



# Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region Newsletter



WINTER 2017

## Regional Officers 2017-18



Immediate Past President  
Jennie Levick



President  
Chris Clark



President Elect  
Pat Kilbane



Vice President &  
Minute Secretary  
Judith Clark



Secretary  
Margaret Middlemass



Treasurer  
Ann Hawkes



Development Officer  
Andrea Trimmer



Media Officer  
Linda Gerraghty



Benevolent Fund Rep  
Angela Edwards



Federation Councillor  
Val Hills



Programme Action  
Lindsay Green



Joint Chairs  
Susie Westwood

### Regional Council

- The new team line up for the camera at the Regional Council meeting in November

### Inside this issue:

SIY P.P. Lunch	2
ASG Day	2
West Cluster Group	3
ASG Conference	3
Clubs News	4-6
Diary Dates	7
Obituaries	7

## Hail and Farewell

Immediate Past President SI Yorkshire Jennie Levick, SIGBI President Sue Biggs and SI Yorkshire President Chris Clark on stage at the SIGBI Conference in Cardiff



## Yorkshire Past Presidents' lunch

The Yorkshire Past Presidents Lunch on 24th September was held at Monk Fryston Hall Hotel

From the top:

Sylvia Wilson, Liz Lyle, Lesley Berry

Janet Haywood, Margaret Cook, Pat Shore

Angela Edwards, Eileen Morgan, Jenny Heppenstall, Val Jenkins

Andrea Hunt, Yorkshire President Jennie Levick, Barbara Evamy, Thelma de Leeuw



## Anti Slavery Day

Soroptimist International of Yorkshire's Anti Slavery Group attended the Wilberforce House Museum on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October to raise awareness of Modern Day Slavery. This is a growing crime and covers a wide range of exploitations including:

- Sexual exploitation, forced labour, organ harvesting, forced criminality, domestic servitude and forced begging;
- Online abuse including sexting; this is the sharing of inappropriate images on social media sites such as Snapchat. This can lead to the blackmailing of people and ultimately to online grooming.

### Victims of types of slavery for UK Nationals Yorkshire and Humberside January to June 2017



■ Domestic Servitude ■ Sexual Exploitation ■ Unknown

The group produced a range of displays highlighting the types of slavery within our area and up to date data of slavery within the different Police Force areas across Yorkshire and Humberside.

The most common type of exploitation during the first two quarters of the year according to the National

Referral statistics was domestic servitude with sexual exploitation as the second most common type.



During the day Soroptimists spoke to visitors to the Wilberforce House Museum and comments ranged from, 'there is no slavery in Hull' to 'I hadn't thought about organ harvesting as a form of exploitation' and everything between the two. Two videos were shown and resources such as FGM and Forced Marriage booklets and our 'Loves me, Loves me Not' and 'Friends' Bookmarks were given out.

### Slavery Victims from January to June 2017

#### Yorkshire and Humberside by Police Force Area



■ Humberside ■ North Yorks  
■ South Yorks ■ West Yorks

## Simply the Best

SI Yorkshire's West Cluster received the Economic Empowerment Best Practice Award at the Federation Conference in Cardiff for their Together Women Project.

The project was as direct result of work undertaken by the UKPAC in partnership with the Prison Reform Trust and is focused on empowering women to promote realistic change within their lives.

The project moves women out of crime and away from damaging lifestyles into more positive futures, working with them in safe, women-only spaces, building their resilience and empowering them to learn new skills. The majority of the women attending are newly released from prison or on community orders. The possibility of staff working with self-referrals has greatly reduced due to cuts in funding, therefore our services are even more critical.

Members have been involved at many different levels - from the weekly Knit & Natter or other craft activity sessions facilitated by Soroptimists from Bingley, Bradford, Ilkley, Keighley and Skipton in Craven donating clothes, bedding, welcome packs for women in need and through

the funding of activities/gifts for the women and children.

Our donations of welcome packs, clothes, money to support their activities have been vital.



Our weekly activities are greatly appreciated by both the TWP staff and the users themselves appreciate the opportunity to talk and be listened to as they develop their communication and social skills. We have observed how they have grown in confidence. Some users who have learned to knit have found that learning new skills has increased their self-esteem, their ability to re-engage with the family, and take their minds off addiction issues.

