remember people like me who have received immense support to live again, free from the bondage of domestic abuse.

To The River Manchester and all who are in the business of supporting domestic abuse victims - Women's Aid, Trafford Abuse Services and indeed all others; you may not realise it, but you are literally giving life to the lifeless.

Thank you.

Maame Frimpomaa

You are a courageous, inspirational young woman, thank you again for sharing your story

www.therivermanchester.org

From Chiefs to Tigers



Hi Carole,

Just thought I'd drop you a note as we close out the season entirely

We played in a tournament on Saturday 21st June (pic attached) against some very good opposition and managed 3 draws and a couple of defeats. This is great progress for us as we continue to bring new girls into the team.

We've also changed our name to Tigers - there was a clash with another AoM team so we opted to change.

That's it now until late August when we'll be back in for pre-season training.

Thanks again for your support

Peter Fletcher

Carole Swarbrick

The River Manchester

We answered [The River Manchester](#)'s plea for pasta, rice and tins with a special delivery from Tesco.....
When nobody had the time to purchase and deliver the goods, Rose had the idea of booking a Tesco order.....
Brilliant idea Rose ★



The River Manchester

★ Favourites · 9 July · 🌐

A big thank you to [#SoroptimistInternationalManchester](#) for their generous donation of food towards our food club tackling [#hunger](#) [#CostOfLivingCrisis](#)

Soroptimist Manchester Arena Memorial Award 2025

In the aftermath of the Manchester Arena terrorist attack in 2017 the club decided to set up an annual award for a performing arts student at Pendleton Sixth Form College. Many young people attended the concert and were affected by the events of that terrible night.

This year the Performing Arts team nominated Ava-Grayce Gregson from the HNC Musical Theatre course. The award was presented by President Fiona – accompanied by Rose, our club lead for the award – as the class graduated on 17th June.



Congratulations Ava-Grayce Gregson



Pat Usher

Fiona said –

It was a really inspiring occasion seeing how positively the students supported and appreciated each other's achievements and the camaraderie they had developed. We were also treated to a fabulous musical performance from two of the students which underlined for us why we continue to develop this link with Pendleton College.

The small award can help the student with travel or expenses for audition or performances. We know that previous recipients have continued to flourish on leaving Pendleton and have been cast in touring musical theatre productions, so good to know we have potentially helped a little as they realise their dreams.

Emmeline Pankhurst's Birthday Party

An open day was held at the [Pankhurst Centre](#) on Sunday 13th July to celebrate Emmeline's birthday (she was born on 15th July 1858).

Visitors enjoyed free entry to the museum, craft activities, live music and cake.

Five of our members baked cakes and helped at the event.



One of the guests made us a lovely thank you card from the blanks on the table meant for making birthday cards!



New Hope, Orissa – Sunitha's First Year

Greetings,

It's really hard to believe that through Soroptimist's sponsorship
one girl who comes from one of those 'frightening' backgrounds
and grows up with us and then,
like it was her destiny,
does incredibly well
and has a scholarship for Nursing.....

This last part in itself is remarkable bearing in mind the, literally, hundreds
who apply for just 5 or 6 scholarships.

Sunitha is doing her end first year start on 'practicals' and has gained equal
second place in skills test.

The distance between the before New Hope and with New Hope today is
even for me - beyond the dream.

Thank you again. With regards

Eliazar



Cathrine's Half Marathon for Contact Hostel (Total raised now £710)

We are very proud of our Vice President Cathrine who completed the [Edinburgh Half Marathon](#) to raise funds
for [Contact Hostel](#), a charity we started supporting in 2024.

Cathrine says –

I swapped my theatre clogs for running shoes to do the Edinburgh Half Marathon, fundraising for Contact Hostel in support of homeless young women and girls who need help to lead happy and fulfilling lives and to reach their potential.

The weather was a bit hot and sunny for running despite a forecast for rain, but the expected strong winds showed up which presented a challenge for the runners. The local support on the beautiful coastal route was fantastic with the Edinburgh residents offering jelly babies along the way to keep us fuelled!



Before



After

When my legs were in pain and felt like they could not keep running, it was the thought of the cause I was running for and the generosity of sponsors that really kept me going. I shall continue to wear my Contact running vest with pride whilst running around Manchester to help publicise the work of Contact.

Pat Usher

Wood Street Mission

Katie Bridge from [Wood Street Mission](#) was our speaker at the May meeting.

The charity was founded in 1869 to provide the basic necessities of life – food, shelter and clothing – to alleviate the appalling levels of hunger, poverty and destitution which many in the slum areas of Manchester and Salford had to endure.

Today the charity's projects encompass five areas –

Family Basics

Low income families are provided with the day to day essential items that every family need for their children – clothing, bedding ,towels, toys, baby equipment and toiletries. 2,545 children received help in 2024.

Smart Start

New school uniforms are provided to ensure that children from struggling families are not made to feel different from their classmates and can focus on their learning. Other school essentials such as winter coats, school bags, sports kit and stationery can also be chosen.

Books Forever

This project helps transform the lives of local children through reading. In 2024 over 15,285 books were distributed to over 3,090 children.

Childhood Experiences

Children are introduced to experiences that they might not otherwise have – including trips to the theatre, climbing centres and museums.

Christmas

3,013 children received Christmas presents in 2024.

We were pleased to be able to give a donation to this very worthwhile charity and hope to be able to help at forthcoming events.

Pat Usher



The Herds

On the 3rd July, a herd of African animals crashed the opening of the Manchester International Festival in Cathedral Gardens. The Manchester Camerata were “interrupted”, but gamely carried on playing their instruments - sometimes being chased by the creatures, sometimes chasing after them. Some of the chimps gambolled up Market Street surprising shoppers, the magnificent elephant reached M&S.



The festival event was chaotic, funny and moving.

The puppets are travelling from Africa through Europe and Scandinavia to the Arctic Circle. It's a reminder that animals, as well as people, will be forced to migrate from their natural habitats because of the climate crisis.

