



Soroptimist
International

Nottingham

Club Newsletter

February 2021



Sue McF's garden – Sue sent this in to remind us what it was like!

Programme Action Report

Despite COVID restrictions, Nottingham club's PA work continues apace. In February the main activity has been in the categories of tree planting and support of the refuges. More of that later.

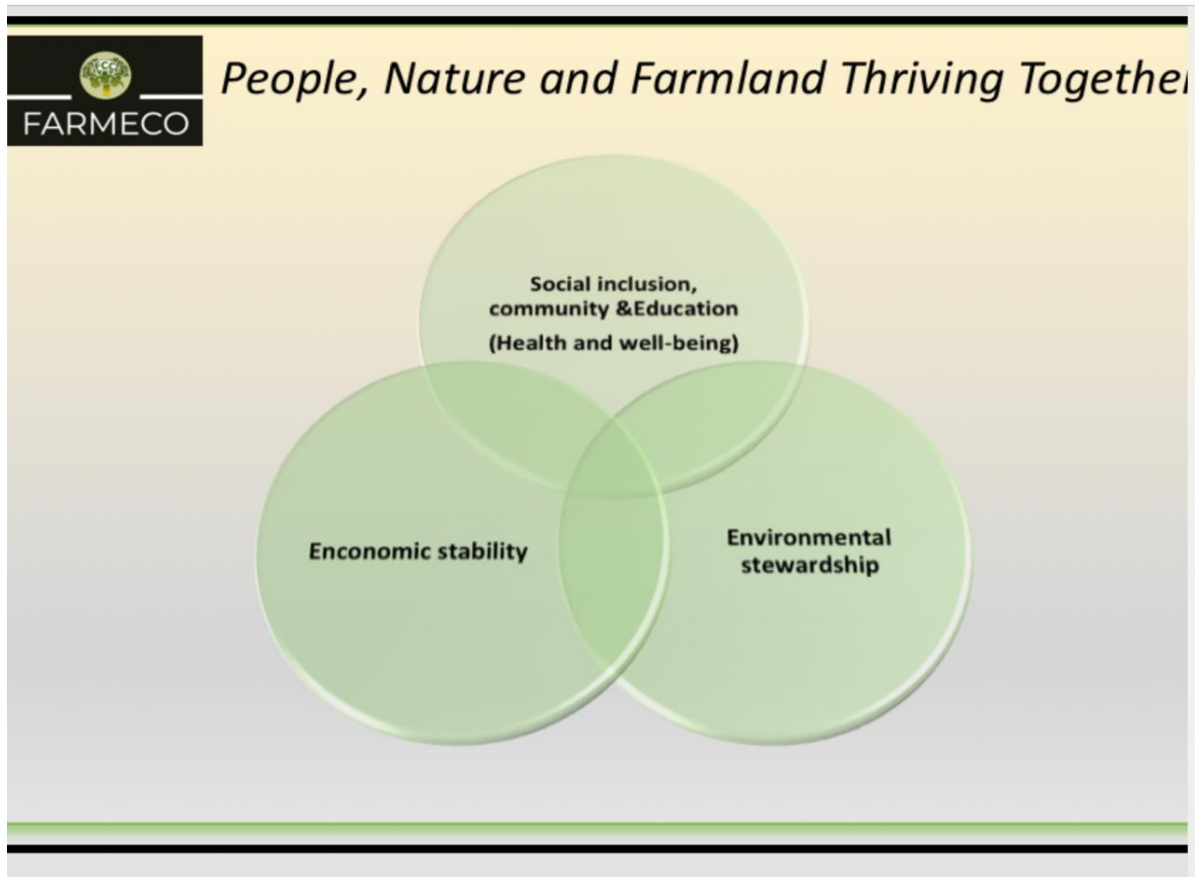
In addition, we continue to fund raise using 'easy fundraising'. If you have not already done so, please sign up and then every time you spend with major retailers, we get a donation. This does not affect the price you pay at the online checkout. If you order using a PC, it will even remind you each time to purchase via easy fundraising. Sadly, this is unavailable for tablets and mobiles. However just try to train yourself to start shopping by clicking on their website and they will then divert you to Boots, John Lewis, Matalan etc.

