



Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region Newsletter



WINTER 2018

Regional Officers 2018-19



Immediate Past President
Chris Clark



President
Pat Kilbane



President Elect
Rita Leaman



Linda Davis
Vice President



Secretary
Margaret Middlemass



Treasurer
Ann Hawkes



Development Officer
Andrea Trimmer



Minute Secretary
Judith Clark



Communications Joint Officers
Emma Bogantseva



Liz Lyle



Programme Action Joint Chairs
Lindsay Green



Susie Westwood



Membership Officer
Jane Glendinning



Benevolent Fund Rep
Angela Edwards



Federation Councillor
Val Hills

Regional Council

- The new team line up for the camera.

Inside this issue:

Conference	2
SIYAMS	3
Clubs news	4-6
Diary Dates	7
Obituaries	7

Reflections of Conference

SIGBI Liverpool Conference 2018

Rita Leaman shares her conference experience:

I have been in Liverpool, attending the annual conference for Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland. 'Women inspiring action, transforming lives.' There were inspirational speakers, who have worked their way through the most challenging of circumstances. Reports were presented by some of the three hundred and fifty clubs, about the educating, empowering and enabling work Soroptimist volunteers have achieved around UK and the world. Projects which are only a drop in the ocean of Poverty, Loneliness, Slavery, Abuse, Genital Mutilation, Human Trafficking, Imprisonment, Hunger, Hygiene, Disease and Education.

Returning home I found that the fridge freezer had broken down with resulting problems, my husband's smartphone had broken, the car repair bill was massive and Christmas is just around the corner.

My husband became a little 'Dad's Army', along the lines of, "We're all doomed." I stopped him and said, "I've just spent three days hearing about the appalling misfortune of millions of people worldwide. Please get this into perspective." Irritating and inconvenient our problems may be, but life threatening or life limiting they are not.

Two speakers gave these words of wisdom. The one time hostage, Terry Waite, spoke about appreciating the small, free things in life, when he experienced a moment of colour in his bleak, black and white, five years in captivity. From a momentarily uncovered window, he had managed a glimpse of a bunch of flowers for a few seconds. He also spoke about his mental survival being due to continually exercising and challenging his brain. Terry's imagination saved him and he maintains that stretching himself mentally every day, keeps his brain from atrophying at seventy-nine.

A former UK police officer, Ellie Bird Lenawarungu,

now married and working in Kenya, spoke about empowering villagers to enable themselves. More powerful than aid workers doing the enabling. I have heard similar from relief workers working in disaster zones. Teachers spoke afterwards, agreeing that if pupils had some part of a project in school, they felt some ownership and therefore respected the work more.

One of the problem with teenagers and their mental health, may be that instead of adults empowering children to enable themselves, too many adults are doing the enabling themselves, leaving the children entering adulthood, lacking life skills.

Empower and encourage others to enable themselves

Pictured Below: SI Dewsbury members. Courtesy of PatThornes .



Best Practice Nomination in Violence & Conflict Resolution

After the SIGBI Glasgow Conference in 2015, Linda Gerraghty from SI Halifax and Rita Leaman of SI Scarborough, had an idea to increase awareness of Soroptimist PA on Domestic Violence and the Soroptimist International organisation. Inspired by conference speaker, Dame Stella Rimmington, they created Operation Stella, using SIGBI members as 'Agents of Influence'.

Connecting the initiative to the domestic abuse storyline in the BBC Radio soap opera, The Archers, they created a social media campaign to 'Help the Ambridge I'. Using the UN 'Orange the World' 16 days of Activism against Violence Against Women, on November 25th 2015, they travelled to the

BBC Birmingham radio studios where The Archers is recorded. Linda and Rita met up with members from Midlands Arden Region, all wearing orange.

Linda and Rita sent a report on Operation Stella to The Princess Royal and Dame Stella Rimmington. Princess Anne replied, congratulating them on the initiative. She had remarked at Conference that if anyone could be Agents of Influence, then it was the Soroptimists.

SIGBI created the first Soroptimist led petition highlighting Domestic Abuse. A Facebook page - Operation Stella - was set up to highlight the work that Soroptimists do worldwide to support women experiencing domestic abuse, both physically and

psychologically. The storyline has moved on, but the work of the Soroptimists is still as valid today and in the future and articles are still posted on the Facebook page.