## West Cluster Group

## 'Failing our Children- Shattering Secrets, Rebuilding Lives'

This was the fourth day conference that has been led by Yorkshire's Anti Slavery Group. Held at the West Yorkshire Playhouse on November 10th it was attended by 40 professionals and Soroptimists. Our speakers were Christina Gabbittas - children's author, Rita Leaman- from SI Scarborough and a psychotherapist as well as DS Ian Mitchell and Sue Tinnion. The latter two are part of the Multi- Agency Safeguarding Hub in Bradford. The day was chaired by President Chris who made sure that the day flowed well and that the delegates were able to network and leave determined to enable children to have positive outcomes and face a healthy future.



'Share some Secrets' is the children's book which has led Christina into a new avenue in her career

and she is now passionate about raising awareness- and finding the way forward- about child abuse in all its forms. She spent two years researching the book and now she is involved in taking that message wherever she can get. 'Reach Out, Speak Out' is an outcome of the opening of doors in safeguarding- a conference at the Royal Armouries on February 1st 2018 of which she is a driving force.

Rita emphasised the importance of 'emotional health' in our lives. Mental health issues are very much news but positive mental health is a result of the emotional health we grow up with. If children are exposed to abuse then it will shatter lives unless positive role models and positive values are presented.

Ian Mitchell and Sue Tinnion gave us hope in the way that services have developed over the last few years and there is a positive outcome when agencies work together on safeguarding issues. Bradford is leading the way on this and it was good to hear the difference this is making to outcomes.

The feedback has been very positive and Chris did take part on Radio Five Live later that day- in a programme where Christina was being interviewed. Tweets were also being sent all day by our 'Tweeters' and having many responses.

## ASG Conference

Margaret Cook

## Putting the Pieces in the Right Place

### SI Castleford Normanton & District

Soroptimist International of Castleford Normanton and District with some of the members of the Pop Up cafe in the Parish rooms at Castleford. Castleford have made a donation for equipment and went to see the equipment. Easy handle jigsaws with local pictures, music and song sheets from the past which will be recognised by those that attend and also a large floor game.



## A Reet Grand Neet Aht

### SI Dewsbury & District



Continuing their 75th Anniversary celebrations, a day of mixed weather saw over 20 members, friends and a dog complete 100 laps of Dewsbury District Hospital. Each lap was 0.75 mile so a target total of '75 miles for 75' was achieved. President Julie's chosen charity the Yorkshire Air Ambulance supplied a gazebo and a range of souvenir items. A collection bucket revealed £177.39 at the end of the day for the charity.

SI Dewsbury got together on Saturday 14th October at the Ossett Trinity Church centre to have a 'Reet Yorkshire night aht'.

The event was to raise funds for Yorkshire Air Ambulance and was a real Yorkshire meal, followed by a quiz on all things Yorkshire.



The kitchen team worked like troopers and pulled out all the stops to deliver a three course Yorkshire themed meal, black pudding, mucky

fat, yorkshire puddings and curd tart et al were all devoured by grateful diners. None of the cooks wish to see a corned beef hash again this year!

However it was a huge success and raised over £400.00 for the charity.

The club held an Open Evening in November evening to raise awareness of who we are and what we do. Invitations had been sent to a variety of contacts and prospective new members. President Julie welcomed the Mayor of Kirklees, Christine Iredale; SI Yorkshire President Chris Clark and the speaker for the evening Barbara Dixon, Programme director of SIGBI, before giving a brief insight into the kind of work done by the club.



Members with guests: Barbara Dixon - Top 4th from left, and Front; middle Mayor of Kirklees and SIY President Chris Clark

Barbara Dixon chose, as her theme for the evening, the oppression of women and various practices to which women are still subjected, such as slavery, FGM, trafficking etc. and, which still exist in our modern world. The statistics which she provided were quite horrendous. This presentation certainly gave food for thought, and begged the question as to what can and should be done to stop these barbaric practices.

The evening was well attended, and there was a fair representation of people from various groups around and beyond the district.

## Friendship Day Celebrations

President, Nicola Harding, presented the award to Niamh Owens saying 'It is a pleasure to award the Gill Smith Memorial Trophy to Niamh. The trophy is a fitting tribute to one of our members who loved tennis and I am sure, she would have been proud that this is being awarded for the Best Girl Improver.'