You will probably have seen the article by We R Here in which they praise the gardening work that has been done by Mary D at their premises. Well done, Mary!

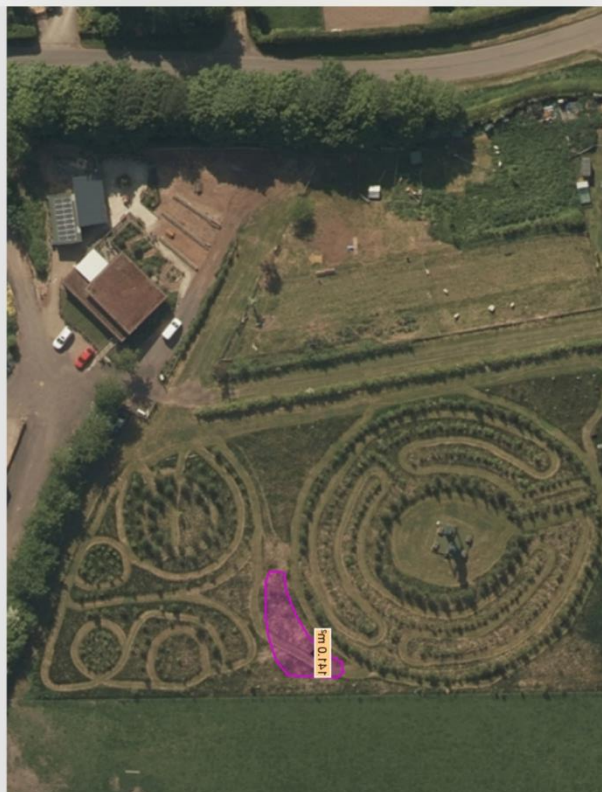
Clare Co also has done valuable PA work recently, running free relaxation sessions for several women referred from SAFE who are experiencing difficult times during lock down.

As noted at the beginning, Sue McF and her team are pushing ahead with the various tree planting projects. The two trees at the Windmill are due to be planted in March. We may not be able to physically attend but it is hoped that we can watch via Zoom. Sue has scoured the internet to get the best value fruit trees

The plot at FarmEco is coming along. Trees are on order, ground cover plants seeds are germinating and we hope to plant in April depending on restrictions.



Sue McF and Sue W have done a cracking job, well done! Here are two photos of the outlined plot and the FarmEco philosophy.



We continue to provide welcome packs to the refuges as and when requested. In addition, Zola have sent us an urgent request for bath towels and a few more packs. Margaret O and Lisa are liaising to meet this request. In these sad times, they are opening two new facilities and will soon need more support from us.

Exec Report

- **Future pattern of meetings** There had been a really constructive and friendly club discussion about the two suggested patterns of meetings. Four members had given email feedback and twenty-seven took part in the online discussion. One member rarely comes on Zoom meetings because she is working with a screen all day. Another prefers to wait to return when we can meet face to face. Members appreciate the benefits of both face to face and Zoom for various purposes. The clear preference is for an alternating pattern throughout the year with one face to face and one online meeting per month but perhaps with a bias towards face to face where possible. It is very helpful that Executive is now clear about members' wishes so that when face to face meetings can resume, the programme can be planned on that basis.

- **Planning for future Club Meetings and Events**

1st March PA Evening with speaker Helen Everett, Region PAO, will be the speaker. Audrey will advertise this in the Newsletter

15th March Charter Anniversary Meeting. Format and arrangements were made. It was agreed to invite Margaret Emsley, Secretary of the Diamond Education Grant, to speak.

AGM – Sue W will manage the production of the Annual Report. She will need to have the content by 10th March. No nominations have been received. Margaret will advertise again in the Newsletter and mention at meetings. It was noted that it is unfortunate that two of the club's major posts, Treasurer and Secretary, happen to fall vacant in the same year with both post holders having done six years. The Treasurer post requires someone with specific skills. The Secretary needs to have a good knowledge of the organisation. The Communications Officer has already done two years more than the official maximum. The committee recognised that it has powers of co-option.

