



Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region Newsletter



AUTUMN 2019

Deserving Award Winners

The presentation of the Mary Hillary Award 2019 took place at the RCM on the 28th September. This year clubs submitted 93 reports, helped 5558 beneficiaries and raised over £156,000. It was a privilege to read through the reports and to understand the diversity of Programme work that has been undertaken in Yorkshire during the last twelve months.

There were three clubs that were short listed for the award. The first club was **SI Dewsbury** who undertook several projects over a prolonged period which highlighted the difficult area of dementia. Projects undertaken included an Annual Garden Party in aid of Alzheimer's Society and Carers Trust Mid Yorkshire. They had a stand at a local festival to raise awareness and to educate visitors about SI Dewsbury. Their "Time for a cuppa" coffee mornings and St Patrick's supper aimed to raise monies to enable our region to appoint more Admiral Nurses and to educate the public about dementia. They also undertook bag packing at a local supermarket and held a fashion show in support of the charity.

The second submission was from **SI Selby**. They were short listed for their involvement in the Literacy Festival in Selby Abbey and their attendance in local schools to develop pupils' reading skills. The festival allowed primary school children to meet five children's authors whose books address the



L-R: SIY PA Joint Chair, Susie Westwood; Pat Thornes & Linda Davies, IPPs SI Dewsbury, SI Yorkshire President, Pat Kilbane; Jean Gee, SI Keighley

subject of safeguarding and secret sharing. The club worked closely with Christina Gabbitas and were involved with the launch of the project. They helped with stewarding and manned the registration desk and were able to distribute our friendship bookmarks. The result was that SI Selby now have a closer relationship with local schools which has led to further projects.

The third club to present was **SI York Ebor** for their work with the Red Box Project and York College. Once Red Boxes had been introduced to York Higher and Further Education College it became apparent that there is still a stigma amongst young women in talking about issues concerning this normal physiological process. The club carried out surveys in the college and as a result of this were asked to prepare a tutorial for the Health and Social Care students and to prepare slides for distribution which also raised awareness of Soroptimism. This project also addressed the

mental well-being of the students which was aligned to Federation President Sue Williams theme "Think on it."

Although all three clubs were deserving, after deliberation the judges were unanimous in their decision that the Mary Hilary Award 2019 should go to **SI Dewsbury**.

There were also four projects that were Highly Commended. These were **SI Bradford** for their work which supports Bradford Schools Drug Prevention Initiative; **SI Ilkley** for their partnership with Ilkley Fairtrade group for their efforts to recognise and honour women who serve their local community; **SI Bradford and SI Bingley** for their continuing work with the Together Women Project; **SI Yorkshire** for the refurbishment of Askham Grange Prison.

The Region should be proud our Programme work which enriches the lives of women and girls locally, nationally and around the world.

Susie Westwood

Mary Hillary Awards

- Hot off the press - Award presentation at RCM

The best kept secret in Yorkshire ;-)

Ed

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Women in Prison (WIP) Event

Women in Prison hosted a Mass Lobby of Parliament on Wednesday 26th June, to mark one year since the publication of the Ministry of Justice's women's strategy (entitled the "Female Offender Strategy"). We called on supporters of the campaign to reduce the women's prison population to join together at Westminster and meet with their MP.

The main message for MPs is that in order for the Strategy to be delivered we need greater investment, growth and support for the specialist network of community-based Women's Centres - 'one-stop-shops' that enable women to address the root causes of offending in a supportive, non-judgemental environment. We will also be asking for the £80m that our HM Treasury has received from the sale of HMP Holloway (the only women's prison in London) to be used to deliver the

Strategy and ensure growth and sustainability of the specialist Women's Centre network and other support services.

We believe an event like this can really bring together and amplify the voices of those calling for an end to the harm prison causes to individuals, their families and our communities which cannot be ignored.

Rita Leaman from SI Scarborough and President Elect of SI Yorkshire, attended the event. The event was sponsored by two women MPs and well organised in the Emmanuel Centre, Westminster. She had not received a response to her request to meet the local MP, so stayed in the centre, talking to staff and ex offenders through the day. WIP have written a 10 point Manifesto under the title #Open Up Women's Futures. See

attached.

Rita was delighted to meet a variety of women who knew of the work of the Soroptimists with other agencies. The work for the Prison Reform Trust was mentioned, as was the work of Women Together in Bradford and The Women's Support Alliance in Manchester.