The Herds was brought to life by the team behind Little Amal to bring questions about the climate crisis to our streets.

Elaine Loader





Regional Conference, Northwest England and the Isle of Man May 2025

The conference was held on a beautiful sunny day at the lovely setting of Brockholes Nature Reserve Conference Centre near Preston. We were welcomed by Val Moss who is Regional President for Northwest England and the Isle of Man and well known to many of us as she was previously a Manchester member before retiring further north. The day was well organised with 5 interesting women speakers and I thought it was an inspirational day.

Sinead McCann is a manager at **Growing Well Kendall** and she told us about the charities aims and results. Starting on land next to Low Sizergh Farm it has now grown to have 3 sites covering all Cumbria. Growing Well does just that; providing an opportunity for people with mental health problems to spend a day a week with them, working in a team to prepare the land, seed and grow, then harvest their organic crops. And along the way cultivate good mental health. Developing purpose, skills, providing continuity and connecting them with nature show measurable improvements for their beneficiary volunteers who work with support volunteers. Using frameworks to measure their mental wellbeing they are able to show a step change for 68% at 3 months, with most spending around a year working with them. Cooking the vegetables they grow means they also get a nutritious meal and learn to take care of themselves. Sales of the vegetables help fund the project, some through cropshare boxes, also selling to shops and restaurants and you may see some of them in the shop at Tebay services if you stop there (as I do on my way to the Lakes and definitely won't mind the price tag now). They help 300 people a year at each of the 3 sites, wonderful to see nature as a healer in action. (see www.growingwell.co.uk)



(Editor: Sinead said "Grow through what you go through" and "Looking after plants reminds me to look after myself")

Lianna Champ was our next speaker. Her talk on breaking Barriers told us of her path to become a **Certified Embalmer & Civil Funeral Celebrant**. This had been her dream from the age of 9 (no that is not a typo, age 9) so really she was very unusual and found it very hard to get any training as it was very much a male dominated area and they did not want to take her on. However she persisted, becoming the youngest qualified woman embalmer and started her own funeral home in order to be able to practice. She believes women can bring compassion and empathy, supporting those in grief. Her story was therefore about believing in yourself and following your passion, not being afraid to be different but staying true to your dreams. She said we should never stop learning, build a support network of those who believe in you and be able to laugh at yourself as finding humour removes negativity. (see www.liannachamp.co.uk)



Sharon Hendrie Chief Officer at **Ynot Aspire** founded her organisation 13 years earlier to help young people develop aspirations and goals. Having worked in recovery services and then in prevention, in the youth offending team, she left her role at the County Council rather than spend her time applying for grants to fund her post setting up her own organisation. She shifted the focus talking to young people on the streets about what they wanted, what was good or bad about where they lived. Having opened youth centres she showed a reduction in the first time of entry to the criminal justice system, realising a lot of issues are around low level mental health problems with a gap in the service so has developed a multiagency approach. She works with the secondary schools in the area and now her team are being needed in primary schools too. They have volunteer children from the schools on a committee that creates a celebration with awards for young people locally, which they organise themselves and have a voice now about the future for young people in Hyndburn as they have a voice on organisations planning services locally. They had an event with local Soroptimists and also did a project together looking at recycling to create beach wear or Trashion. Sharon quoted Margaret Mead's words "Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world". (see www.ynotaspire.org.uk)



(Editor: Sharon also quoted "I want every girl to know that her voice can change the world")

Jenny Natusch told us about **Escape2Make** which she founded to empower young people. It aims to help 11-18 year olds escape the pressures of social media and provide them with a range of creative opportunities. She was a creative person herself and had produced television programmes too. It started as her daughter age 13 was very creative but opportunities were really blocked at school. Jenny surveyed 4 schools and found 79% of teenagers said they were lonely and 56% wished there was no social media. So, she set out to help the group “too old for the playground, too broke for the café and too young for the pub”. She found lots of artists and creative enterprise wanting to help so set up workshops and festivals and all sorts of events. Now they also have a small base in the centre of Lancaster for the teenagers and are reducing EBA (emotionally based avoidance) of school which 1 in 5 local children have dropping out regularly as they are bored, lonely and lost. She was again an amazing example of someone like Sharon who on seeing the problem sets out to make a difference and clearly has. (see www.escape2make.org)



Sarah Neill Marine Biologist was our final speaker. Sarah’s message was really about following your dream and not giving up. Sarah is a petite woman who says she is always underestimated and that meant at first she underestimated herself. She is a Lecturer at Kendal College and an Aquarist who helps run the Animal Rescue Centre and went on to not just participate in but lead SeaWomen Arctic expeditions. In order to be able to do that she had to undertake quite arduous physical tasks such as firefighting and as she is so petite they had to make a suit for her specially. However she was so determined that she passed all the assessments. Her work on rescuing stranded sealife means she is the advisor for the Project Wild Gambia training their network of rescuers. She conjured a great example of being underestimated when called to a stranded seal whilst out, they assumed her boyfriend was the marine biologist when she arrived and were somewhat surprised when she gave him her handbag and wrestled the seal into the recovery vehicle. As her next stop is Antarctica for more research I sent her social media details to my god-daughter a marine biology student.



I am still amazed at how much was achieved by these motivated women, particularly where they really have changed the world for young people around them. It certainly inspired me to believe we too can make a difference through our club, as we support our charities or volunteer.

Fiona Spencer

Of course the next Regional Conference will be South Lancashire’s, whilst our Sue Underwood is Regional President so we should put a save the date in our diaries now!



Novotel Manchester West, Worsley Brow, Worsley, M28 2YA
Friendship Supper on Friday Evening

Celebrating the Impact of 25 Years of Act4Africa

Our dedicated **H.E.A.L.** approach
Health, Education, Agriculture, and Livelihoods
ignites transformative change, not just for vulnerable
women and girls, but for entire communities across Africa.