- **85th Anniversary Celebration in August.** The tea party has been re-booked for 8th August. The contract has been signed and a £50 fee paid for making the change
- **AGM – Notice of meeting.** This was approved. It was noted that there are a lot of vacancies this year and the issue of ensuring continuity was raised. There had been some discussion about this at the December meeting but it will need to be discussed again.
- **Programme Action (Report given at Exec.)**

The tree planting at Green's Windmill will be at 1400 on 12th March. There will be a video of the event. Plaques will give the date. FarmEco plaques will say that the trees were planted for the SI Centenary. Lisa is still waiting for confirmation from Karlsruhe of their agreement to the mutual planting of trees for our two clubs.

Audrey will contact the Lord Mayor about support for these activities.

Lynda and Lisa have been investigating the idea of turning the Council House orange

for the 16 Days of Activism this Autumn and are now looking at extending the idea through Craftivism. For example, we could knit orange scarves for the 'Slab Square' lions and the Brain Clough Statue with labels to say why. The latter would all be removed afterwards and the 'watchwords' would be 'do not harm'. We might be able to involve other craft/women's groups, Councillors etc and make it a City initiative. This will be discussed with the club PAC and the incoming Lord Mayor will be contacted.

- **Finance**

Ann presented five documents: Report for period ending 31st January 2021, Report for first week of February 2021, Balance Sheet for 1st February 2020 to 31st January 2021; Receipts and Payments 1st February 2020 to 31st January 2021, Treasurer's Annual Report for 2020/21. She had altered the previous adjustment to the Toilet Twinning budget to ensure that it had £243 in it which is the exact cost of the last block. This project is now ended.

This was agreed by Executive. Members had donated £155 to replace the money used to respond to Emmanuel House's request for urgent funds for food.

Thirteen subscriptions for the 2021/22 year are part paid i.e. the monthly payments

Margaret's Moment

Come and Join the Executive Team

The Executive Committee is a friendly and supportive group which has the following opportunities available. The current post holders (in brackets) would be delighted to discuss the roles with you and to explore any suggestions as to how they could be carried out.

Treasurer (Ann Collin)

Secretary (Margaret Oldroyd)

Communications Officer (Audrey Jones)

Region Council Representative (Sue Goodley)

The first three posts are members of the Executive Committee and this involves an evening meeting on the second Monday of each month. There are two Region reps (only one vacancy as Daphne will be continuing). Only one needs to attend although both are welcome.

Please do get in touch.

Also, anyone can attend an Exec meeting (Currently on Zoom) to see how we work with no obligation. The next meeting is Monday 8 March. Please contact me if you are interested.

Audrey's Moment

- **A woman who inspires me**

What an interesting meeting that was. Many thanks to the participants. Three of them have kindly put keyboard to screen and written a short summary of what they said. I will include 2 of them in this Newsletter, and 2 the next (I'll will get round to writing mine!)

Barbara H wrote of Sandi Toksvig

“Sandi is a very funny & witty stand-up comedian, who cheers me up & always makes me laugh. You may have seen her as compère of the entertaining TV programme ‘QI’ of quite interesting facts.

She is bilingual, speaking Danish like her father, the original & first Danish TV broadcaster. A 1st class graduate from Girton College, Cambridge she has written many books & is very knowledgeable about women’s history (herstory), making us visible. She makes great, detailed, quick & clever retorts to sexist pronouncements.

In 2019, she was made President of the Writers Guild.

She writes for children too & as one of the early out lesbians with a high public profile, is a great role model for young people. In 2015, she co-founded the Women’s Equality Party as a political act.

She is married to Debbie, a psychotherapist & lives on a houseboat.

(I am married to Gail & live on a narrowboat.)