Three members of SI Woking and District attended and were able to lobby their MP. Woking is one of only 17 places in the UK to have the specialised Women's Centre requested by WIP.

Rita will be arranging a meeting with her local MP together with other members of SI Scarborough, to talk through the Manifesto. SI Scarborough started to support a local centre two years ago, but lack of funding meant that it unfortunately had to shut down.

Lunch at the Bridge

Chain Gang 2008-9

Nine past presidents attended their annual Chain Gang 2008/2009 lunch at the Bridge Inn on Sunday September 8th. They had a lovely meal with lots of laughter and catching up.

Many thanks to Irene for arranging it and for Angela who finalised it. Everyone wished a speedy recovery to Irene. Looking forward to next year's one.



Seven go International

SI International Convention

Seven Yorkshire members joined with almost 1,000 other Soroptimists from around the world for the first International Convention held in Asia. Host Federation SI South West Pacific delivered lively, stimulating conference sessions and entertaining evening events. The themes were Soroptimists enable a sustainable world, global connections and empowered women. The packed conference programme covered gender equality, water and food security; violence, trafficking and exploitation of women; women in technology and innovation; healthcare and lifetime wellness, and finally on the Sunday climate action. All but two of the speakers were female and the energy radiating from the platform was amazing. We left knowing there is much we need to do individually, locally and globally to improve the lives of women and our environment. One speaker suggested we all



automatically e mail our government leader at 9am every Friday morning to remind them to act on climate change so that Greta Thunberg and other children can stay in school on Fridays!

'From behind the Scenes to the Front Line'

The day dawned with glorious weather for the Yorkshire Conference on 29th June at Elvington Air Museum. By 10.00 am, 95 delegates, mostly dressed in red, white and blue, were seated in a Nissan hut that had been converted into a beautiful Conference centre. It was an honour to also welcome Federation President Sue Williams, Past Federation President Maureen Maguire as well as delegates from Northern Region and Sussex.



The Conference, entitled 'From behind the Scenes to the Front Line' was to recognise and celebrate the role of thousands of women during the Second World War. In 1939, as preparations for war were put in place, there was a very real prospect of a food shortage in our country. The Women's Land Army had been disbanded after WWI, but it was reformed in June of that year.

Also, almost to the day, on 28th June 1939, King George VI established the Women's Auxiliary Air Force to be ready for duty with the RAF for the outbreak of war. And so, it seemed very fitting that as a women's organisation, we had a Conference to recognise 80 years of the WAAF in the marvellous venue of the Yorkshire Air Museum, as well as 80 years of the Women's Land Army.



L-R: Federation President Sue, Judith Webb, Iris and Lesley Berry

Just up the road from Elvington, is the Yorkshire Farming Museum which has an excellent exhibition about the Women's Land Army. We were privileged to have their curator, Dr Mike Tyler as our first speaker. He has extensive

knowledge of the history of the WLA and spoke of the way it was organised and became operational, which was most interesting.

It was thanks to Mike that we had our next speaker. On my initial meeting with Mike, he said, 'I can put you in touch with an actual Land Girl if you like. Iris Newbould is 94, but very fit and would talk about her experiences in the Land Army'. What an amazing lady! She and IPP Chris (pictured below) did a questions and answers session, and she regaled us with stories of her life as a Land Girl, which were poignant, and sometimes hilarious. Needless to say, she had a standing ovation at the end of her session.



Just before midday, we all went outside, as we were treated to a fly past of a Hurricane plane; not especially for us, I might add – it was also Armed Forces Day! Following a sumptuous buffet lunch, our afternoon began with a talk about Women at War, by two of the museum guides, followed by a fun interactive singing session led by Jen Berry (Pat Shore's daughter) and her friend Di Fleming.



Our final speaker was Corporal Katherine Height, currently serving in the RAF. She gave an excellent presentation about her life in the armed forces, the dangers (and hilarious moments) of serving in Afghanistan, and sadly, her mental health issues following bullying because she was a female officer!

I do hope that everyone had an enjoyable, and memorable day. *Pat Kilbane*

SI Yorkshire Conference

Time Out to 'Think on it'

SI Halifax

SI Halifax has been working on SIGBI President Sue Williams theme of 'Think On It' by exploring ways to strengthen our own emotional health and well-being and identifying the services available in Calderdale which support people to find what works for them to improve and maintain their emotional health and well-being.