Imagine the powerful ripple effect: healthy, educated women leading thriving families, empowered communities flourishing through sustainable practices, and a continent strengthened by their collective progress. This isn't just aid; it's a catalyst for profound and lasting change, demonstrating the power of investing in women and girls to build a more equitable and prosperous Africa for all.



Health

2 Million people provided with HIV/AIDS
and sexual health awareness training

100,000 people tested for HIV and other
sexually transmitted infections

300,000 condoms distributed across
Ugandan communities



Education

300,000 people educated through training
sessions on gender inequality

over 100 children provided with early-
years' education at our kindergarten

9,000 women and girls given life skills,
financial literacy and business skills



Agriculture

35 households given grain storage silos,
providing reliable food security for 20yrs

Yearly agronomy training sessions,
improving yields, family nutrition, and income

Over 1,000 families given access to clean
and safe water through our WASH project



Livelihoods

1,200 businesses started by young women supported through Act 4 Africa

1,600 young women trained in business, basic finance, and book-keeping

OVER 90 women's savings groups established, improving access to savings and loans

The Story of Kathy's Centre

Sadly in August 2014, co-founder Kathy Smedley passed away. To honour her memory and work following her passing, the Kathy's Centre was built and established as a beacon of hope. It stands as the vibrant heart of Act4Africa within the Mayuge District of Uganda.

To build this centre we partnered with [Engineers for Overseas Development \(EfOD\)](#), a charity run by young professionals from the construction industry. We worked with them to ensure that Kathy's Centre was built sustainably and to a high standard. Together we developed an eco-friendly design for the building, complete with solar panels and modern EcoSan toilets with disabled access. Training of the local workforce and construction commenced on 4th August 2016. The centre was built using Interlocking Stabilised Soil Blocks rather than traditional fired brick: these bricks are environmentally-friendly, strong and durable, reflecting our commitment to sustainability.



Local labourers were trained to use the press to make the high-quality bricks and to build the centre under the guidance and expertise of EfOD. Eco-friendly brick-making production also helps provide an income for Kathy's Centre itself, ensuring it continues to have a positive impact on local lives for years to come. The Interlocking Stabilised Soil Block (ISSB) press was donated to Act4Africa by EfOD, following the construction of the Centre. Two of them are now employed by Act4Africa to make bricks for sale to the communities of Jinja and Mayuge.

Thanks to the fantastic work of EfOD volunteers, the shell of the Centre was completed in January 2017. The internal fit-out of the centre was then carried out during 2017 and completed by the official opening in September 2017.

Deeply rooted in the local community, it provides vital health and support services to vulnerable women and children. The centre also houses Kathy's Kindergarten, our pre-school, and serves as a hub for training in agriculture, enterprise, and financial literacy.



(Courtesy of www.Act4Africa)

A Unique Gift for Act4Africa's Kathy's Kindergarten Children

The hairdresser in our village, of whom I have been a client for many years, is very artistic with many hobbies including dressmaking. A few months ago I noticed a pile of small children's outfits waiting for collection in her salon and she told me that she loved making children's clothes and those were for another of her clients, a Trustee of a children's orphanage in Africa. Never one to miss an opportunity for out charities, I asked her if she would make some for Act4Africa, she immediately said she would love to and I said I would meet the costs involved.



A few weeks ago the outfits for Kathy's Kindergarten were finished, for girls and boys aged 3 to 7. Brightly coloured cotton fabrics of different designs, dresses for the girls and tops and shorts for the boys, all sized and extremely attractive. She also supplied the pattern for the dresses so it could be used in Uganda.

When I enquired to the cost involved, she said, "I know you have a significant birthday soon and it is my present to you"

Certainly a unique gift which will soon ensure that many little Kindergarten children will be surprised to receive a gift of a lovely new outfit.

Rosemary Steven

Kathy's Kindergarten Pupil Raheema's Story

Raheema, a bright and bubbly five-year-old, is a student in middle class at Kathy's Kindergarten School. Her enthusiasm for learning and innate talent in mathematics have made her a standout among her peers. Every morning, she walks into the classroom with a big smile, ready to dive into her favorite subject. Her teachers often marvel at how effortlessly she solves problems, and her classmates are just as amazed.

Raheema's passion for math goes beyond just doing well in class. She loves to help her fellow pupils, patiently explaining concepts until they understand. Her natural ability to break down complex ideas into simple, digestible parts is impressive.

"Raheema is very good in mathematics and with the strong foundation we are building for her, she's someone to watch out for," says Jennifer, one of her teachers, with a proud smile. When the final bell rings, signaling the end of the school day, Raheema doesn't rush home. Instead, she heads to the playground with a small pouch of Math Dice in hand. These colorful dice are her favorite toy. With a quick flick of her wrist, she rolls them and gleefully calculates the sum, difference, or product of the numbers that appear. Her friends gather around her, eager to play along and learn from her. Raheema turns these sessions into fun, competitive games, encouraging everyone to participate.

Her activeness and passion for studies have not gone unnoticed. The teachers at Kathy's Kindergarten School appreciate her dedication and are committed to nurturing her talent. They often provide her with extra challenges and advanced problems to keep her engaged and stimulated. Raheema tackles these with zeal, her eyes lighting up every time she cracks a particularly tough question.

Raheema's social nature makes her a beloved figure in her class. She is always seen chatting with her friends, sharing stories, and spreading cheer. Her kindness and willingness to help others make her popular among her peers and teachers alike. She has a unique ability to make everyone feel included and valued, creating a warm and supportive classroom environment.

Looking at Raheema, it's clear that she has a bright future ahead. Her strong mathematical skills, combined with her passion for education and helping others, set her apart. As Jennifer and the other teachers continue to support and challenge her, there's no doubt that Raheema is on the path to achieving great things. For now, she remains the little girl who loves numbers, always ready to lend a helping hand and spread joy wherever she goes. (www.act4africa)



Lend With Care: Kuña Mbarete Group in Paraguay

Over 2 years ago members from Soroptimist International Manchester voted to donate £240 to support female entrepreneurs through Lendwithcare. This organisation operates around the world especially in Africa, South America and Asia where women struggle to finance their small businesses.

