



Soroptimist
Weston-super-Mare

Newsletter

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President Susan Kelly 2nd Year in office From April 2014 to May 2015

PROGRAMME – 2014-2015

BUSINESS AND SPEAKER MEETINGS AT WESTON GOLF CLUB

2014	
MAY 6 th	Business Meeting
MAY 20 th	Speaker Meeting – Nigel Dando <i>"How to promote Soroptimists in the media"</i>
JUNE 3 rd	Business Meeting
JUNE 17 th	Speaker Meeting – TBA
JULY 1 st	Business Meeting
JULY 15 th	Barbecue
AUGUST 12 th	Club Day Out TBA
SEPTEMBER 2 nd	Business Meeting
SEPTEMBER 16 th	Dinner & Speaker Meeting – Sally Greyson <i>"Cottage Gardens through the centuries"</i>
OCTOBER 7 th	Business Meeting
OCTOBER 21 st	SPEAKER MEETING - Pat Hase <i>"Shadows Of the Workhouse"</i>
NOVEMBER 4 th	Business Meeting
NOVEMBER 18 th	Speaker Meeting - TBA
DECEMBER 2 nd	Business Meeting
DECEMBER 16 th	Christmas Social Event
2015	
JANUARY 20 th	Business Meeting
FEBRUARY 3 rd	Supper Meeting with Job Talks
FEBRUARY 17 th	Speaker Meeting - TBA
MARCH 3 rd	Business Meeting
APRIL 7 th	Business Meeting - Convenor Reports
APRIL 21 st	AGM Dinner

2014 JUNE 19TH SKIRTING SCIENCE

SKIRTING SCIENCES

June 2014

Article published by the Weston Mercury

Girls grab a spot for science career

Report by **BETHAN EVANS**
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A DAY in the life of a scientist, engineer and technician were explored by hundreds of female students from secondary schools around Weston and North Somerset during a Skirting Science event.

The sessions, organised by the Weston branch of Soroptimist International, were held at Broadoak Mathematics and Computing College in Windwhistle Road, Weston, and 200 pupils attended.

The girls were chosen due to their potential to progress to university and study a science subject.

The Skirting Science programme aims to address the gender imbalance in certain science careers and offers advice to females thinking of taking on those roles.

Students got the chance to hear some wise words from freelance science and technology journalist Nadya Anscombe and then explore the 17 workshops prepared for them, which took a look inside the world of the nuclear industry, physics, environmental science and the history of blood.

The sessions are supported by funding from Weston Town Council.



WINDWHISTLE SCHOOL

July 2014

Message from Lyn Hunt, Head Teacher at Winwhistle Primary School

I just wanted to say a huge thank you to the Soroptomists on behalf of Windwhistle School. You are so good at coming every week and have developed a way of working with the children that really benefits them – and they enjoy too.

Thank you also for the Reading Progress awards. I saw a few of the parents whose children had won awards and they were delighted with the book, the certificate and of course, the wonderful medal. Fourteen of the most-improved readers have been given a prize for their hard work.

I am so pleased we formed the link with the Soroptomists and have been able to maintain and develop it. It is an asset to the School.

Article in the WestonMercury



Book prize treat for best young readers

FOURTEEN of the most-improved readers at a Weston school have been given a prize for their hard work.

The Weston Soroptomists group has been volunteering at Wind-

Report by **SARAH ROBINSON**
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whistle School in Kingsley Road to help youngsters read. Those who improved the most were given a

certificate, book and chocolate medallion.

The prizes were presented by Soroptomist members Ruth Thomas and Susan Ponting at a ceremony at the school on Tuesday.

MARY' S MEALS

August 2014

Club members have been collecting items for putting into rucksacks since 2013. The rucksacks, with essential items for children in Malawi, enable their education to be as complete as possible. The rucksacks contain an item of clothing with pair of shoes, for boys & girls aged 4 to 12. Plus a towel, soap, toothbrush, toothpaste & spoon & ball.

Educational needs include notebook, pencil case, crayons, pens, pencils, ruler, eraser & sharpener.

171 completed rucksacks have been dispatched from W-s-M Soroptimists since the start of our involvement in February 2013 with the hope of reaching 200 by Christmas 2014.

2013 figures: 93 p of every £ goes directly on their charitable work. 6p on fundraising & 1p on governance. £10. 70 p feeds a child for 1 year, costs have increases a little in 2014. The charity has been running for 10 years, 700,000 children are fed every day in over 16 countries.

This very worthwhile effort by members brings such great joy to many children. Soroptism at its best.

The photograph was taken at the Regional Meeting, guest speaker was Magnus MacFarlane -Barrow, chief executive & founder of Mary's Meals.