Linda Gerraghty and Rita Leaman dressed in Orange ready for the Awards.

Soroptimists Against Slavery

UK Anti-Slavery Day dawned on 18 October 2018. Representatives from SI Bingley, SI Garforth in Elmet, SI Scarborough, SI York Ebor and SI Dewsbury gathered to raise awareness of Modern Day Slavery, abusive relationships, and Soroptimism. President Chris Clark, President Elect Pat Kilbane and Vice President Rita Leaman were all supporting this event.



Thanks to the generosity of LNER we set up a table at York Railway Station in the middle of the main entrance, and during the 4 hours we were there we talked to many travellers, gave out leaflets, booklets and book marks, and raised awareness of the 45.8 million people held in

modern slavery around the world. It was a challenge at times to engage with people – many ignored us, several denied that Slavery exists at all in 2018, and some were willing to stop but too busy to have a conversation. However we



did engage with many people who were very interested, and took leaflets away for their families and places of work. We might even have recruited a few new Soroptimists during our time there!

Angela Edwards

SIYAMS

Tunis in November

Back in the summer there appeared a tiny link in the SIGBI newsletter advertising the 10th anniversary celebrations of SI Tunis Ariana. Having followed the link, I learned that these festivities would extend over three days in early November. Guests were invited to book their own travel and hotel and for a reasonable sum would be catered for and provided with activities. Being French speaking I was keen to participate and was further motivated by the prospect of seeing a longstanding friend from University days, who has lived in Tunis for almost 50 years.

A correspondence with Clara, the current president of SI Tunis ensued. To my delight Soroptimists registered not only from Friendship Links in Turkey and Belgium, but also from Italy, Germany and many parts of France. It would be a multicultural experience.

I was surprised to find that European Soroptimists favour the old fashioned gilt badge featuring the "Sally" emblem. President Clara, on the festive evening, wore a string of badges, presumably to denote various offices held. Some of the French wore ornate badges and the Italian rep (who turned out to be English in origin) wore one surrounded with pearls.

SI Tunis Ariana has a multiplicity of projects, which they call "actions"- with a French accent! They meet in a Youth Centre in order to maintain contact with deprived young people. They finance and foster activities such as break dancing for boys, in order to keep youth off the streets and away from drugs and extremist influences. In several schools in poor areas they have improved toilet facilities for girls, providing seated loos instead of the former

"Turkish" variety. The club also supports crafts pursued by women workers, especially dressmaking in traditional mode to produce embroidered kaftans or gilets, highly decorated with shiny stripes or gold thread. At a fashion show outfits with a modern twist such as short skirts or narrow trousers were also revealed

I learned that currently the French Soroptimists sponsor regional exhibitions encouraging women's talents "Les talents de la femme", so some of this enthusiasm must have crossed the Mediterranean!

The partying on the Saturday night, attended by some 30 local residents as well as the 40 foreign guests, featured not only the conventional presentation of gifts but also traditional Tunisian food, music and dancing.

Excursions on other days included an expedition to Dougga, a wonderful site of Roman archaeology, a visit to the Bardo museum, which boasts the best collection of Roman mosaics in North Africa and a feast at a fish restaurant on the coast at La Goulette.

Security was tight but this was entirely for our benefit.

Many of the participants continued on the post party tour to the south of Tunisia, but having enjoyed my fill of Tunisian culture, I was content to return to domestic duties.

I was impressed by the energy and real vibrancy of SI Tunis Ariana, who are only 12 in number, and feel that we can learn a lot from the enthusiasm of such emerging clubs.

Janet Erridge

SI Doncaster

SIYAMS

A Sartorial Soroptimist

SI Beverley & District

Liz Hallett, a member of Soroptimist International of Beverley and District, won the Flemingate Best Dressed Lady competition on Ladies Day at the Beverley Racecourse. Her prize was a £2000 'Search for the northern lights' holiday to Iceland donated by Superbreaks and Humberside airport, and a £200 voucher to spend in the Flemingate shopping centre, Beverley.

Liz now has to travel to Doncaster racecourse at the end of October to take part in

the final of the 'Most stylish racegoer in Yorkshire', (courtesy of Go racing in Yorkshire). All the ladies who have won the Best dressed competition at all the Yorkshire racecourses (9 in total) will meet and a winner will be chosen to become the face of Yorkshire racing for the next year. The winner also receives £2500 jewellery from LoveVintageDiamonds, a £500 voucher for Yasmine of Bawtry and a spa break at the Mount Pleasant hotel Doncaster.



