



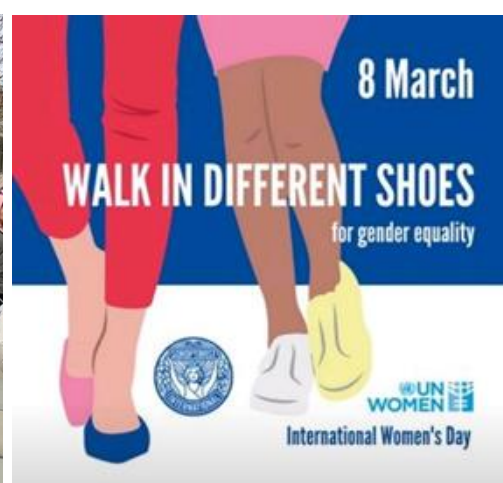
Members of SI Manchester 'Walk for Women'



On Saturday 4th March, members of SI Manchester missed the Region meeting to join the 'Walk For Women' in Manchester.....

....one member managed to 'Walk In Different Shoes'!

The ladies joined other inspirational Women's organisations (including the Pankhurst Trust) to mark the forthcoming International Women's Day on March 8th



Commission on the Status of Women 2023 (CSW67) by SIGBI Representative Abby Younis (SI Crosby)



Mother and Daughter (Clubs) send child off to the UN!

The Commission on the Status of Women 2023 (CSW67) will take place from 6 – 17 March 2023 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and I am beyond honoured to be selected as one of the SIGBI representatives.

What is the CSW?

For those who are not familiar, the CSW is the intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. It is integral in promoting women's rights and shaping global standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

This year's themes are:

- **Priority theme:** Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.
- **Review theme:** Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls (agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session)

The priority theme will include topics such as – access to STEM professions for women and girls, combatting online abuse of women, access to technology for rural women and enabling better outcomes for women in the digital age.

Who is going?

We are 5 SIGBI representatives - Sarah Giblin from SI Dublin; Eadaoin Lawlor - President of SI Dublin; Helen Porter, SI Winchester, and the Lindsay Green – SIGBI Programme Lead (SI Selby).

Preparations

Preparations started 3 weeks ago. The tickets are booked as is the accommodation. There has been a frenzy of activity in my email inbox and my WhatsApp has been furiously pinging with messages from the various WhatsApp groups.

Expert panels and advocacy training session have been attended and advice has been sought from previous attendees (Thank you International President Maureen McGuire, Pat Black and Margaret Emsley). I attended the Liverpool 96th Charter lunch on Sunday 26th March where I was given a warm send off by the President Margaret, Regional Presidents, Chair of PAC and my amazing Mentor.

What am I looking forward to?

The two weeks will consist of networking and discussions in the first week and advocacy in week 2. I am looking forward to meeting delegates from around the globe and hearing what they have to say and engaging in the conversations. I am also looking forward to being in the General Assembly for the observance of **International Women's Day** – how special will that be!

Special Companions

I will be treating a couple of special companions to an all expenses paid trip to New York. One is a beautiful Soroptimist brooch courtesy of Pat Williams – which I will literally be keeping close to my heart (thank you, Pat)! The other is a cheeky Soroptimist tartan scarf which made direct and persuasive eye contact with me on Burns Night, pleading to be taken, too. Following permission from its owner (my mentor Sandy), it too will accompany me (thank you, Sandy)!

I will update you on my return but if you would like to follow my journey you can follow our club Instagram '@si_crosby_official' or my personal one '@womenconqueringcancer'.

Wish me luck!

Abby Younis (SI Crosby)



Regional Presidents, Chair of PAC and Mentor wish Abby a safe trip to the UN

Club News from around the Region

SI LEIGH



At the end of the 16 days of activism on 10th December, we highlighted the International Presidents Appeal and Human Rights Day through our social media.



An excellent time was had at our Christmas Party at Worsley Old Hall. Great food, fun and friendship with the twelve socks of Christmas and the prize that everyone wanted A HOT WATER BOTTLE!



January saw us welcome a speaker, Peter Rowlinson, who came to talk to us about a new local heritage group that is being formed with a vision to protect and restore some of the heritage buildings in the area that have been neglected and are in disrepair.

One of our members has since joined the group to offer her knowledge and expertise as an Architect specialising in heritage/listed buildings.