An event organised by Anne Woolley to draw attention to the educational needs of African children and the plight of the kidnapped girls in Nigeria. This was to recognise the Day of the African Child on June 16th

Visit to Denmark



August 2014

Janet Jones visited Denmark in August, staying with Herdis Kryhmand, Vice President of Aabenraa Club; Friendship linked with Weston-Super-Mare Club since around the 1950's.

Janet and Herdis have been friends since 1983 and enjoyed many visits to one another over the years



Garden of Fragrance

October 2014

Janet Jones reporting

Thought you might like to see the photo that I took unfortunately Danielle had to go and Anne W. couldn't make it in the end.

It is nice to see Anne J. and Marcia in the photo, they were such a help -- Anne planted loads of bulbs and Marcia dealt with bushes and ivy galore.

Moira decided to do her decadent bit with the bottle (just water in it!)

The yellow roses in memory of Rosemary were still blooming.

***Mandy's oat cuisine
for Mary's Meals
October 2014***

Mandy hosted an enjoyable event to celebrate World Porridge Day with a breakfast at her home to raise money for Mary's Meals



***Serving our Community
November 2014***

SI Weston is committed to service in the community and is involved in a wide range of activities. On November 14th, two of our members were involved in helping with the local food bank project as seen in the photographs.





Trafficking

24 October 2014

College Green in Bristol with a United Nations Gift Box raising awareness of modern day slavery

Attached are photos taken 24 October when Sue and Melanie spent 2 hours with the Gift Box which SI Bristol were hosting on College Green. It is all about Trafficking and sponsored by stoptheTraffik.

They were first used during the London Olympics, the aim being to increase public awareness (2nd most lucrative illegal trade after the drug business).



Group photo

November 2014



Christmas Greetings From President sue

December 2014



Fellow Soroptimists ,

As we approach this very special time of year I want to reflect on how the past 12 months has been for us, let us all remember those for whom we have this year made a difference. The children of Windwhistle School who we have read with, the audiences of Worle School who we have offered refreshment to, the ladies and children who benefited from our support of the Womens Project, the numerous customers of Weston super Mare hospital we have smiled at whilst serving them in the shop and likewise at the Life Boat Shop. All those families who find a happy face and a bag of food at the Food Bank, the school children world wide who have had a smile put on their face with a rucksack filled with goodies, all the year 9 girls who we have, maybe, inspired to the sciences, the elderly who have enjoyed tea and a chat with us and all the little things you do yourselves every day to make someone's life a bit better. You are all amazing and I am so proud to be a part of your lives. May Christmas in your life be a special time, a time when you can enjoy those around you, count your blessings, and never forget how fortunate we are to have such full and happy lives. May God Bless you and those you love this Christmastime

January 2015

Welcome to new member, Marcia Shufflebotham



FASHION SHOW

March 2015

It is now a well-established event which raised a large sum of money for our charities.



OUR CHARITIES FOR YEAR 2014-2015



President Sue presents a cheque for £500 to Peter Elmont from RNLI

President Sue presents a cheque for £500 to Ollly Joseh from Weston Hospice Care



Programme Action Committee 2014-2105

Awareness

Stop the Traffik campaign - to stop the use of enslaved children for the harvesting of cocoa. Leaflets were handed out detailing which brands of chocolate are ethically manufactured.

In June we drew attention to the global summit End Sexual Violence in Conflict which took place in London 10-12th June, fronted by William Hague and Angelina Jolie. We were invited to send selfies featuring a clock as part of the time to act photo campaign.

June 28th - we had a stand at the Regional AGM in Bristol highlighting our PA achievements and we received compliments for the display prepared by President Sue and Melanie (using boards lent by the Girl Guides via Liz Bell, for which we are most grateful).

In November President Sue, Shelagh and Melanie attended the SIGBI Harrogate annual conference which brought lots of PA to our attention and which I later reported to the club.

In January Melanie encouraged members to take part in the WaterAid Big History campaign which involves researching the history of water and sewage supplies in our local area.

Finally, on April 16th, we had a stand once again at the Weston Town Meeting where we could highlight our PA activities. This time we were able to use boards made for us by Terry Brown, which worked very well. Thank you, Terry! Ruth once again went on stage with other recipients of a Town Council grant.

Advocacy

In June an email from Stop the Traffik was sent to club members about writing to David Cameron a letter concerning the Modern Day Slavery Bill which was going through Parliament at the time - and has since been passed.

On June 16th 8 club members gathered, nearly tying ourselves to the railings at the end of the High Street near the Winter Gardens, for an event organised by Anne Woolley to draw attention to the educational needs of African children and the plight of the kidnapped girls in Nigeria. This was to recognise the Day of the African Child on June 16th.

For Anti-slavery Day on October 18th we were asked to forward a website address to 10 friends to raise awareness of Modern Slavery. 12 members did this.

