



Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region Newsletter



WINTER 2015

Regional Officers 2015-16



IPP & Benevolent Fund Rep
Angela Edwards



President
Liz Lyle



President Elect
Jennie Levick



Vice President & PA Chair
Chris Clark



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Margaret Middlemass



Treasurer
Ann Hawkes



Minute Secretary
Judith Clark



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Andrea Trimmer



Ext. & Membership Officer
Pat Kilbane



Federation Councillor
Val Hills



Media Officer
Linda Gerraghty



Public Relations Officer-
COULD THIS BE YOU ?

Regional Council

- The new team line up for the camera

Situation Vacant:

Public Relations Officer



An opportunity for you to:

Become more involved in SI Yorkshire

Become a SI Yorkshire Officer

Become the SI Yorkshire PR Officer

This is a possible job share position

Do you drive and enjoy travelling in Yorkshire?

Do you use Social media, a computer and camera?

Are you available for most RCMs and up to four officer meetings a year?

If interested, please speak to your Club President



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SIGBI 81st Federation Conference Glasgow 2015

Delivering the Difference

Thursday evening and with the River Clyde flowing outside, over 1000 SIGBI delegates watched with pride, as the flags of the Federation countries were paraded into the auditorium of the SECC Glasgow. It was the start of the 81st Federation Conference and opened by Federation President Jenny Vince.

The invited speakers on Friday morning each held the audience's attention with their presentations. Jo Fairley, co-founder of Green and Blacks chocolate and Dame Stella Remington former DG of M15, were also heard by the special guest speaker, The Princess Royal. After hearing Dame Stella speak, Princess Anne suggested that knowing the Soroptimists, she thought that there might be at least a couple of spies in the audience! The panel discussion with Jo Fairley, Dame Stella and Sarah Montague from BBC Radio 4, was informative and well chaired by Dr Joan Smyth, a former Federation President, The Chief Steward Hilary Ratcliffe, announced before lunch that one of the neighbouring exhibition halls was hosting the BBC Good Food Show and that they were giving SIGBI delegates free entry on Friday. A most popular offer.

The selection for SIGBI Project 2016-2019 was won by SI Canterbury with the Meru Women's Garden Project. In the afternoon the General Meeting went smoothly and the vote for Associate Membership was carried by 77.2%. The SIGBI Board showed visible relief.

The SECC is only one of many modern buildings either side of the Clyde. Another is the Glasgow Science Centre and many delegates crossed the bridge to enjoy an evening reception amongst all the gadgets. The entire centre was open for the delegates, while enjoying a glass of wine.

Saturday morning started with Australian, Justice Rowan Downing, who gave a serious presentation on his work with the war crimes hearings in Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge period.

After lunch came the popular club PA presentations and SI Yorkshire was well represented by SI Richmond and Dales. A moving presentation came from Olivia Giles, founder of the charity, 500 miles. Fifteen years ago, aged 35 and living a comfortable life, she developed meningococcal septicaemia overnight. She woke up six weeks later without her hands or feet. Through her recovery, she was elated to receive her prosthetic legs. This gave her an idea



SI Yorkshire members ready to wave their white roses at the exchange of Regalia between Angela Edwards and Liz Lyle.

of helping people in developing countries, who, if they didn't have legs, live a very poor, isolated life. Olivia spoke of a joy of life and it shone out of her. She was given a standing ovation.

At the Closing Ceremony, the Presidency of SIGBI passed from Jenny Vince to Margaret Emsley, a civil engineer. Her theme for 2015/16 is 'Engineering the Future'. Margaret comes from a SI Lancashire Club. Red roses nearly outnumbered the white ones waved by SI Yorkshire, when Liz Lyle from SI Beverley came on the receive the SI Yorkshire regalia from Angela Edwards. There was a rousing finish to the evening with the Glasgow Phoenix Choir and a welcome to Malta in 2016.

Rita Leaman



A celebration for the new SI Yorkshire President, Liz Lyle with President Elect (Jennie Levick. SI Sheffield) and Honorary Member, Thelma de Leeuw.