Continuing our support of local Refugees; members packed welcome bags containing soap, shampoo, conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrush, face cloth, deodorant - all the essentials and a few little extras, which are always gratefully received.

SI LEIGH

In February we celebrated 76 years of Soroptimists making a difference in Leigh and this year we had a theme of Programme Action with the 5 P's and 3 E's. We gave out the first of our Golden Star Awards to charities we have worked with or supported during the year and who we consider to be deserving of recognition for carrying out outstanding work in the community. Beauty for Ashes Refuges, WN7 Outreach and The Bridge at Leigh all do very different, but valuable work. Excellent entertainment was provided by Zoe Unsworth a talented singer and vocal coach.



We are currently planning an event for International Women's Day in partnership with Leigh Spinners Mill to celebrate the achievements of local women.

All Contributed by Lynda Lilley

SI RAMSBOTTOM

Ramsbottom Soroptimists put together over 100 bunches of daffodils to give out in and around Ramsbottom as an "act of kindness" to hopefully put a smile on people's faces (and to raise our profile of course!).



Last year our Young Achiever Award winner was Ella Thompstone who excelled in her sport of Muay Thai Boxing becoming National Champion for her age group. Ella decided that she need a new challenge and wanted to start boxing with an ambition to go the Olympics.

It seems she is well on her way, as in February, she won the Youth National England Boxing Belt. We are very proud of her and look forward to watching her at an Olympic Games in the future.

Contributed by Ann Bennett

SI LIVERPOOL



"At our February meeting, members from the club's climate group promoted the climate action theme "Show the Love", <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/show-the-love>, aimed at raising awareness of issues around climate change.

Members crocheted or knitted green hearts to stimulate conversation and will use the power of these hearts to show decision makers that they want urgent action to tackle climate change, to protect nature and reduce energy bills.

The group will also be lobbying their MPs on the subject of climate change. Club members wore green at the February meeting to show their support and they were each given a "Show the Love" bookmark as a reminder ! "



Contributed by Anne Grimes

SI Manchester - Visiting WomenMATTa

WomenMATTa is a charity that SI Manchester has supported for the last few years. During our annual review the PAC chose this as one of the several projects that we would support again throughout 2022/23.

The project supports Women in Manchester and Trafford who have been affected by the criminal justice system by providing Trauma informed, in depth 1-2-1 support, including a Specialist Domestic Abuse service for women dually affected by both domestic abuse and criminal justice system involvement. They provide a weekly 'drop in,' including free lunch, craft activities and a rolling group work programme of structured and therapeutic workshops. The women have access to free clothing, toiletries and emergency food bank.

When SI Manchester's President Sue, was delivering 250 diaries to the charity, along with £150, before Christmas we realised that their clothes bank was running very low.



We wanted to help and so, following a wide appeal to the club and on Facebook, over the last couple of months we have collected around 50 bags of clothes for the Clothes Bank at WomenMATTa.

We delivered half before Christmas to coincide with our gifts of Christmas goody bags and diaries and a hearty Christmas lunch. Thanks to our many supporters across the region

The other half was delivered in February and, having realised how much work this involved, three of our members spent a couple of hours volunteering at the Clothes Bank helping to sort all of the clothes we had delivered.

Contributed by Sophie Kennedy



Food, Fun and Friendship at Fiona's Pancake Party!

Many thanks to Fiona, her family and the members who pulled out all the stops to make "Fiona's Annual Pancake Party" a massive success..... Lovely Food, Delicious Pancakes, Games and Drinks flowing!

Lots of fun, friendship and pancakes raised much needed funds for the projects we support.

Contributed by Liz Aniteye



SI Manchester's 97th Charter Lunch

What a fantastic afternoon of food, fun and friendship!

Skilfully managed by Toastmistress Alison, President Sue welcomed members, friends and guests to SI Manchester's 97th Charter Lunch.

President Sue's 'Toast to the City and Ports of Manchester' reminded us that 'In this life, things don't always go to plan....but it is how we respond to those changes that matters', closing with an Indian expression,

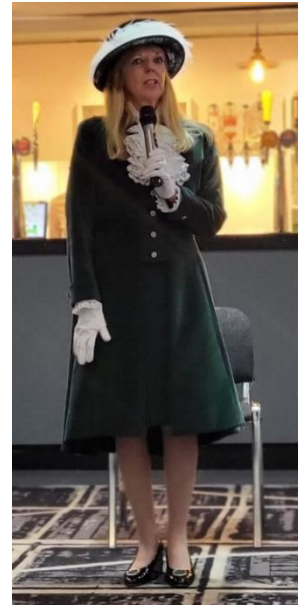
"We can't change the direction of the wind, but we can adjust the sails!"