I admire her for all those positive reasons, lesbian solidarity & feminist sisterhood”

Margaret wrote of Charlene Smith

“Charlene is a South African journalist who was also an anti-apartheid campaigner. She spoke at the Federation Conference in Durban in 2001. “At that time HIV Aids was the scourge of Sub-Saharan Africa. 90% of infections were in that Region. 40% of annual deaths in South Africa were due to AIDs. Charlene was a lovely, tall blond lady who told us an horrendous story of how in 1999 she came home one night to her home in Johannesburg and found a man



in her bedroom who raped her and left her tied up while he went to rob her bank account. He was not caught for several days during which time he rang and threatened her. The focus of Charlene’s story was that when she got free and went to the Police, she was not offered an AIDs test or anti-retroviral drugs. She wrote her first article about the experience within a week of the event and within less than two years she had written a book called ‘Proud of Me’. She campaigned tirelessly and, as a result, rape courts, rape trauma units at Police Stations and automatic testing and ant-retroviral treatments for rape victims became standard. She helped design new WHO guidelines and most significantly, she

helped others to speak out about their experience of violence. She was inspiring because of her bravery and because of her attitude that she would only find healing by helping others. She insisted that she was not a victim but a survivor. She said : ‘We are only powerless when we fail to act with goodness and determination’ and ‘Respect yourself and remember that an injury to one woman is an injury to all’.”

Membership News

We would like to welcome Kathy G as a new member of our club. We look forward to meeting you initially on-line Kathy.

Birthdays in March



None as far as I am aware.

Region

Message from Region Secretary: Our next Region Meeting will take place **on Saturday 6th March 2021**, as originally scheduled, but will now be online via Zoom with a 10 am start as usual. We anticipate that the meeting will end around 1 30p.m. (.Any member wishing to join the meeting can just click on the link or, alternatively, key in the Meeting ID and Passcode numbers into their Zoom app. **See the email circulated by Margaret for the Zoom link -Ed.)**

I have now received confirmation that our Region Zoom licence has been extended for this meeting and I'm therefore pleased to tell you that the meeting is open to ALL members who wish take part and there is NO restriction on numbers

President Kam would like us all to celebrate International Women's Day (on the 8th March) by wearing any national costumes or dressing up in our finery for the occasion. Six of our clubs will report on an amazing woman of the 21st Century, or entertain us with a reading or poem. They have each chosen a different person or activity, so sit back and enjoy their offerings.

Our speakers include our own Jacqui P from SI Leicester, who will update us on the Centenary Tree Planting Project, and Cathy Cotteridge, President Elect, on other Centennial Projects and Celebrations. We are also fortunate to have recently secured Dr Carina Tyrrell as our guest speaker. Dr Tyrrell, a Public Health Physician, gained recognition as the first Miss England to have a degree from Cambridge University. She has a first class honours degree in Medicine and further post graduate qualifications and has published papers on identifying and managing emerging respiratory viruses, so it is no surprise to hear that she has been working on the Coronavirus that has so disrupted our lives over the last year. A feminist and women's right advocate she has promoted projects that support homelessness and is an ambassador for Homeless charities. I am sure that we will all listen to her talk with interest.

Dates for your diary

Monday 1 March. Programme Action Evening, the Speaker will be the Region PA Officer Helen Everitt

Monday 15 March Open Meeting celebrating 85 years of Charter

Monday 12 April Getting to know you. Sue Leadbetter and Viv Pearson. Club Business and Programme Action

And finally,

I attach an interesting article to the Newsletter. Margaret G sent as she thought we would be interested– we should be looking to our gardens for protection from atmospheric pollution.

**Women inspiring action,
transforming lives**

I thought you may be interested in some of the other work Action do in Kenya

📍 Kenya

Thank you for standing with women like Susan

My name is Susan and when I was 13 years old I underwent female genital mutilation (FGM) and was forced to marry, ending my education.

Many years later, I attended ActionAid training sessions about FGM and child marriage. A group of us women decided we needed to be a voice for the vulnerable girls in our community. Together we founded our Women's Network.

We work with communities explaining the dangers of FGM and child marriage. We also visit schools and speak to the boys and girls to change the views of the younger generation. Girls know they can come to me if they are in trouble and are able to stay in our safe house.

Cover image: The women's network that Susan started has grown to over 1,000 members. They are working together to end FGM and help girls remain in school.

I feel that my biggest accomplishment is that all of the girls – over 150 – who have sought my help are in school and continuing their education.

Asante!
(Thank you!)

Keep well and Safe all

Audrey