Matt McTurk, Head Coach at the Harrogate Spa Tennis Centre, said 'Niamh was put forward for the award because she has shown a real enthusiasm and love for tennis since she started being coached and playing tennis with us over a year ago. She is also keen to help others, and if she doesn't have a tournament, is regularly at the club on a Saturday morning, to help younger children to improve their tennis. It has been good for the younger juniors to see Niamh in this role and for them to see how Niamh has improved her game over the last year and grown in confidence, to where she is now playing tournaments across Yorkshire, competing against some of the best players in the County.'



to everyone who has come along today to share in the celebrations of the 84th year of our Club.

Harrogate and District Soroptimists celebrated International Friendship Day in recognition of their friendship links across the world.



At the beginning of the evening, candles were lit for each of the Friendship Link Clubs as well as for Soroptimist International. The Club has Friendship links in Wales, Scotland, England, Australia, Belgium, France, Japan, South Africa, Malawi, America.

In a welcome to members and guests, President Nicola Harding spoke about the International President's Appeal, 'Women, Water and Leadership'. Christabel England spoke about her recent visit to Blantyre in Malawi, which is one of their Friendship Links.

The club has raised funds to help members of the SI Blantyre, in their joint project with the School and the community. The project is improving the school facilities and supporting girls to stay in school by providing them with uniforms and learning materials.

After everyone had enjoyed a tasty meal, a raffle of the gifts which had been received from Friendship Link Clubs from around the world, raised funds for the International President's Appeal

The 84th Annual Lunch was held at the Spa Hotel, Ripon. Over 70 people attended, including the Mayor of Harrogate, and the Deputy Mayor of Ripon. President Nicola Harding welcomed guests from across the Yorkshire region and beyond including: Yorkshire Regional President, Jennie Levick; President Nicola said 'It has been a lovely way to spend a sunny October day, with all our Soroptimist friends, guests and members, Thank you

## Helping the Stroke Unit

Joint Presidents of SI Selby, Rita Pearson and Pat Griffiths, recently presented the Stroke Unit at York District Hospital with 25 washbags put together by their members.

The Leeds University along with the Trust had taken part in a research study around creating good rehabilitation environments for survivors of stroke and involving some past patients to contribute as to what would make a better environment for a patient to start their long

rehabilitation programme. The patients were videoed and part of what they said on film was around personal hygiene – being able to shower and shave and wash their hair and have their hair cut if they wanted – all this made them feel better and more able to focus on the long journey ahead. President Rita said " We are delighted in being able to help patients in their recovery by providing this small service."

Selby Soroptimists were delighted to meet with Anna Foster from Selby and Craven IDAS (Independent Domestic Abuse Service) at their recent meeting. IDAS is the largest specialist charity in Yorkshire supporting people affected by domestic abuse and sexual violence. SI Selby have been awarded an IDAS Ambassador Club Certificate in recognition of their support for tackling domestic abuse. As an Ambassador Club, SI Selby are raising awareness of the work of IDAS and are working with other Soroptimist Clubs in Yorkshire to support initiatives aimed at tackling all forms of domestic abuse and supporting victims.



## SI Harrogate & District

## SI Selby

## Giving Old Bras a New Lease of Life

### SI Sheffield



This year SI Sheffield decided to help in a practical way and have been collecting bras for a very good cause. Giving our old bras to 'Against Breast Cancer Charity' is a great way to help raise funds for ground breaking research into finding a vaccine against breast cancer and to look at ways to increase the survival of women and men who have the disease.

It also keeps the textiles out of land fill sites and keeps many families in developing countries out of poverty and plenty of

people in the UK in a job too. This successful venture also helps our textile recycler save 7.8 million tonnes of CO2 emissions every year by collecting, reusing and recycling many thousands of tons of textiles.

The picture shows some of the members of SI Sheffield with the bras and pink hats.

SI Sheffield were delighted to welcome Amy from Breast Cancer Care as their speaker last month. A full house - including many members from daughter

club SI Hallamshire - marked the 25th anniversary of the *Pink Ribbon* by wearing pink and the Golf Club provided a wonderful pink themed meal. Members and guests gave generously through a tombola and an auction to raise funds for this unique charity. Amy told us some of the history of Breast Cancer Care and also informed us of the very valuable work which it does in supporting those with this disease and their families from diagnosis through treatment and beyond, helping women to find their 'new normal'.