Barbara Blaber, MD of Act4Africa, one of the many projects supported by SI Manchester, proposed the 'Toast to Soroptimist International' and Denise Parker, President of Soroptimist International of South Lancashire, gave the response including telling us about Manchester's Civic Week in 1926.

The Guest Speaker was Mrs Lorraine Worsley-Carter, High Sheriff of Greater Manchester, seen here in her Court dress. Lorraine gave us all a very informative insight into the role of High Sheriff and shared some of her experiences in her year so far. The 'Vote of thanks' was given by soon to be Vice President Fiona Spencer.

We were pleased to be joined by Soroptimists from 8 Clubs: President & members of Stockport & District, Leigh & District & Liverpool. Also, members of Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Lancaster, Southport and Widnes.

President Sue left the 'last words' to Honorary Member Kathleen Beavis reading from the greetings she had sent: *"Success in all your service. Always remember to ensure that Manchester leads the way in these times of change!"*



Contributed by Sue Underwood

SI SOUTHPORT'S EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

During the Covid-years, SI Southport continued to 'meet' regularly. We enjoyed speaker and club meetings via Zoom, we entered balloon races and we shared a meal and a glass of wine while celebrating key dates in the calendar. A few new initiatives were introduced too, with the aim of keeping members in touch with each other.

IPP Rosemary Moore created 'Reading Between the Wines,' SI Southport's book club. This started during lockdown on Zoom and was so well received that Rosemary has continued with it – but now meetings are held in our club room in Baverstock House once a month. Most genres of books are covered, but they are mainly fiction. Some titles include: Where the Crawdads Sing; Michelle Obama's Autobiography; The Backpacking Housewife and A Shepherd's Life (non-fiction).

On the current reading list, a controversial person - but if his book is as good as his Diddly Squat TV series, it will be worth a read.



Joan Hardwick joined SI Southport a few years ago. As a well renowned flower demonstrator in the area and beyond, she offered to start flower classes in the club room. The aim was for members and their friends to learn new skills in a happy, friendly environment – and to raise money for our President's charity. Joan



wanted members to feel confident to create their own designs for their homes and for future Soroptimist events.

A number of members and friends met in 2019 on a monthly basis. Following a break in 2020 and 2021 due to lockdown, Joan scheduled monthly sessions during 2022 and these have been well attended and shown great creativity. She is hoping to do an exhibition of the collective work. Joan has now scheduled sessions on a monthly basis throughout 2023, on the last Tuesday afternoon of the month. Everyone is welcome - and encouraged – to join us, so do come and give it a go!

Our 'Thursday Group' meet in the afternoon of the second Thursday of the month. This initiative was started by former Regional President Margaret Davies, who recognised that some members were unable to attend evening meetings but wanted to keep up to date with the activities of the club - so the Thursday Group was born. The group had an enforced break during the Covid years and sadly, Margaret has health issues and no longer attends the club. One of our longest serving members, Ann Bryan, has now picked up the reins and has re-launched the group, which is open to all members.

The first few minutes are spent catching up on topics discussed at the evening meetings and the rest of the meeting is purely for socialising. We meet in various places – not only in our clubroom, but in members' homes and gardens, or garden centres where we enjoy coffee and cakes and sometimes meet for lunch. This is a good way to keep in touch and share ideas in an informal way.

Contributed by Ghislaine Fletcher

SI Crosby



Crosby Soroptimists have a long-term partnership with the Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside, and welcomed Cheryl Ashton and Molly Toal to a club meeting. An update on progress with the construction of the long-awaited welcome centre was given.

One of the nature-based learning activities that could feature at the welcome centre is

'Hapa zome' printing. Japanese in origin, the technique is 'flower-pounding'. Fresh flowers and leaves are arranged between layers of fabric and then 'bashed' with a wooden implement. The fabric is then peeled away to reveal a colourful pattern.



President Margaret also welcomed Sylvia Hargreaves as a Soroptimist and presented Shirley Smith with a certificate marking 30 years' service as a Soroptimist during the September meeting.