Charitable Events

SI Dewsbury & District

SI Dewsbury had a busy Autumn starting by helping the residents of Tentercroft court with a Charity Coffee Morning raising over £500.00 to share between Admiral Nurses and Macmillan.

A Fashion Show in October raised over £800.00 for Admiral nurses with an extra £96.00 from a second raffle of the deluxe Italian themed hamper!

Members joined the Mayor of Kirklees Cllr Gwen Lowe (pictured with member Jan) at Tesco in Batley where a Toy Tombola and raffle raised the club's profile and funds for the



Mayor's charities.

Several Knit and Natter sessions were held which produced many colourful knitted poppies to contribute to a display in Thornhill church. Presidents Linda and Pat and members attended the local Remembrance parade in Mirfield laying a wreath from the club.

Local Library Project

SI Harrogate & District

The aim of the club project is to work in partnership with other organisations to provide craft materials and educational toys for staff and volunteers to use during children's activity sessions. If young children are encouraged to use libraries they become more confident in using books and this gives them a head start in learning to read and provides a massive boost to their educational attainments. Libraries have been through a very difficult time recently and suffered major budget cuts and sadly even asking for a voluntary donation to cover the cost of crayons and glue can be enough to put off some of our most vulnerable families attending.

Knaresborough Lions have joined the Soroptimist Campaign to support Knaresborough Library by providing toys, dressing up clothes for story time and huge quantities of craft materials to use during children's activity sessions. It has made a huge difference to their current resources and Jaime Berry, aged 8, could not wait to open the new toys and crafts. Jaime is the granddaughter of

Soroptimists Pat Shore and Lesley Berry.



Pictured: Presidents Hilary Waddington & Elsie Johnston, members Sue Williams, Pat Shore & Sandra Jowett. Together with Knaresborough Lions President Bob Godsell and his wife Pamela and library staff member Maria Burley and volunteers Ged Williams and Keith Harmer.

Rewarding Events

Ilkley Soroptimists held an extremely enjoyable Curry and Quiz night at the Kashmiri Aroma. This raised £450 in aid of this year's charity, The Samaritans. The Bradford branch alone has to raise £40,000 each year. Its aim being to reduce suicide rates of whom 75 percent are men, suicide being the biggest cause of death in men under 45. Mrs Joy Lynch the Ilkley Soroptimist President particularly thanked the quizmaster David Briggs and prizes donated locally by The Coop, Tesco, Santander Bank, Allwyn Carr Interior Designs, Hollins Hall and the Kashmiri Aroma.

Whilst not part of the formal structure of the club, Ilkley members have formed two

new subgroups to add to the longstanding weekly Walking Group and the Luncheon Club, these being the Climate Change Group and most recently a Book Group. The Book Group meets monthly from 7 until 9pm and is limited to ten members. Our venues are a mixture of members' houses and local pubs. Everyone appreciates not only broadening the kind of material we would normally read but also the building of differing friendships within the group. Recent titles have included: A Man Called Ova, Gilead and Common Ground. We are always open to recommendations if other clubs run a similar group?

Nominated by Ilkley

Soroptimists, Sheena Bradley was presented with a Volunteer Award for her outstanding service with 'Contact the Elderly'. Sheena has coordinated the work of the local branch of this national charity for 15 years. Elderly people, living alone are chauffeured and able to socialise whilst enjoying an afternoon tea, once a month, in someone's home.



L-R: Mayor of Ilkley Steve Butler and Sheena Bradley

SI Ilkley

Good Companions

Northallerton Soroptimists help local MIND Group

Northallerton Soroptimists recently purchased two garden companion set benches, from R&VJ Ellis, Yafforth, for those using the MIND garden at The Link, Northallerton.

Pictured are Sheila Stewart (right) and Hilary Dodd (left) from Northallerton Soroptimists with Northallerton MIND enjoying the benches.



SI Northallerton

Congratulations



We were delighted to welcome Chris Clark, Yorkshire president, to our October meeting. She very kindly presented the club with The Mary Hillary Award 2018, which we shared jointly with SI Bingley. Congratulations to them too! The award was in recognition for our STEM 'Jobs For The Girls' project, 2017.