Amounts from £15 can be donated to specific females where their requests for funds have not been fully met. There is information about each request and details of how the loan will be used to the benefit of the women and their families so we can choose who we wish to support. Care International verifies the women's requests for loans and agrees a schedule by which the money will be repaid.

To date SI Manchester has made 38 loans ranging from individual entrepreneurs to village groups. 22 of the loans have been fully repaid. As the loans are repaid we reinvest the money in further entrepreneurs. £750 has been paid in total.

We have supported businesses as diverse as farming, catering, sewing, manufacturing, training and retail in grocery, general household and clothing.

Lendwithcare has successfully made it possible for us to support women in their business ventures and be assured that the money is being well spent.

This is the story of the **Kuña Mbarete Group**, a group of women who have benefited.

Total Amount requested £1,425.49
Repayment Term 12 months
Retail – grocery and general household items
Their Loan has now been fully repaid

The Kuña Mbarete Group has been working with Lendwithcare's local partner, Fundación Paraguaya for several years. The loans they have received have helped them to provide for their 12 dependent children. Comprised of entrepreneurial women, they are distinguished by their strong sense of solidarity



Members of Kuña Mbarete fully understand the responsibilities involved in being part of a women's group, from making timely payments to offering mutual support. They work hard to earn a living and support each other.

Laura is a member of the group who sells clothing to earn a living. She shared that the loan will be invaluable in helping her replenish her stock. The group is widely recognised for their solidarity and commitment to punctual payments, which enables them to qualify for larger loans and continue benefiting from the programme, ultimately improving the lives of both themselves and their families.



Val Jenkins

Why Lendwithcare?

85 years of experience

Run by one of the world's leading humanitarian charities: CARE International.

100% of your money

That's right, 100% of your loan goes to the entrepreneur you choose to help.

A passionate community

A large, devoted community of over 80,000 lenders changing lives with small loans.

CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

We are celebrating our Centenary over TWO years

The Inaugural Meeting was held on February 18th 1926

Our Charter was granted on June 16th 1926

So, Fiona Spencer will be President for our 100th year and will host our 100th Charter Dinner

SAVE THE DATE Saturday March 28th 2026

& Sophie Kennedy will be President when we are 100 and will host the celebration of the granting of our Charter in June 2026

President Fiona Declares Her Centenary Pledges

As we said we would try to pledge to do something with a centenary theme I thought I would count up the **Diary of Days with Soroptimist Activities** from our first centenary planning meeting to our charter celebration next June. So far I am on 52 counting visits to our charities, regional conference and a recent trip with the founder of Early Essentials pitch to a potential sponsor as examples. Keep your fingers crossed that I can get to 100 in the time frame.

A bit easier were my **"Planet " pledges** as I have managed to re-home 100 books and 100 items from my wardrobe, though that is counting scarves and shoes too, not sure if that is cheating! I have to say the lady at the charity shop was rather amazed at the boxes of books.

So I wonder have you made a pledge yet?

Are there 100 things you could do?

No pressure, but are you are willing to share how you are doing?

It may inspire others!

****Remember Alison's Call for Action: What is YOUR Centenary Pledge****

Now that the Centenary of Soroptimist International Manchester has begun, it's time to reflect on our remarkable journey and the impact we've made.

To honour this incredible milestone, we invite each member to participate in a special challenge: a pledge to celebrate our 100th year by committing to the number 100 in a unique and personal way.

*****Let's make our 100th year unforgettable, one pledge at a time*****

Centenary Supper Hosted By Carole

Our Centenary year of fundraising suppers continued on a Friday evening in June with a supper hosted by Past President Carole at her home in Horwich.

At the end of the hottest day of the year, seven club members plus Sue's intrepid traveller friend Sharon, started the evening cooling down in Carole's pretty garden with welcome glasses of refreshment!

Carole provided a most delicious supper and the evening unfolded with plenty of discussion and chat, some of it Soroptimist related and some not; nothing off limits and all of it entertaining.

It was a most enjoyable evening – great food, great company, once again proving that Soroptimists are sisters and most importantly good friends. Thank you, Carole, for making us all so welcome.



Since I am situated in probably the most southern outpost of SI Manchester, Carole extended her generous hospitality to me with Bed and Breakfast, so I was lucky enough to have an overnight stay in Carole's lovely new house.

Carole lives right on the Lancashire/West Pennines border. The next morning, we had a short drive through lovely countryside to Rivington for a snack lunch before the drive home.

So, a special thank you Carole, from me for a most enjoyable time and for generating an interest in an area which previously was a closed book to me.

Hilary Dodd

Centenary Fact

The Professions of the original 43 founding members....

bearing in mind this was 1926, when women were expected to become good wives and mothers and before all women got the vote :

Barrister, Blouse Maker, Dentist,

Elocutionist, Engineer, Florist,

Garment Manufacturer,

Journalist, Lecturer, Librarian,

Mental Welfare Worker,

Nurses Outfitter, Osteopath,

Photographer, Pianist,

Principal of Secretarial Training School for Gentlewomen,

Printer, Secretary, Singer, Solicitor,

Theatrical Costumier, Toy Seller,

Typewriter Repairer and Dealer.

Obituary Kathleen Beavis

Sadly, on 21st July SI Manchester's Honorary Lifetime Member Kathleen Beavis passed away peacefully at home.

Kathleen was a very valued member of our club from when she joined in 1980, President on two occasions and very active and dedicated to all things Soroptimist throughout the years, becoming an Honorary Lifetime Member.

SI Manchester is immeasurably richer for having had her as a member.

Although some of you may not have met her, as she "retired" to Anglesey nearly 20 years ago, she still came to many events whilst she was able, including our AGM, Past Regional Presidents lunches and SIGBI Conferences. Her legacy will linger for many more years as we all learnt so much from her about being Soroptimists.