Presidents of SI Hallamshire ,SI Yorkshire and SI Sheffield

## Golden Celebrations

### SI Skipton in Craven

SI Skipton in Craven celebrated the 50th Anniversary of their first meeting in their Clubroom on Otley Street. It was also their Interclub Evening, as well as being International Friendship Day

Their special guest was Chris Clark, incoming President of the Yorkshire Region. The club also took advantage of the gathering to present Chris Clark with bags and toiletry items for distribution to trafficked victims in the Yorkshire Region. The Speaker for the evening was Tim Crossley who spoke about the Mystery of the Dugdale Medals.

With the vision and financial support of founder members in 1956 a building fund was started to provide their own club-room. Adjoining properties in Otley Street were bought and re-designed by founder member Mary Wales who was one of the first female Architects. The building was to include a ground floor club-room and two first floor residential flats. The first meeting in the club-room was held on 3rd October 1967

exactly 18 years after the first club meeting.

Since that time the Clubroom has been available for hire by many, many local organisations as a base for their meetings, celebration, and events, thus providing a valuable service to the Skipton community.

Just before half-term President Jane presented prizes, given by SI Skipton in Craven, to pupils at Greatwood Primary School, Skipton, for the best posters created on the topic of what makes a good friend. At the start of the Autumn Term 200 "Friends" bookmarks were given to the school by the club along with suggestions for how they could be incorporated into a project on Friendship. One side, which is red, has a list of warning signs and behaviours that suggest that someone wanting to 'be your friend' may have a hidden and dangerous agenda. The reverse side, which is green, lists the actions and behaviours a good friend would exhibit such as politeness, encouragement and a willingness to listen. The

bookmarks were a result of work done by pupils of Trinity All Saints CE Primary School, in Bingley, and were developed with the SI Bingley. The aim is to safeguard children from unhealthy relationships. Greatwood pupils spent a week focusing on Friendship. They created posters and each year group produced a display.



Pictured are the prize-winners from each year group and some of the displays.

Soroptimist International  
Yorkshire Region

A Word from the Editor

A successful conference in Cardiff gives SI Yorkshire a new President, Best wishes to President Chris and Congratulations to IPP Jennie on a successful year.

*Merry Christmas  
& Happy new Year*

Liz Hayes

**Diary Dates - 2018**

**January**

Sat 13 Regional Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett - all day

**March**

Thurs 8 International Women's Day, Regional Event at Kala Sangam, Bradford

Sat 17 RCM Garforth Academy

**April**

Mon 16 Regional Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett - evening

**June**

Sat 23 RCM Askham Grange Prison

**July**

Mon 2 Regional Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett - evening

Sat 7 UKPAC Study Day Belfast

**September**

Sat 29 RCM Grammar School at Leeds

**October**

Sat 6 Regional Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett - morning

25-27 SIGBI Conference, Liverpool

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - March 4 2018**

## Obituaries

**Doreen Bales  
SI Sheffield**



It is with sadness we report the passing of Doreen Bales in August 2017

Doreen had been a member of S I Sheffield for over forty years and was our President 1986-1987

She was a JP, a member of Inner Wheel, NCW and Standing Conference and President of Bamford

Sheepdog Trials

Latterly she had been a resident in a Private Care Home in Sheffield as her health had deteriorated.

**Janet Sykes (Nee Hill)  
1933 – 2017**

**SI Wakefield**

Janet Sykes passed away peacefully on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2017. She had been a staunch member of the club for over 50 years and was very proud to be invited to become an honorary member in 2015.

Janet was always a committed member, becoming President in 1969, and holding the post of Treasurer for a number of years. Even in her later years, she was still helping to organise events and was instrumental in raising money for Martin House Hospice and The British Heart Foundation. She imparted her knowledge of Soroptimism during discussions at club meetings,

which was interesting and valuable to newer members.

Janet was an inspirational teacher, who became Headmistress of Bottomboat School Wakefield. She was admired by staff, pupils and parents for her diligence and patience when working with young children, and was asked by the Local Authority to head a Reading Unit within Manygates School, which was very successful.

In her personal life, Janet was happily married to Duncan for many years, and was a supportive stepmother. She swam regularly at Walton Hall and was a member of The Wakefield Luncheon Club. Consequently she had a wide circle of friends, and will be missed by many.

**Newsletter Submission  
Guidelines**

News Reports: maximum of 400 words in a Word document or email

Obituaries: maximum 150 words

Photos: Unmanipulated original images of high resolution sent as an attachment not embedded in a text document. No collage/montages.

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