

MRS. ROZELLE SUTHERLAND MBE

Rozelle was born in the UK on the 24th August 1933, in the town of Wigan, Lancashire where she spent her early years. She moved to the Island of Jersey in the early 1960's. She has a son John, who is a Paramedic in the Island, and a daughter Lucie, who is a Lecturer at the University of Nottingham in the UK. Her early years in Jersey were spent as a Librarian, firstly at the Public Library, and in her later working life as a School Librarian at Beaulieu Girls school where she was a much loved and respected Staff member.

Rozelle became a member of Soroptimist International Jersey in 1968 and has held various positions within the Club. She undertook the Office of President in 1974 and again in 1983. During her second Presidency she identified the need to establish a Women's Refuge and made it her mission to progress it. This idea was constantly rejected by the Government of the day, it being felt there was no necessity for 'such a place in Jersey'. Rozelle never gave up on this idea, and with the help primarily, of two female Politicians, and a handful of others in the States, it was finally agreed to provide suitable Refuge accommodation. Appropriate premises were found and formally opened in 1988.

Rozelle did not rest on her laurels. She formed a committee to manage the House, and took on an unpaid supervisory role for close to 30 years and still continues to monitor and advise. She has worked tirelessly for the Refuge in such things as securing part annual funding from the Government, seeking financial support from local businesses, fund raising, etc. in addition to overseeing the recruitment and management of the staff. In recognition of this wonderful work she was awarded an MBE in 2010. A proud moment for our Club.

Whilst acting as the Club's Programme Action Officer, it was a privilege to accompany Rozelle to our Region Meetings. From the many people she introduced, it is clear that she is a very well thought of Soroptimist Member at Regional level. This was borne out by the fact that, whilst undergoing a severely invasive and dangerous operation in Taunton Hospital in 2019, she was visited by several members from neighbouring clubs.

Rozelle is now also an Honorary Life Member of our Club, and though not quite so mobile, she continues to be entirely supportive of our work. She is always there to listen, and offer the soundest advice and support. She is currently shielding during this Pandemic but is very much at the other end of the telephone, imparting her knowledge and offering verbal help.

As one of only four people who has been a member of our Club for more than 50 years we could not be more proud of Rozelle. She is an inspiration and demonstrates at all levels what a true Soroptimist is. She will be celebrating her 87th birthday in August 2020, and we look forward to sharing many more birthdays with Rozelle in the coming years.