Kathleen then became a valued member of SI Anglesey, who also miss her greatly, as well as being extremely active in her local community. It is no exaggeration to say that her funeral, on the 19th August, was a true celebration of her life, a wonderful way to say goodbye to such an incredible woman and great friend.

Her son Mike gave a beautiful tribute describing her myriad achievements though her life and indeed making us reflect on her indomitable strength and commitment. Kathleen was a "tour de force", amazingly capable and organised but also great fun to be with. It is no surprise to me that she reached the age of 98!

Following the family tribute, Rev. Canon Emlyn Williams and Reverend Elizabeth Roberts, as the local clergy she knew so well, were able to tell us of Kathleen's exploits in the "open the book" project bringing alive bible stories in schools. Her exploits were described with humour and the fondness of great friends.

Ann Garvey, former President of Soroptimist International, paid tribute to her dedication as a Soroptimist, Kathleen had been Regional President in 1989-90.

Ann, a past chairman of 'Number 63', recalled memorable times with fellow director Kathleen at 63 Bayswater Road, the Soroptimist hotel in London, though many stories could not be repeated!

As I write this, I feel so thankful to have known her. I am sure a lot of us will have wonderful memories we can share later, and you will join with me in sending our condolences to her family.

President Fiona

Kathleen's Last Party

In the church there were a few tears but mainly there was recognition and laughter as we listened to the eulogies, some quips I'll always remember:

Son Mike began by describing his Mum as 'Quite a woman'

98 years lived with dignity, integrity and her way. Kathleen was a sickly child and in later years she delighted in telling doctors that she was only still living 'to prove a point!'

She had a great sense of fun, her favourite cushion explained 'Those who think they know everything are of great annoyance to those of us who do!'

She made a difference, she lived long and well.....and we will miss her.

Ann Garvie recalled the trials and tribulations shared at '63' sometimes resolved in the Pub! A true Soroptimist.

Canon Emlyn explained that despite being invited to call her Kathleen, she was always 'Mrs Beavis', out of respect and a touch of fear....Mrs Beavis could make him feel like a 10 year old in short trousers or the Archbishop of Canterbury, always in the spirit of true encouragement.

Reverend Elizabeth declared Kathleen 'a strong woman'.....I shall never forget her and thank God for having known her.



Stories and laughter were shared at 'Mum's last party', catered by daughter Hilary of course
Sue Underwood

Fiona's Memories of Kathleen

I remember being in awe of Kathleen's knowledge from when I transferred to SI Manchester. She certainly was a "tour de force" but also warm and welcoming and fun. I got to know her so much better when I had Guillain Barre and was off work for months. Kathleen soon spotted Paul and I might need help, with a one year old at home, as I was recovering. She offered to take me to physio each week and I soon realised this was not really an offer but a statement of what would happen! It was a great chance however for us to become good friends and I was delighted.



Dinners at her house were often lively discussions about art as she was a keen collector and Paul was knowledgeable about modern artists and also painting himself. Kathleen embodied Soroptimism to me, she had huge knowledge about the organisation and was always involved in projects in the club. I remember going to my first pancake party at her home and marvelling that she could have us making pancakes on the night (I can't do that!!) with all the fillings made ahead. When she retired to Anglesey we were all sure that as well as supporting us she would find time to be an active member there. Her dedication and commitment to help in the community and support others was a great inspiration. Christmas parties were hosted by Yvonne and Kathleen with home made mince pies, mulled

wine and games because if there was food and fun Kathleen would be there, often hosting or providing food and ensuring everyone was having fun and included. When she retired to her beloved cottage I was inspired to take on the pancake parties, big shoes to fill as hers were legendary, and now find myself host at Christmas too. It means I think of her all the time at such events and hope she would be proud we are continuing her traditions.

As a family we set off to see her in her retirement cottage in Anglesey. After the first trip over when she insisted on cooking three course breakfasts, lunch and dinner for us, with the explanation that I worked hard and needed a treat, I thought we should not give her all the washing to do when we left, bearing in mind her age at the time. Of course that did not stop Kathleen as she was indefatigable and extraordinary. So in future we decided to take the Motorhome and park behind her cottage. We enjoyed many wonderful visits. Ciara and Alex have early memories of her digging up and roasting veg from the garden, particularly remembering the beetroot which they looked shocked at but then discovered they



loved.

One weekend we were sent off with plastic mat sledges to sledge down the dunes and soon had passing walkers wanting a go too. Exploring the forests and beaches, rockpools and South Stack for the birds are all vivid memories, Lladwyn and the light house, fish and chips from Newborough and homemade cakes from Kathleen all vied for the best part of the trip. We visited the open houses of artists, the islands galleries and more whilst with her, often with her as chauffeur locally, and finish with word games over a glass of wine (for the adults). The 'kids' remember her 90th birthday party and weekend on Anglesey; so Kathleen was a very much loved part of our family stories as well as an admired and respected Soroptimist. The last trip over that Paul and I made in the campervan with Kathleen, in her late 90s, with Mike there to support her and Hilary's great food all ready in the fridge, we probably all ate too much, drank too much wine and permitted rather late but I suspect none of us would have it any other way! It was therefore wonderful for all four of us to be there to celebrate her life and say farewell at her funeral. The vicars Emlyn and Elizabeth were amazing. They knew Kathleen well from her community work and regaled us with stories of her that showed their love and admiration and what a feisty capable person she was.

She would have loved it. As her daughter Hilary said "this is her last party" so we made sure we honoured that.

Saying she will be missed is an understatement as her legacy will live on in us for a long time.

Fiona Spencer

Rosemary Remembers Kathleen

I first met Kathleen in 1985 when I first decided to become a member of SI Manchester. It was her first Presidential year and she was so warm, welcoming and knowledgeable. She personally looked after me in her own unique way, ensuring as one of the then youngest members in a club of awe inspiring women that I was brilliantly supported.