We began with a Tai Chi Chuan evening in Mental Health Awareness week in July where we learned how to relax. Tai Chi involves relaxed flowing physical movements with regular breathing patterns which allow the body and mind to relax and de stress in a natural way. The Instructor lay on the floor and showed member Dorothy Wood, how to get up out of a bath safely!

Our next focus was to look at the help available for local people and we found a mental Health Charity in Calderdale called 'Healthy Minds.' The CEO Jonny Richardson Glenn came to a club meeting and talked about the work the Charity had been doing

since 2007. Healthy Minds was created for 'the preservation, protection and enhancement of good mental health of people living in Calderdale.' They have a staff team of 26 (some are part time) and over the years they have helped over 13,500 people. As well as peer support and activity groups they run education and well-being support for children and young people in schools through a programme called 'Time Out.' The Roshani Project is an emotional health and well-being programme for people from Black and Ethnic Minority backgrounds. Safe Spaces is an out of hours emotional support line for people in distress in Calderdale. The Money in Mind team offer help with welfare rights and employment support and financial resilience support. Out of 370 organisations in the country Healthy Minds was one of the 10 organisations to win a GSK(Glaxo Smith Kline) award.

Pearl Horner, who recently reached 25years as a member of SI Halifax, is a Trustee and a



volunteer receptionist at the Turning Point Counselling Service in Brighouse who work with clients from the age of 14 who are suffering from emotional pain or feelings of stress anxiety, depression or loss and also provides training for student counsellors. Turning Point hold regular fund raising coffee mornings and members from SI Halifax helped with one in May as well as showcasing the club's activities.

Think on It has certainly given SI Halifax plenty to think about!

Garden Wander in Ilkley

SI Ilkley & Central East Cluster Group

The sun shone and the flowers were at their best for the Garden Wander arranged by SI Ilkley on July 6th this year. This is the second time we have held this event- previously we did it two years ago in the Ben Rhydding area of the town. We followed the template of planning that we created last time as it had been so successful and it was a project in which all club members could join.

This time we had nine gardens situated in the west of Ilkley. Some of the gardens were Soroptimist owned and one was a prizewinning garden at a local residential home.

Maps and itineraries were obtained from our base at Ilkley Baptist Church where there were also stalls to browse and tea and cream scones to enjoy. The plant stall was especially popular with many bargains to be had- all plants being 'home grown' by the members.

We had many visitors from around the town as well as fellow Soroptimists from around the Region and friends and relatives. One group of Soroptimists made it their monthly walk and brought along a Soroptimist visitor from Germany!

The funds we raised are to be divided equally between the SI President's Appeal- 'Women, Water and Leadership' and the local Clarke Foley Centre- the community centre where the club meets. We were thrilled with a final total (we think) of £1.155. It had been a great day for SI Ilkley and all our visitors. The garden owners were glad to have

shared their lovely gardens with the many visitors.



Members of SI Garforth Elmet, Selby and Wakefield - clubs in the Central East Cluster Group - travelled to support SI Ilkley's Garden Wander. Joining them was Maria Deicke, President of SI Frankenthal, Germany. SI Frankenthal has a Friendship Link with SI Selby.

Six gardens were visited. All different but beautifully tended, with lovely colours and a variety of plants and settings - wonderful gardens.

Everyone enjoyed the Garden Wander. But whether we will be as green fingered as the SI Ilkley members remains to be seen in our gardens!

A memorable Afternoon Tea

SI Northallerton and District had an Afternoon Tea Party with a pink tombola on the 11th August at the home of President Jill.

This was to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Support Unit at The Friarage Hospital in memory of one of our members who sadly died this year.

Despite it not being a lovely sunny day, yes it rained we raised over £400.



SI Northallerton

Relief came Flooding in...

On Tuesday 30th July, 150mm of rain fell on Swaledale, Arkengarthdale and Lower Wensleydale in less than 3 hours causing flash floods which swept animals, cars and crops away. Boulders, mud and debris arrived in houses and businesses, causing substantial damage and making a number of families homeless. Roads and bridges were damaged including part of the route planned for the UCI World Championships in September. The fire station in Leyburn was under water while the firefighters were rescuing people caught in the floods and their own cars were floating in the car park. Current estimates suggest repairs will take up to a year and damage to roads will cost some £3m. Richmond and Dales are very grateful for messages of support from the Regional President and others.