A fundraising auction held by Crosby Soroptimists raised over £1,700 for Liverpool University Hospitals Charity (towards a women's 'room of safety') and other local charities. Pam McKee, Chair of the SI Crosby Fundraising team was the MC for the event and thanked generous donors and keen bidders. Crosby Soroptimist Pat Murphy was the auctioneer and ensured every last pound was squeezed from bidders. Local retired jeweller Marie Caddick was the guest speaker and gave a fascinating insight into the latest development in the jewellery business 'lab-grown diamonds'.



Contributed by Gill Boggan

Members of SI Crosby braved a day of downpours and drizzle in order to plant out hundreds of wildflower seedlings at Lunt Meadows Nature Reserve after raising the seeds at home. This work was also undertaken last year and is part of the club's ongoing partnership with the Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside.



The charity Autism Initiatives was the theme for decorating Crosby Soroptimists tree at the annual Christmas Tree festival at St. Faith's Church. The theme was requested by President Margaret and pupils at Peterhouse School in Southport made some of the decorations. Small change donated by festival visitors go directly to the charity. The non-maintained specialist school and college is for children and young people aged 5 to 19 who have a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Conditions.

SI Crosby has a friendship link with SI Jesi in Italy. SI Jesi have connections in Raipur (Chhattisgarh, India) and passed on details about a charitable hospital – The Sri Sathya Sai Sanjeevani hospital - dedicated to the treatment of children suffering from heart defects and disease. The services of the hospital are free and they had hoped to set up a homograft bank providing organs for patients 'on site.' Dr Marco Pozzi, Consultant Paediatric Cardiac Surgeon, based in Ancona, Italy, set up a fundraising campaign involving Rotary International clubs. Denise Pozzi of SI Jesi asked if Crosby Soroptimists would support them with a donation for the centre. The answer was 'Yes' and the Homograft Bank was opened in 2022 following a huge fundraising effort by over 40 Rotary clubs, Kiwanis and two Soroptimist clubs.



Pictured: Raipur hospital, homograft team



Sue Doyle, a volunteer speaker with the Royal Osteoporosis Society and a member of SI Wigan, was welcomed by Crosby Soroptimists at a recent club meeting and enjoyed an interesting talk about bone health, diagnosis and treatment. The central theme was the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle. A network of support groups and a helpline staffed by specialist nurses make a real difference to the lives of people accessing support from the Royal Osteoporosis Society. The charity is dedicated to campaigning for the 3.5 million people in the UK who have the condition. It was clear that osteoporosis is a topic that has touched the lives of many club members.

Sue Doyle (left) with club member Vesna Levi

Contributed by Gill Boggan

SI WIDNES

Following our first successful event on PAUSE where we had a raffle which raised £120, we were invited to attend a graduation for 30 ladies. At the Belfast conference we commissioned 32 "makeup" bags from another club at a cost of £116.46, which the raffle monies will cover. The monies for the bags will go to the Kori Project, Sierra Leone. We filled the bags with toiletries, sweets and trinkets and were given 32 sachets for tissues, made by past Federation President Barbara Dixon prior to her death.

We also included the poem below. Thank you all for your support.

"Standing on tiptoe and looking ahead
We try to discover the path we should tread,
Or looking behind us, lamenting the past
We yearn for the things not intended to last
Postponing the present with all that it holds
We miss all the richness as nature unfolds.
One day at a time is as much as we need,
To meet every problem and try to succeed" - *Iris Hesselden*

Contributed by *Eleanor King*



Some time ago, club member Linda made a blue and yellow quilt. You may recall buying a raffle ticket to win the quilt. The raffle raised £202. Anne Jones of St Helens club has a contact - Dean - who was travelling in convoy to Ukraine. Anne also has a contact with a club in Dnipro.

The club asked for candles, torches and batteries. The picture shows Denise, Eleanor and Anne delivering 10 sturdy torches with batteries and 60 candles. Well done SI Widnes and South Lancashire region.

On the morning of Wednesday 22nd February, SI Widnes members carried out a litter pick at Sunnybank, Widnes.

Wendy Ross-Barker came to take a photograph of Denise and Lily, who went on the litter pick, whilst having a pleasant walk and chat along the way. It was a busy morning for dog walkers, who sometimes stopped to say hello.

Overall, we half-filled two bin bags. Much of the rubbish consisted of paper, dog poop bags (sadly, some of them with dog mess in them, after having been discarded on the ground), plastic bottles, bottle tops, and drink cans, despite a good number of bins.

contributed by *Denise Parker*