I left the club (due to career relocation in 1992) then in 1999 following early retirement I bought a business in Timperley , a well established ladies fashion shop. One Saturday morning she and Yvonne Mullen came as customers and asked if I would reconsider joining the club. She was once again President and therefore for a second time welcomed me into membership , what a coincidence. They were both extremely elegant ladies and I particularly remember when Kathleen had received an invitation to go to the Derby at Epsom she purchased a fantastic pink and navy outfit with a fabulous coordinating hat she looked and felt wonderful. *(See Kathleen in Pink in Malta!)*

I have many memories of innumerable highly successful social events in her magnificent Victorian villa in Fallowfield , she never failed to offer her home as a superb venue for so many highly successful events . It was there on one occasion that many of us had the opportunity to meet Eliazar Rose the founder of New Hope Rural Trust, Orissa, India, the charity we have continued to support for so many years.

Her 80th birthday was truly wonderful,a superb lunch at Bridgewater Hall, afternoon tea at Midland French and a Mozart concert by the Halle orchestra in the evening. Kathleen did everything with the utmost style.

Whilst I was President in 2001 the club was invited to speak to several Rotary clubs to talk about Soroptimism as at that time women were being considered to be allowed to become Rotarians. Following our, to say the least, lively presentation we received a standing ovation and comments such as "Why do women want to join us when your organisation is so fantastic " . We had often wondered this ourselves!



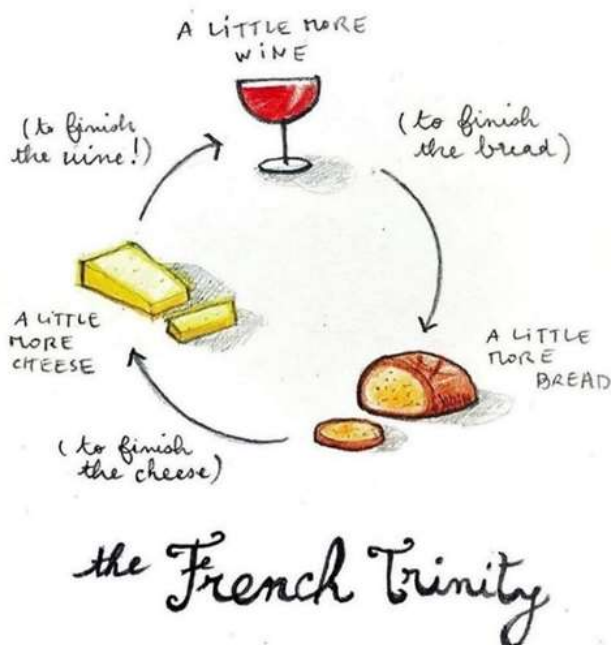
January 2017: We presented Kathleen with a Soroptimist Rose for her

The club gave her a wonderful 90th birthday party and until the last couple of years she has travelled from her home in Anglesey for our AGM. I have had the pleasure to spend time with Kathleen at several SIGBI conferences and since her relocation to her beloved Anglesey visit her home , the last being her surprise 97th birthday party.



A truly remarkable outstanding Soroptimist, an example to us all.

Rosemary Steven



Eliazar Rose (New Hope Rural Trust, Orissa, India) Remembers Kathleen

Some years ago we received an email asking if Koraput in Odisha was near to Muniguda, also in Odisha. It was explained that Kathleen and her daughter Hilary would be visiting some people in Koraput and could they somehow arrange for us to get them to Muniguda.. We agreed. At that time we had a senior young person, Vasu, who was managing projects in Vizag and he met Kathleen and Hilary at the Green Park Hotel and in meeting them was told to use 'first' names. (That's a bit difficult for a young Indian to call any senior by first name.) He made his first mistake by saying Kathrine; and was corrected. The three got on marvellously and reached Muniguda safely. Vasu later told me the days were real learning by him as 'days of correction and very good sharing of knowledge and ideas'. Sadly he passed away ten years ago. He called Kathleen the best English teacher he ever had and it was a compliment as after that he double checked all letters that passed through the Vizag office.

In Muniguda I enjoyed their visit like never before, Both gave truly great suggestions and both were great enjoyment and entertainment to us and the children at Namaste House – our home for challenged young people.

Kathleen met Sakuntala and she explained the work she did in heading the team of 18 tribal villages having Savings and Credit Schemes and her challenge with the Bank to give these 'signature only' Tribal women Savings Accounts. Kathleen told her that this was 'Soroptimist work to the core'. She said "Do more" and Sakuntala was motivated as the work had been very hard and challenging, "fighting" rigid Bank Managers". She expanded it to 35 villages. At that time it was difficult to get Non Formal Education into villages but Kathleen's sheer insistence that I just face the challenge to 'do it' gave me the push I needed.

Hilary stole the hearts of the Namaste House children and it was hard to explain that she, Hilary, could not stay. We kept up our friendship and my visits to Kathleen and Hilary were some of my greatest joys whenever I was in the UK.

Some years ago we made an appeal for a windmill for Kothavalasa. We were being stressed beyond imagination with power cuts and no working water pumps for 65 children and our HIV Hospice. Kathleen and Hilary made it happen. Words cannot explain the change this has made - not just in saving us money but giving us a totally assured water supply for the children and the garden, the cows and the goats.

The photographs tells its own story. One of the senior boys, now training as a Chef, still organizes the Windmill team to 'grease it quarterly, clean the grass, wipe the stone.

I can say now that the short visit was a lifetime in so many ways and Ruth cried when they left. Kathleen had encouraged Ruth not to be bullied by red tape. Kathleen has passed from this life but her friendship and input to New Hope will remain.



Eliazar Rose

Kathleen reported in the Spring 2012 Newsletter

HAPPY BIRTHDAYS IN ORISSA

Last January I had my birthday whilst at Muniguda, Orissa, and I was treated to a surprise party. All the children assembled in the hall and I have never heard "Happy Birthday to you" sung so many times to the accompaniment of piano accordion and steel drum. Two cakes were brought in, with a discreet number of candles, and these were cut into pieces and following tradition I was fed the first mouthful and I then distributed the cake to all the children.