A Challenging Event



When Councillor Judith Chapman, Lord Mayor of Leeds, opened the fourth annual Day Conference organised by the Anti Slavery Group of Soroptimist International of Yorkshire, she stressed in her opening remarks, the need for society to address the theme of the Conference which was Safeguarding: Challenging Attitudes and Opening Minds. And to this end the Conference organisers had brought together key note speakers who would bring their own wide ranging experience to share with the delegates.

The first speaker was Tracy Almond, from the Lucy Faithfull Foundation who spoke of her work as a therapist, helping young sex offenders to develop healthy relationships, to change their anti social behaviour and to take responsibility for their own actions.

This work was reinforced by the address given by Julia Mulligan, North Yorkshire Police and Crime

Commissioner who spoke about the awareness raising initiatives and the new training programmes now in place that give guidance to serving officers on the identification and management of cases of abuse.

The next speaker was Ray McMorrow from the National Working Group Network, (NWG) a charity and UK wide network of practitioners, policy makers and researchers working with children and young people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and trafficking within the UK. From him delegates learnt of the work being done with children and young people who, because of mental health issues, are especially vulnerable to abuse.

The final speaker was Julie Tweedale, Founder of Freedom Personal Safety, an organisation which she developed as a result of her own experience of abuse as a teenager. Julie shared her concern about social media being used as a tool for the grooming of young people,

urging the delegates with children and grand children to be vigilant. She also expressed concern about the many pornographic images that are finding their way into main stream advertising, influencing and desensitising attitudes.

The programme ended with a presentation by the young people of St. Mary's Youth Theatre under their director Steve Archdale who formed the group in 1993 as a response to the increasing problems of drug and alcohol abuse amongst teenagers with too little to do and too much time on their hands. The Group presented a piece that showed how easily and unwittingly a girl can allow a boy to take control of her. After their presentation there was a "hot seat session" when the audience had an opportunity to explore the attitudes and experiences that underpinned the action of the play and the players.

This was certainly a day of learning for the delegates. Some of it was uncomfortable for them, challenging their attitudes, opinions and behaviours. It was also a great day for networking as delegates from many organisations and disciplines discussed their work, their problems, their hopes and dreams.. and, as they exchanged contact details, there was certainly the commitment to go forward and safe guard our children and young people...together.

Chris Clark

Anti-Slavery Group Conference



Precious Time with Friends

Zimlink *Chris Bowran*

It was lovely to stay together with the Zimbabwean delegates at conference. It was an opportunity to spend some quality time with them and find out how life is treating the clubs in Zimbabwe. It was also an opportunity to catch up with Precious Chasara who is a member of the elusive SI Uyanda, about whom information is hard to come by! Despite a failing economy, the clubs' activities continue undaunted.

With money sent by soroptimists in Australia SI Vabatsiri has bought blankets for the government run orphanage Hupenya Hutzva. They have also started supplying the elderly persons' home Melfort with fabric so the residents can make rag rugs for sale and they have given them fruit trees for their orchard and continue to support the poultry unit. SI Vabatsiri have joined forces with SI Lewisham to provide knitted blankets for women who are in prison with their babies.

Some time ago SI Uyanda adopted the children's cancer ward at Parirenyatwa Hospital in Harare. They have decorated and refurbished the ward and staff room and they regularly provide medical equipment as needed plus heaters and toys. The latter are regularly stolen so their replacement is an ongoing task. The heaters are particularly important for malnourished patients. SI Uyanda is also running its 'Live



Soroptimists from SI Harare, SI Vabatsiri and SI Uyanda (plus husband) having dinner with Yorkshire Soroptimists at the SIGBI Conference in Glasgow.

Your Dreams' project. This project pays for the education of 21 girls - 14 in primary school, five in secondary school and two in college. In addition they continue to support New Start Orphanage and through their development of the garden New Start is now self sufficient in vegetables and has surplus to sell. SI Uyanda also provides them with formula milk, cereals and clothes.