L-R: Chris Bowran, me, Judith Clark and Rishi Sunak

The club ran a coffee morning in Richmond Town Hall in August to raise funds for the flood victims when we were joined by Rishi Sunak whose constituency includes Richmond and the Dales. The coffee morning and donations from Bingley, Dewsbury + Friendship Link, Garforth Elmet, Harrogate, Leeds, Northallerton, Scarborough, Selby, Sheffield, Skipton, individual members and Region itself will raise over £2206.00. This will be donated to the two ridings charity whose recovery fund to support people affected by the floods is giving grants of £300 to families and others in immediate need. Richmond and Dales wishes to thank our sister Soroptimist clubs for their generous help and support at this difficult time.

Yorkshire to Gambia Educational Trust

Wendy Arrowsmith, a member of Richmond and Dales and a primary school teacher, visited Bakau New Town Lower Basic School in the Gambia as part of a group of teachers with the Yorkshire to the Gambia Educational Trust. This Trust supports schools in the Gambia and have provided drinking water for one school and new rooves for another. There is no technology in the classrooms, basic sanitation and girls tend to drop out of education. Wendy ran phonics workshops for teachers and told the club about a new project started by the retiring Headteacher who has started a literacy group for 35 women. There are also plans to make sanitary pads to support girls to attend school. The club has asked how it can help to support these initiatives.

The picture shows Wendy in typical women's dress made for her in the Gambia in less than 24 hours for the equivalent of £20.



SI Richmond & Dales

Equal Pay Fund

Remember Caroline Gracie's fight with the BBC to obtain equal pay with her male colleagues? She donated her back pay to establish the Equal Pay Fund hosted by the Fawcett Society to enable women to have their case considered by lawyers in the complex field of equal pay legislation. £200 pays for a woman to have her case reviewed by specialist lawyers and Richmond and Dales have raised this sum to fund a case.

Supporting Think Pink TukTuks

The SIGBI conference in Liverpool heard a presentation from SI Middlesborough about their support for the Think Pink project in Sri Lanka to buy tuktuks, spray them pink, train women drivers and provide women and girls with a safe travelling environment. Each tuktuk costs £3500 and several members of Richmond and Dales supported an afternoon tea held by SI Middlesborough who are aiming to raise funds to purchase a tuktuk with their SI logo on the back.

An Eventful year so far

SI Scarborough

We are half way through 2019/20 and SI Scarborough has had a busy few months. We celebrated our **80th Charter** with a weekend of events. On Saturday evening, 15th June a concert was held at South Cliff Methodist Church, open to the public, with entertainment from the award-winning Harmonia Ladies Choir, based in Malton. They entertained us with a wide variety of music and songs. An excellent buffet was provided for guests during the interval. The evening was pronounced a great success.



The next day, Sunday 16th June, we held our 80th Charter Lunch at the Palm Court Hotel, attended by SIGBI Federation President Sue Williams, Regional President Pat Kilbane and the

Mayor of Scarborough, Mrs Hazel Lynskey, and 70 guests. Again, the food was good, the company stimulating and the guest Speaker, Rebecca Beattie, Ambassador for the Prince's Trust, gave a thought-provoking speech.

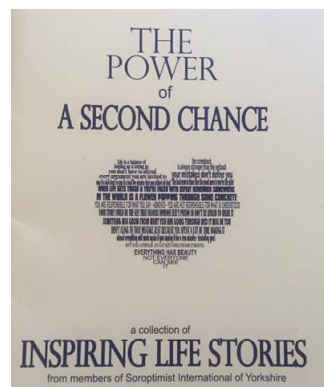
We have held several interesting meetings e.g. an exciting Quiz Night; a fascinating speaker from the local CAMHS Young Minds project, discussing mental health issues of young people; and a presentation on Toilet Twinning which is now part of our Programme Action agenda.

Looking forward to the rest of the year with an International Evening, several Christmas events and our annual 'Decluttering' evening, in aid of several charities, all coming up!

Angela Edwards.

The SI Yorkshire Presidents' theme for 2017/19 has been 'The Power of a Second Chance.' The SIGBI President Sue Williams chose Mental Health for her year, with the strap line, #SoroptimistsThinkOnIt.