Kathleen, Me And The Newsletter

When I joined Manchester Soroptimists in 2000, Kathleen was my first contact and, of course, she made me so welcome. At the time Margaret Johnson produced the Club Newsletter on a typewriter, using literal copy and paste. When Margaret became unwell she asked Kathleen to take over and I offered to help.

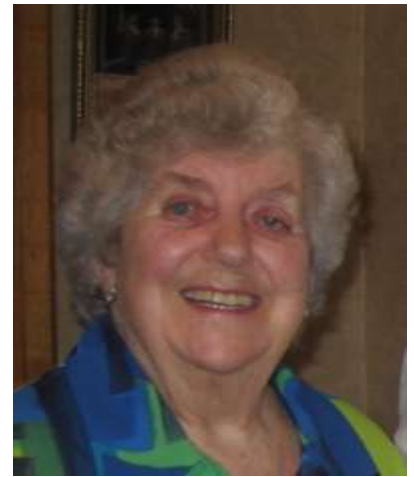
Our first Newsletter was "Issue 1 - Autumn 2001". At the time Kathleen lived in Fallowfield and I would go to her lovely home and we would spend the day producing the Newsletter, breaking for a super lunch - Kathleen was well known for her hospitality - and having so much fun.

In 2005, Kathleen decided to sell her Fallowfield home and move permanently to her beautiful cottage on Anglesey so each time we wanted to produce a Newsletter (every three months) my husband, Bill, and I would drive over to Anglesey and stay two or three days with Kathleen. One day we would spend producing the Newsletter, again with so much fun and laughter. I always thought my English grammar, spelling and punctuation were very good but that was before I worked with Kathleen. We often discussed the correct placing of commas, full stops and semi-colons and I never knew subjunctives could be SO important! On the other days Kathleen delighted in taking us to such interesting places on Anglesey.

When Bill became ill and we could no longer travel, Kathleen and I continued to produce the Newsletter by telephone and when this was no longer possible, Sue (Underwood) volunteered to take over, though Sue may demur at the expression 'volunteered'. !!! The last Newsletter Kathleen and I produced was Summer 2018.

Apart from punctuation (!) I learned so much from Kathleen over the years and we shared lots of fun and laughter. Rest in peace, my lovely friend.

Maureen Heywood



The Newsletter Wins the Rose Bowl Challenge

In June 2003, I remember I was a very proud President when our Newsletter won the first Rose Bowl challenge, presented by Regional President Carole. Kathleen was editor by then, but in my Oscar style acceptance speech, I hoped that previous editor, Margaret Johnson was watching from her cloud! (....my hat was supplied by Kathleen!)

Sue Underwood



SLR Pres Carole- Kathleen-SIM Pres Sue U-Yvonne Mullen

Tribute from Val Moss

The phrase 'a life well lived' was never more appropriate. I treasure the memory of the marvellous times I shared with her. We went to lots of different art exhibitions, to France a couple of times and not forgetting the lunch in aid of 63 at the House of Lords. She was a friend who enriched my life and a stalwart of Soroptimism. Rest in Peace, Kathleen.



*Perhaps my favourite photo of Kathleen
2018 SIGBI Conference Liverpool
Kathleen was determined to see me come in as
South Lancashire Regional President*

SIGBI Conference, Malta 2016 or 'Our Honorary Life Members On Tour'!

Some celebrities cross Africa on a motorbike, our stars do Malta on mobility scooters!

Our journey began with very smooth passage through Manchester airport, Yvonne and Kathleen being wheeled direct to the front of the check-in queue with Hilary and me following in their wake. Then we passed through 'Oversized Baggage' (cheek!) to security and beyond.

The Hilton Malta had been very helpful organising suitable rooms for us, but nobody had told Dennis who was on reception when we arrived at 11pm! All was well after some furniture rearranging by a very helpful porter. After breakfast on Tuesday Kathleen and Yvonne collected their mobility scooters and Hilary and I put on our running shoes!



After an afternoon of chatting with friends old and new we headed to the 'Blue Elephant', a Thai restaurant in the basement of the hotel. The final half flight of stairs were achieved by driving the scooters onto a platform, directed by the very helpful staff. It was only later in the bar that the first design fault of the scooters was identified – 'Where do you put your drink whilst trying to read the menu?!'



As we made our way to the table the manager decided that the scooters should be parked in their China Shop.....I'm afraid that we don't have a photo because neither Hilary nor I could watch!?!'

The banquet was generous and delicious with a host of flavours and colours.

We did return for another meal, but lessons learned, the scooters remained at the top of the stairs and we only ordered one dish!

On Wednesday morning our HLM's settled on their balconies whilst we were sent out for some fresh air – we got soaked! Returning to the rooms, still dripping, we pleaded to be allowed to stay indoors! So, back to the lounge for more lively conversation!

Registration was painless on Thursday morning. After lunch we delivered our HLM's to the hairdressers and enjoyed a pot of tea whilst we waited for them to return.....but we missed them and had our exercise running up and down stairs to be reunited and persuading our keys to let us into our rooms!

The Opening Ceremony was a little 'flat', somebody had decreed that we shouldn't applaud the individual flags onto the stage?!? (We managed to do as we were told for most of them!)

Friday began far too early as we prepared to be 'Pink by the Pool' – as the website reports, 'one Member on a mobile scooter was dressed as a Victorian bathing belle'.....it was Kathleen!



Miraculously, we were all back in the auditorium on time, and a little less pink!

Dame Professor Sue Ion spoke of the achievements of women engineers throughout history and demonstrated how early in their education children define careers as male or female.

S I Malta's 'Novawoman' project aiming to empower young girls, from 7 to 17, in creative skills training, was ably represented by two of the school girls who confidently quoted Dr Edward de Bono 'If you never change your mind, why have one?'

