

Tricia Coll

Tricia's aunt was a Soroptimist and when she died in 1988 Tricia found her aunt's Past President's Badge and returned it to SI Blackburn. Tricia had heard of Soroptimism but nothing more. Returning the badge, a friend asked her to a meeting. Her sons thought she should go and hear what it was all about. Tricia attended the next meeting and that as they say, was that. The group of ladies made Tricia feel welcome as does the Club 32 years later.

From the beginning Tricia was encouraged to attend Regional meetings and Federation Conferences. The first Federation Conference Tricia attended was in 1992 in Liverpool. Little did she know that she would return to Liverpool in 2018 as Chairman of the Federation Conference on its return to the city!



Attending Conferences helped Tricia understand about the Programme Action work being carried out across the globe which energised her. This led Tricia in 2008 to become a trustee of the charity Partners in Education Swaziland (PIES). Started by Soroptimists in the North West Region to feed and educate the children in a country blighted by AIDS and HIV. There are two Centres where 200 children receive a daily meal, often the only meal they get. The Charity runs two pre-schools to help the most vulnerable children. Tricia has made annual visits since 2014 and is active in the sponsorship programme.

At a speaker meeting Tricia heard about the Red Cross Tracing and Message service, trying to reconnect families separated by war and disasters. Tricia volunteered for this service in Lancashire for a number of years.

Professionally Tricia worked as a Financial Accountant for a large wallpaper manufacturer and when the Club was looking for a new Treasurer Tricia volunteered. Tricia has also served as Regional Treasurer and registrar for the Joint Regional Conferences with South Lancashire. At Federation Level Tricia has been Conference Treasurer at Bournemouth (1998), Manchester (2010) and Harrogate (2014).

Tricia has also been Regional President and Federation Councillor and later Regional Development Officer. When the UK PAC Study Day was in Lancaster Tricia was the Chief Steward.

Whilst she was Federation Councillor Tricia had the opportunity to travel to the Cameroon when the Federation President Hilary Kay Young visited. The people she met and places she visited opened her eyes. Following Tricia's visit a Friendship link was created between the Region and SI Kumba which exists to this day.

Tricia has always loved foreign travel and has visited SI Blackburn's Friendship Link of SI Wieringerland, Netherlands twice. Sharing friendship is very special and makes one realise how ever physically far apart Soroptimists are, they all share the same goal.

This can be seen clearly in the two International Conventions in Glasgow (2007) and Istanbul (2015) Tricia has attended. The thrill of seeing and meeting with women from across the globe and hearing about the project work being carried out to improve the lives of women and girls continues to inspire Tricia in her membership of Soroptimist International.