The level of support which the Soroptimists in Zimbabwe give to their projects belies the economic difficulties which they are all facing. The Government is having a crack down on corruption and, as part of this, has closed many companies putting thousands out of work. There is no welfare provision so the already significant proportion of the population which needs extra support to survive has increased dramatically. In addition local companies are now unable to donate to Soroptimist projects and there is very little money spare for

fundraising activities. As the projects which the clubs support are vital for the survival of many people they cannot be abandoned, so we understand that many soroptimists are now using their own money to maintain their projects.

All the clubs in Zimbabwe have a friendship link, either formal or informal, with a club in the Yorkshire region. It would mean a lot to the Zimbabwean Soroptimists if their friendship links would build support for the Zimbabwean clubs' programme action into their own PA planning and thereby ensure the survival of projects which are so vital to people who have nothing.

Friendship and Fundraising

In October a fish and chip supper was enjoyed by members, and friends from SI Wakefield. The club was also pleased to welcome a visit by SI Yorkshire President Angela Edwards - pictured with SI Dewsbury President Hazel. The excellent evening was rounded off with a Yorkshire quiz and light hearted members contributions. Who says gin and tonic doesn't go with fish and chips!



SI Dewsbury and Wakefield "Painted the Town Pink" in Ossett during the week of 19 October to raise awareness of breast cancer and money for research through the charity Breast Cancer NOW. The week gave the opportunity for organisations to be creative and be "pink" for the week. Businesses really took on the challenge from selling "Pink" buns, giving discount on "Pink"

items and having their retail/business window "Pink". The presidents of SI Wakefield and Dewsbury voted to who had the best dressed window, A market stall on Wear it Pink Day on 23 October 2015 helped to raise awareness and funds by selling cakes, and a teddy tombola. Over £300 was raised from the market day, increasing after collection boxes were counted raising £891.42 for the charity"

SI Dewsbury & District

Fashion and Festivities



S.I. Doncaster held a very successful Fashion Show presented by Karen of London Connections, resulting in an addition to the

Charity Fund of £500. Here are the very wonderful models, who perhaps required a little "persuasion" but did a great job, a credit to the Club.

SI Doncaster have arranged an evening of festive singing on the 4th of December at 7.30 pm at St Aiden's Church Wheatley featuring-The South Yorkshire Police Choir, A local primary school choir. The proceeds of the evening will be dispersed to local good causes, such as Riding for the Disabled, The Women's Refuge, M25 for Homeless People and others. Tickets are available from: Bea Smith , 01302 886 249

SI Doncaster

Blooming marvellous!

Club members have many interests apart from Soroptimism. Sue Smith is a flower arranger and demonstrates to raise funds for the President's charity.

She also was involved with the organisation of the flowers for H.M. The Queen when she came to Sheffield Cathedral to distribute the Maundy Money. There were eleven flower arrangers, Sue being one of them. The Cathedral looked beautiful. Derwent, Jennie Levick's husband received the Maundy Money for his

voluntary work in the Cathedral. This is Sue's arrangement.

The Club was delighted to receive Yorkshire President Angela at their B.B.Q. in July together with members from S.I. Sheffield and S.I. Wakefield. A representative from Roundabout (this year's charity) also came, not forgetting several husbands. Once again the weather was kind. The next large fund raiser was the Fashion Show in October.



SI Hallamshire

Bagging a Good Deal

SI Harrogate & District

A Yorkshire Pie and Peas supper and Quiz with a twist provided a perfect opportunity to raise money for President Sue Williams chosen charity, Our Angels, a local organisation who support parents after the loss of a baby. The event, held at St Andrew's church Hall, Starbeck raised a fantastic £600. The Club aims to raise £1500 over the year to enable Our Angels to fund a specialist training session for healthcare professionals to support families after the loss of a baby.

SI Harrogate and District latest project is to work with new Soroptimist Friendship Link Club Tshwane Pretoria, South Africa, to support the building of a new library at an after school drop in centre for the poorest and most vulnerable children living in a Township outside of Pretoria.



This responds to a critical need for those affected by HIV/Aids who are at great risk, offering enrichment and care in a safe environment as well as a good meal each day, together with the

opportunity to improve education and literacy skills, helping to prepare them for a better future.