SI Scarborough have embraced both themes with their booklet



full of twelve inspirational stories from some SI Yorkshire members with their experiences of 'The Power of A Second Chance.' It is a booklet full of hope.

Copies are £2.50 each (p&extra), with profits going the club charities. They can be ordered from Rita Leaman at Ritaleaman@aol.com. Club members will be taking copies to the Bournemouth conference. They will also be on sale at the November RCM.

Friendship in Action

SI Selby

SI Selby welcomed Maria Deicke, President of SI Frankenthal, for an International Friendship visit, during early July.

A full programme was arranged for Maria, which involved different members of SI Selby. This included a Welcome Tea in the Parish Hall at Brayton, walking tours around Selby and then York, dinner at The Queen O T'Owd Thatch at South Milford, a Garden Wander in Ilkley, and a Farewell Evening at the home of Selby's President, Sandra Hills. Everyone enjoyed the events they attended.

Sandra said " it was a very nice visit. Fortunately, Maria speaks excellent English and was happy to talk to all our members. She told us about Soroptimism in Frankenthal and we may well take up some of the things they do in Selby.

Maria also invited SI Selby to make a reciprocal visit next year. A number of us are thinking about doing this. It was lovely to host an International Friend in Selby. "



Members and Maria - sitting in the middle of the left side of the table - enjoying the Dinner

A Mark of Recognition

SI Wakefield

For the last year we have supported a local project about The Forgotten Woman of Wakefield. Money was raised for a plaque in respect of Florence Beaumont, who

organised the Wakefield Branch of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies in 1910. The Blue Plaque is now in position on her childhood home.



Soroptimist International Yorkshire Region

A Word from the Editor

An eventful summer of Soroptimism with the Yorkshire Conference and International Convention reports to enjoy. Congratulations to the Mary Hillary Award winners announced at the RCM

Liz Hayes

Diary Dates - 2019

OCTOBER

Saturday 5 Regional Officers Meeting - morning meeting 9.30
Thurs 24 - Sat 26 SIGBI conference Bournemouth

NOVEMBER

Saturday 23 RCM and Yorkshire Lunch at The Fairfield Manor Hotel York

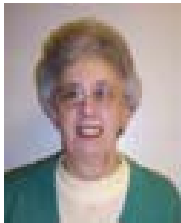
NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE - November 10th 2019

Obituaries

Joyce Greaves SI Keighley

Joyce died suddenly on 5th May 2019. She had been a member of SI Keighley for 24 years and in March 2011 made first contact together with Elizabeth Hughes to suggest to the headmaster of Eastwood Primary School if a project was viable in partnership with our club. This was the start of the SAME project (Soroptimists and Mothers of Eastwood) for which we later received an award. She will be missed.

Ann Elizabeth Clough SI Ilkley



Ann was a hardworking and committed member of SI Ilkley. She joined in 1987 and was President of the club 1992-1993. She also held the offices of treasurer, secretary and regional representative as well as being involved in the many committees and

activities that are a part of the organisation. Her vision was wide and she regularly took part in Region activities and attended Federation and International Events.

Ann was utterly reliable in all she was involved in. Her career in nursing took her into differing roles completing her career as a nurse tutor. She had served in Cyprus in the Queen Alexandra's Nursing Corps.

Ann was a valued member of SI Ilkley- fully involved in all activities, enthusiastic about its projects, supportive of her sister Soroptimists and eager to promote the values integral to being a Soroptimist.

She died on June 19th after a short illness. She will be very much missed.

Claire Feather SI Scarborough



SI Scarborough are very sad to announce the death, in August 2019, of Claire Feather, aged 81 years. Claire, an experienced Head Teacher for many years, joined SI Bridlington in 2001. She was President there for 3 years, and later transferred to SI Scarborough when SI Bridlington closed.

Claire held office in Scarborough as Secretary, Regional Representative and President for 3 years. Claire's warm and caring personality, and her knowledge of and commitment to Soroptimism made her a much loved and respected member of our Club. She was as active as possible despite almost a year of illness, even attending our AGM in April.

Claire was also a valued Trustee of Montrosa, Soroptimist Housing, Independent Living for the Elderly, in Scarborough.

Claire has been described as 'an exceptional woman!' She will be much missed in Scarborough and the Yorkshire Region. We shall never forget her.

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: ehayes1@sky.com