On October 23rd and 24th the Bristol Club hosted a Gift Box on College Green. This was another initiative of the charity Stop the Traffik to highlight issues around trafficking of people. Sue Kelly, Melanie, Shelagh Jeacocke and Carole Morrison took part in manning the box.

On November 25th, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, several club members supported the Gemini Group on their stand at the Sovereign centre, drawing the attention of passers-by to domestic abuse.

Action Mary's Meals backpacks have been filled and sent off throughout the year. Ronnie has a report:

"Just imagine the joy and delight that our efforts have given to so many children. The recipients of these filled backpacks are going to school, receiving an education and a meal at mid-day, often their only meal of the day...they have very little in life. We are providing the tools to enable their schooling to be of benefit.

We also supply clothing, footwear and tooth-care. The items we provide are negligible to us in our affluent western culture, but so very much to the children in Malawi. Many members are generous in their support, with books, pens, pencils, clothing etc. If I am given cash to go shopping, I hope I get good value for money, in cut price stores, charity shops and offers... directly reporting to the fellow Soroptimist how their money has been spent.

I have also made £34 from making and selling gift tags. The biggest expense is rucksacks, the availability from charity shops is variable. The club has given me £50 towards a bill for rucksacks of £79.52 and recently £30 towards a bill of £41.79, when I have found offers on line.

There is £12.86 left in the kitty as well as a healthy stock, and I know Shelagh is keen to continue.

To date we have sent off 245 filled rucksacks. This Presidential year we sent 30 in May 2014, 40 in August, 34 in November and 40 in April 2015. I thank so many of you for your generosity and continued support. This is a true Soroptimist project and could not happen without you".

Skirting Science was held on June 19th 2014, once again at Broadoak School. We had 17 workshops and 12 schools, with about 200 girls attending. In the absence of Mark, Anne Graham took over all contact with the schools, finding getting payment out of them especially difficult. Ruth is the main contact with the workshop providers and managed the mammoth task of allocating girls to workshops.

Taunton and Solihull (as far as we know) continue to hold Skirting Science, and Ruth has had enquiries from Cwmbran.

Forced Marriage & HBV - this is a project I have been trying to get off the ground this year after we made contact last year with Maliha Berridge, who works on this with Avon and Somerset Police. We decided to produce a questionnaire on the subject for other clubs in the region to take to their local police force. Susan Long and Ruth helped with this. Melanie have had responses from 6 clubs. Of these, SI Bristol did not send it on because they thought they were in the same police force as we are, St Austell got no response, Bath, who sent it to Devizes to involve the Wiltshire police received a reply saying the questions do not fulfil the criteria of the Freedom of Information Act. Only Barnstaple, Jersey and Torquay & District sent completed forms. Jersey had seen no cases, nor had Torquay but they were keen to point out that they were very aware of the problem. Only Barnstaple force had dealt with 2 cases which they resolved satisfactorily. Both the latter were interested in liaising with Maliha. We shall continue to plough on with this and keep in touch with Maliha.

Contact the Elderly tea parties were held 3 times during the year - in March and October at Liz Bell's house and in March at mine. Club members are very supportive, supplying food and helping on the day.

Love me, Love me not posters were distributed round town by Anne Woolley and Carole Morrison on October 8th. Thanks to President Sue I have been in contact with a woman who works in the field of domestic abuse who is very interested in using the posters and perhaps the original bookmarks.

Books for Sierra Leone - there have been 2 deliveries of books to the Thames Valley Club during the year, one by Wayne Kelly in June and another by Ruth's son Stephen Thomas. We are very grateful for their help.

Hospital Shop - we continue to man the shop on one Thursday evening every 4 weeks but we need more volunteers to make it less onerous.

Cancer Research UK - a brief mention to say that 4 members helped selling flowers at the CRUK Race for Life last May and that 3 members attended the Knit-in on March 12th.

There are a number of other actions we have pursued which have been covered in separate reports - Cancer Research fund-raising, Windwhistle School, Sensory Garden, RNLI, Foodbank and Woodspring Talking News.

It is good that this is the case because it means that responsibility for PA is spreading through the club. AsMelanie I said when she took on the job this was something she wanted to achieve. Melanie was inspired to take on this job as a result of being President and , through learning more about SI and attending annual conferences etc., understanding that PA underpins everything we do and is the reason for the existence of SI - and does not preclude having fun. Melanie would urge members to take the same path as me (preferably without waiting 25 years) and/or become President, go to Regional meetings and attend annual conferences - which Melanie have never failed to find inspiring.

Annual lunch in March 2015

At our annual lunch a group of Soroptimists regroup behind the banner of Mary's Meal with the aim to serve their MILLIONTH meal to school children, mainly in Malawi. The UK government have announced that for every £1 raised by the charity they will match it £1 for £1.

Note: Since, Mary's Meals have achieved their goal. Mary's Meals is now feeding more than ONE MILLION of the world's poorest children with a nutritious meal every school day!