Whilst SI Tshwane Pretoria members offer practical support with teaching and life skills, art and recreation, they desperately need equipment and particularly books to help the children learn. They have also asked for children's book bags, so that the children can take books home from the library to read at home and help family members to learn to read. In response to this SI Harrogate & District are sending an initial donation of £500 directly to our friendship link in Pretoria to ensure the money goes toward setting up the library.



Rawcliffes Smart Schoolwear in Harrogate has done a fantastic job of supporting the Club initially by donating 20 school book bags to send out to South Africa, emblazoned with a Yorkshire Rose Emblem, and then, after an opportunistic conversation with project leader Irene Kerr, to offer 105 polo shirts of all sizes that were surplus to requirements after a

local school had changed its emblem.



The donation and School Bags are already on their way to Pretoria. President Sue (pictured above) handed them over to Laurel Becker, President of Tshwane Pretoria at Conference in Glasgow. Club members received the polo shirts now packed and ready to be shipped. Efforts do not end there, the Club is working on a plan with SI Tshwane Pretoria to introduce a Pen-pal Scheme for one of our local schools to link up with the children attending the Drop In Centre, so that they may learn about British and South African cultures and enjoy mutual friendship in the coming years.



Presentation of gifts by President Laurel Becker to Harrogate and District President Sue Williams and Sylvia Purser.

Champion Efforts

SI Ilkley



SI Ilkley President Agnes Tomlinson, Pat Booth the street collection organiser and Marilyn Haythornthwaite

Following a successful Quiz Evening at a local hotel and a Saturday street collection, Ilkley Soroptimists were able to donate over £1500 to the renamed charity Breast Cancer NOW. SI Ilkley has supported Breast Cancer Research for many years following the death of an SI Ilkley member. Each £1000 collected has also resulted in a name being inscribed on the wall of donors

at the Institute of Cancer Research, the Royal Marsden Hospital. Pat Booth has organised collections over many years and it was thought fitting that her name be recorded on the wall of champions at The Royal Marsden Hospital.



President Agnes and Pat Booth of SI Ilkley presenting the cheque to Liz Macpherson the local representative of Breast Cancer NOW

Enjoying International Friendships



Members braving the wind and rain on Richmond market place! They used the opportunity to raise the profile of Soroptimist International in the town, and to publicise their current interests in WaterAid, Dementia and Domestic Abuse in the Dales. The new banner boldly proclaimed the identity and purpose.

A very busy conference for SI Richmond & Dales! As well as presenting their Programme Action project at Conference on Saturday morning, members were delighted to re establish links with fellow Soroptimists. They met with Nainah Shah,

President of Chennai Downtown, India, at coffee time on Thursday morning, and handed over £230 raised by WEST (the students who had previously been part of SI Richmond & Dales 'Sharing our Skills' project.) Nainah talked of her club projects, and how the money would go towards installing a running water system for a small shower block.



Members had been busy knitting and collecting baby clothes, and these were handed over to Thandi, President of SI Harare, Zimbabwe. Thandi had brought an empty suitcase to be able to take the items home with her. She explained that the clothes

would be given to the Traditional Birthing Attendants, in the village of Epworth. The women they help are extremely poor, and when they arrive to give birth, they often have nothing with them for their new born baby. SI Richmond & Dales are looking forward to many photos of well dressed babies in the future!

When members visited Zimbabwe earlier this year, they were taken to visit a very rural and isolated school. The headteacher of Chikupo school was passionate that all his pupils should learn English. With this thought in mind, members came up with the idea of a writing competition. They have now donated two trophies, one for boys and one for girls. Each year they will be presented for the best piece of written English. Thandi has very kindly offered that her club members judge and present the trophies each year on behalf of Richmond & Dales.

SI Richmond & Dales

Rewarding Long Service

SI Scarborough recently held an International Evening, celebrating links with SI clubs worldwide. It was Yorkshire President Liz Lyle's first official engagement after the Glasgow conference, attended by the Mayor Cllr. Tom Fox, members from neighbouring SI clubs Beverley and Malton and WI Members.

SI Scarborough supports a local charity, Smiles for Tanzania (smilestotanzania.org) and the co-founder Derek Edwards, gave an illustrated presentation about the work done by this charity.