We organised and ran a conference for 200 Year 9 girls so they could listen to inspirational speakers, engage with 30 Stem companies and take part in numerous STEM activities. Two years of hard work!

We must also offer our congratulations to Kev Stannard - who was the STEM

ambassador at RAF Leeming and helped us with our project - as we have just heard that he has won 'The National STEM Ambassadors Award 2018'. His prize is a visit to the Hadron Collider in Cern, Switzerland. We are confident that he will continue to promote STEM to girls across Yorkshire in his new venture delivering STEM activities to schools.

Busy at conference

As well as helping iron a multitude of flags for conference, Richmond & Dales ladies made contact with Connie Mutunhu, to present her with a donation of dollars to take back to SI Harare.

SI Richmond & Dales

Sunshine and Soroptimism

SI Scarborough

It has been a busy 6 months in Scarborough since our AGM in April 2018. Speakers at our monthly meetings have included Pauline Waslim, who gave a fascinating talk about the delights of Burton Agnes Hall; more serious matters were covered by Sophie Rice from the Probation Service, talking about women's experiences in prison; and Drs Alistair and Margaret Robertson from the Jacob's Well Appeal, based in Beverley, talking about their work in several countries around the world. This includes Ghana, where one of our members, Helen Hyams, visits regularly in a voluntary capacity, using her skills as a Paediatric Physiotherapist with children with cerebral palsy and their families. Fundraising in the club supports her work in Ghana as one of our Programme Action projects.



L-R: Dr Margaret Robertson, Dr Alistair Robertson, Jacob's Well Appeal, Carole Ireland, Scarborough President

We have had fun too! We enjoyed an excellent Afternoon Tea in September, attended by guests from several other Yorkshire Clubs and Chris Clark, President of SI Yorkshire. This event raised almost £400 for our charities.



L-R: Afternoon Tea - Carole Ireland, Chris Clark, Yorkshire President, Rita Leaman, Pat Kilbane, President Elect



Eight of us joined 5 members of SI Dewsbury and District on a day out to Liverpool, to see the amazing Terracotta Warriors Exhibition pictured above. We had a wonderful day, culminating in an open-top bus tour of the city before dinner.

We also supported a day at York Station on Anti-Slavery Day, 18 October, handing out leaflets, talking to as many travellers as possible about Modern Slavery and hopefully raising awareness of the issue.



L-R: Members, Susan Chapman, Angela Edwards, Sally Anne Longden, Rita Leaman

Six members attended the SIGBI Conference in Liverpool, and enjoyed every minute of it, from the inspirational speakers, and opportunities to meet old and make new friends, to the fabulous Yorkshire Dinner on Saturday evening to welcome our new President, Pat.

And finally we held an International Evening on 12 November, to celebrate the work of SI, and of our region and club. A Ceremony of lighting candles for all the Federations of Soroptimist International and the United Nations, went smoothly. The Mayor and Mayoress of Scarborough joined us, and were delighted to have President Pat Kilbane and guests from SI Beverley and SI York Ebor. We also welcomed 2 new members in to the club. An internationally themed buffet finished the evening with delicious food and a chance to talk to each other.

Next it's Christmas!!



L-R: International Evening - Janine Maw, President Elect, SI Scarborough, Rita Leaman, Pat Kilbane, Yorkshire President, Cllr Joe Plant, Mayor of Scarborough, Mrs Margaret Plant, Mayoress

Gifts Well Received In The Ukraine

SI Selby

Members of SI Selby recently visited their Friendship Link club in Dnipro, Ukraine, and the capital, Kiev. A report was given on the visit at the club's Business Meeting on 7 November, with pictures on a laptop, a display of the items brought back, including gifts they were given, and a commentary by Lindsay Green - pictured below and Hilary Putman, supported by Olwen Fisher and Irene Brereton.



Time spent at the orphanage in Dnipro was of particular interest. The 65 children in the orphanage all have physical and / or mental disabilities. It is supported by the Soroptimist club there. After liaison with SI Dnipro, members of SI Selby and friends purchased didactic toys and games, educational items, specialist cups and toothbrushes for the benefit of the children.

Whilst at the orphanage, a concert was given by some of the

residents and watched by them all. Irene commented on how well the children sang and danced and how happy they looked.