Club projects were presented, 'Spoon badges', 'Toilet Twinning', 'Singing for Memory' and 'STEM' (Note to SIGBI: Please could we give some basic PowerPoint Training for Member presentations?!?)

Bandana Rana, a journalist and activist from Nepal, working for women's rights in Nepal, urged us to 'Walk together for women's causes – change is possible'

After lunch, the AGM was lively and informative. SIGBI is to be allowed to apply for Charitable status, but the resolution to remove the Immediate Past Federation President from the Board was lost, common sense prevailed!

Saturday was a truly inspiring day, superb speakers (who knew how to use PowerPoint!)

International President Yvonne Simpson urged us to work to **FRIENDS**:

- F** Friendship in Federations and beyond
- R** Report your projects on the Programme Focus Reports
- I** Increase membership, be inclusive
- E** Educate to Lead
- N** Nepal – support the S I President's Appeal
- D** Deliver the Mission
- S** Stand by and support each other

RoseMary Reid, President S I Americas spoke of their work for younger members – 'Live the Dream'

Theresa Lyford, President S I South West Pacific quoted – 'An Optimist is someone who figures that taking a step backward after taking a step forward is not a disaster, it's more like a Cha-Cha!'

Sarah Ezabe Malliue, a law student at the University of Malta and recipient of the Queen's Young Leader Award who launched the social media anti-discrimination campaign '#RedefiningUS' quoted Angelina Jolie to explain her determination to wear a hijab 'it is who I am...it is my identity...I feel like an empowered female'

Steve Arthur from Water Aid suggested that women and girls should not be seen as victims but as engineers, innovating bringing safe water and sanitation to their world.

Dave Coplin, Chief Envisioning Officer for Microsoft began by telling us that we, as an audience, terrified him! But he soon turned our heads around as he spoke of 'The Rise of the Humans'! A technology alchemist, he explained how we should benefit from the potential of technology rather than simply using it to do the same things, only slightly better – we need to work smarter not harder!

Dr Helen Sharman, Britain's first Astronaut, had to follow that and she was equal to the challenge! Helen took us from the advert 'Astronaut wanted – no experience required', through her training, to the actual launch and journey into space 25 years ago. She gave us some examples of the mission leading to technical improvements for drugs using protein crystals grown in space and a better understanding of health issues. However, the mystery remains as to why we cannot grow fruit and vegetables in space!

The Closing Ceremony and Change of Insignia had its challenges!

President Margaret reviewed her year in office. From the 'zip-wire' challenge to places less travelled (Sierra Leone and Cameroon) she expressed her sense of privilege and honour of serving.

Change of Insignia was followed by **President Ann Hodgson's** Inaugural Address, her theme and challenge for next year is '**Step Up and Lead the Way**'

Entertainment by **Red Electrict** was a missed opportunity – they could obviously sing and play (if not spell!) but the volume was vamped up so high that their sound was distorted! We left early, with many others and had our own party in room 413 with our HLM's enjoying a shot of Brandy or two, purely medicinal of course!

Finally, there were a couple of 'Remind me why I'm a Soroptimist' moments to share....soaped from head to toe at 8am when the fire alarm and 'please evacuate the building' was sounded – false alarm! Then on Friday at 6am, either no cold water and trying to rinse in scalding hot water, or no water at all and abandoning the idea of a wash! Thankyou Hilton Malta for the timely lesson in 'running water' appreciation!?!

So, an inspirational trip packed with friendship and laughter! Looking forward to next year in Cardiff!

Sue Underwood from the Winter 2016 Newsletter



Kathleen delighted in being just one year younger than our Club!

Her words to remember....

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

Kathleen Beavis
1927 - 2025

Dates for Your Diary

Tuesday 2 nd September	7pm
Thursday 11 th September	7pm
Tuesday 16 th September	7pm
Saturday 20 th September	From 10am
Thursday 2 nd October	7pm
Tuesday 7 th October	7pm
Tuesday 21 st October	7pm
Saturday 25 th October	2pm
31 st October – 2 nd November	
Tuesday 4 th November	7pm
Tuesday 18 th November	7pm
Tuesday 25 th November	7pm

25th November to 10th December

Tuesday 2 nd December	7pm
Saturday 6 th December	From 10am

Further information & Social events – Watch for emails! - See <https://sigbi.org/manchester/meetings-and-events/>

Club Meeting
Programme Action - Zoom
Executive Meeting
South Lancs Region PAC & Council Meeting
Dinner Committee at Sophie's
Club Meeting (6pm Centenary Planning Greek Evening)
Executive Meeting
Greek Evening
SIGBI Federation Conference Birmingham
Club Meeting
Executive Meeting
Programme Action meeting at Sophie's

16 Days of Activism

Club Christmas Party hosted by Fiona
South Lancs Region PAC & Council Meeting

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

Looking Forward to the Autumn/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)?

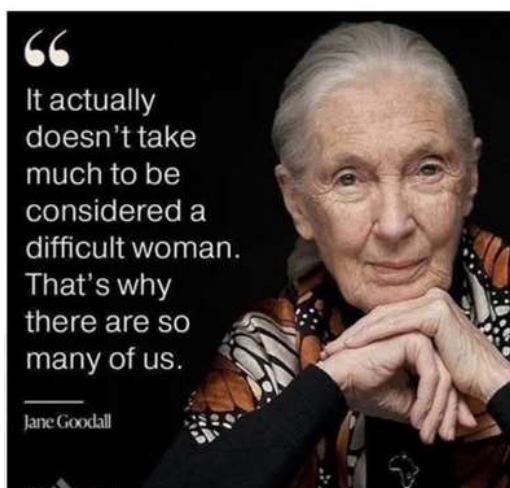
Please send me your **Greetings** (Maximum 20 words or a photograph) before the **November 30th deadline**

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

Sue Underwood sueuhome@sky.com

Last Words from Women, a Boy & his Dog who could/should have been Soroptimists!

& a Puzzle & a Riddle for
Kathleen!



Pre internet chat room using
An old version of windows...