Long service awards were presented to Dena Hebditch 47 years; Lillian Sedgwick 43 years;

Betti Thomas 37 years; Barbara Rodger 33 years; Ann Jones 32 years; Pat Berry 31 years.



L-R: President of SI Yorkshire Liz Lyle, Barbara Rodger, Dena Hebditch, Betti Thomas, Lillian Sedgwick.

SI Scarborough

Grand Effort for Learn to Earn

The Eid curry event held on 19th September was a fantastically successful evening raising the profile of SI Sheffield. Over £1200 was raised for SI Karachi's project Learn to Earn - aimed at women in the slums of Karachi - from ticket monies, donations, the raffle and from a previous donation. More than 60 people attended including the Lady Mayoress plus a host of other distinguished guests including local councillors, members of the Asian community and members from SI Sheffield and SI Hallamshire, husbands and friends. A splendid Asian curry buffet was prepared with delicious sweets to follow.

Two youngsters provided musical entertainment and there was some retail therapy also.

Iffat Hammed was the driving force behind the event and generously sponsored the buffet, ably helped by Farah Khan, Ann Hawkes and other Club members. In all a most successful night.



Jane Ferretti collecting the winning raffle prize

SI Sheffield

Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region

A Word from the Editor

A busy autumn with the ASG and SIGBI Conferences starts the Regional roundup of reports in this issue.

Congratulations to IPP Angela Edwards on her year of office and Best Wishes to our new President Liz Lyle for her forthcoming year.

*Merry Christmas
& Happy new Year*

Liz Hayes

Diary Dates - 2016

January

Sat 23 Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett (All day)

March

Sat 12 Regional Council Meeting, Holiday Inn Barnsley

April

Mon 25 Officers' Meeting, Holiday Inn Ossett (Evening)

May

Sat 14 Yorkshire Conference, North Ferriby

Sun 15 New Presidents' Lunch

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - February 28 2016

Obituaries

Mair Pinnell MBE

8.4.28 – 15.11.15

SI Leeds



Mair was a committed Soroptimist, proud to uphold the aims and objectives of our worldwide organisation, from 1968 until her death, a valued member of Leeds Club throughout. She enthusiastically entered into all Leeds Club activities, generous with her time and expertise, visited other clubs and was a keen member of the CE Cluster Group.

She held various offices, including Club President 1982/83; committee convenor (particularly Programme Action), IGU and Friendship Links; Club Secretary 1989/96 and Regional Representative; SI Yorkshire President 1991/92. Her special charities included fresh water availability in India and the Solomon Islands.

She became an honorary member of Leeds Club in April

2000 and later of Yorkshire Region.

Mair retired from her post as Headteacher at Bedford Fields Middle School, Leeds in 1989 later becoming a private tutor and Governor at Ashville College, Harrogate.

Mair enjoyed the international aspects of Soroptimism especially Friendship Link visits and Conferences, attending all SI Conventions and SIGBI Conferences until her health deteriorated, and made many lifelong friends to whom she was always ready to offer hospitality.

Pat Berry

SI Scarborough



Pat was a member of S.I. Scarborough for over thirty years where she was a stalwart member working tirelessly, and was President three times.

She was married to Peter for fifty five years and they had a son and a daughter who all

survive her. She gave of her time freely to Scarborough, being a member of the Operatic Society, the first woman chairman of Scarborough Chamber of Trade and Commerce and in 2002 a founder member of the Scarborough Branch of the Parkinson's Disease Society.

Sadly Pat suffered with Parkinson's Disease which she bore with great dignity but we shall remember her for her generosity and her wonderful sense of humour. Elizabeth Hughes wrote, "She was a unique woman who embraced life and squeezed every drop of living out of it." Those who remembered her song about former soroptimists, will remember the famous line, "They don't make them like that any more", will agree that this should be her epitaph.

Bye, Bye Birdies

The familiar call of 'Good Evening Night owls and Early birds' will be heard no more!

The newsletter is now to be circulated by SI Yorkshire Secretary Margaret to all Club Secretaries who will then disseminate to their club members. This is to ensure that every club receives a copy in future

Bye for now & ENJOY!

Liz

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.