The toothbrushes were given out individually to each child after the concert and went down surprisingly well. Hilary said "it was good that every child received a toothbrush, as so much is shared and held communally. The staff were pleased too as often the children just receive sweets and chocolate!". The toys were also very well received, by the children, and the specialist teachers. The children played with them straightaway. Olwen mentioned how they shared them and helped others to play with them.

Lindsay has since received thank you e mails from the staff in the orphanage. One wrote "Thank you so much. You have made a very important gift for the children of the orphanage. Games and items will help the children".

The report to SI Selby included an outline of the programme for each day of the visit. It was "full on" all day and into the evening. Going to lovely sights, seeing beautiful restored buildings, getting involved in some traditional activities. A surprise, one evening was going to see The Marriage of Figaro, performed as a ballet by the Ukrainian National Ballet in the Kiev opera house. And there was a farewell dinner on the last night for everyone on the visit.

Hilary summed the visit up, saying "the visit was so worthwhile - we were able to help the children in the orphanage, support our sisters in Dnipro, and enjoy the fun and friendship of Soroptimism".

Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region

A Word from the Editor

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

*Merry Christmas
& Happy New Year*

Liz Hayes

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.

email: ehayes@lineone.net

Diary Dates - 2018-19

JANUARY 2019

Saturday 12

Officers' meeting Holiday Inn Ossett, 9.30 to 4.00

Saturday 19

Presidential Team meeting

MARCH

Saturday 16

RCM - Garforth Academy

APRIL

Monday 29

Regional Officers Meeting - evening meeting 6.30pm

JUNE

Saturday 22

RCM - Askham Grange Prison

Saturday 29

Yorkshire Conference – Elvington Air Museum

JULY

Monday 1

Regional Officers Meeting - evening meeting 6.30pm

Saturday 7

UKPAC Study Day in Belfast

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 28

RCM/AGM - St Francis Xavier School, Richmond

OCTOBER

Saturday 5

Regional Officers Meeting - morning meeting 9.30

Thurs 24 - Sat 26

SIGBI conference Bournemouth

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - March 3rd 2019

Obituaries

Valerie Mullins

1938-2018

SI Doncaster



Val joined S.I. Doncaster in 1986. She was still working, which in those days, one had to be to become a member. Her job was that of Chief Inspector of Taxes in Doncaster.

During her working life she had been in posts away from her family, but finally came back to Yorkshire.

In 1992/1993 Val became President of S.I. Doncaster and again in 2011/2012.

She also served time as both Secretary and Treasurer in S.I. Doncaster. In 1997/98 Val was proud to become President of

S.I. Yorkshire. In 2000 Val was elected as Yorkshire Representative on the Benevolent Fund, which she served until 2010, having been Chairman of the Fund during the last 4 years.

During the years that I knew her, she never missed a Federation Conference and attended at least 4 International ones.

She was part of numerous committees- each of which was in the business of helping someone less fortunate than herself. She was a major figure in her church, which received so much support from her. Strange that during her working life she was good at taking money from people, but after she retired, she made it a point of giving to those who needed it most.

She is sadly missed

Eve Dickenson

Marjory Cockburn

SI Hallamshire

Long-standing member, Marjory Cockburn, died peacefully in her sleep on 22nd September 2018.

A State Registered Nurse, Marjory spent the early part of her career working as a missionary in Africa. On returning to England, she later took up the post, of Matron at St. Luke's Hospice, Sheffield, where she served for many years, being awarded the MBE for services to nursing and the Hospice Movement.

In retirement Marjory maintained her active support of a number of local charities. A long-serving and past president of the Club she retained her interest in Soroptimism to the end.

She is very sadly missed.

Deirdre Clark

SI Richmond & Dales

Deirdre died peacefully on October 15th, aged 80, having been a loyal and long serving member of our club. She was interested in all our activities, but her special interest was the Garden of Fragrance which she looked after for many years. She was often seen with tools, plants and water which she carried from the car, doing her best to make the garden attractive. In earlier days, Deirdre and her husband, David, worked tirelessly for the Marie Curie fund. Following the sad loss of David, for whom she had devotedly cared, Deirdre was determined to help us celebrate the club's 60th anniversary, and was with us for the celebration lunch. We shall miss her lovely smile and warm personality, reflected in her colourful clothing. Rest in Peace dear sister and friend.