

Soroptimist International of Great Britain & Ireland

SOUTH LANCASHIRE

LEADER

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A Message from the President



JULY already, and eight months into the Federation year. It is hard to believe, time has passed so quickly. It has been a full, interesting and enjoyable eight months, with yet more to come.

The Joint Regional Conference in May, at the Castle Green Hotel in Kendal, was interesting and thought provoking, as the different speakers gave their presentations and thoughts on the conference theme of "Fair".

Conferences, whether they are International, Federation or Regional, are always stimulating and full of friendship, leaving you feeling exhilarated and looking forward with excited anticipation for the next one.

I recommend to all new and not so new members who have not yet been to a Soroptimist International Conference, to attend one if they possible can. I promise you will not be disappointed.

The SIGBI Conference in Cardiff is the next big event in our Federation calendar to look forward to, but before that, along with other members of the region, I will be going will be going to the European Federation Conference in Amsterdam. I am looking forward to meeting my European sisters and meeting

up with friends I made at the 2007 International Convention held in Glasgow. I expect to return home filled with enthusiasm and fire for the next task ahead.

It was at the Barbados conference that Lord Anthony Gifford QC, said, "The beauty of a woman lies in the interweaving of her mental brilliance, her bodily form and her spiritual fire". There is not one of us who would disagree with that statement. He also went on to say that it is only in retrospect that you realise that the tasks we undertake may sometimes be small, but joined with the small things that hundreds of others have done, have made a massive change for the better.

Let us all in our region anticipate with relish the next task ahead.

Bernadette Platt

Friends from Down Under



Pictured from left to right are, June Wilson, Hon Member SI St. Helens, Barbara Thompson President SI St Helens, Bea Hitt SI Freemantle Australia and Bernadette Platt President South Lancashire Region and also a member of the St. Helens club. Bea was on a visit to St. Helens to meet up again with Andy Perry, whom she first met when Liverpool 08 Clipper Race docked at Fremantle Western Australia with Andy on board on its voyage around the world. She is on a visit to the UK. Bea is Program UN/Liaison officer for Western Australia covering 17 clubs. Last year Fremantle club won a Best Practice Award for their work with Domestic Violence victims being rehoused in the Women's Refuge movement. Their project helped the women gain their legal rights for their homes and joint assets.

Surprise Party

It was with great pleasure that the members of SI St Helens accepted a surprise invitation.

June Wilson, Honorary member of SI St Helens was marking her 80th birthday with a wonderful party but at the same time celebrating 54 years with SI St Helens and wanted to share it with her club members. We enjoyed an evening of elegance, charm, perfect food and wine and exceptional friendship.

June has served Soroptimism well, having been Regional President and Treasurer, Federation Treasurer for two separate terms and also International Treasurer.

Thank you June on behalf of all who attended for serving our club so well.

The photograph shows June in the centre dressed in pink with her guests



OUT AND ABOUT IN THE REGION . . .

ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE

On Saturday 7th March SI Ashton under Lyne built a Pyramid of Shoes, on the Market Ground to highlight the victims of land mines and cluster bombs. Victims are often women and children who move out of their communities to forage for water, firewood and food and lose either limbs or their lives by the detonation of these armaments left after conflict. Each pair of shoes represented two people who had lost either a limb or their lives.



Member of Parliament for Ashton under Lyne, David Heyes came along personally to bring a bag of shoes collected from his staff.

Local councillors also brought donations, taking the opportunity to look over our display.

The general public as ever were superb including the lady who took off her boots and donated them, going home

in some new trainers she had bought before seeing us.

This gave the Club maximum opportunity to publicise the work of the SI Movement, International Women's Day and the British Red Cross who took away the 650 pairs of donated shoes to resell, reuse or recycle.

Local MP'S James Purnell and Andrew Gwynne supported the Appeal and the

The photo shows Club President Usha Deulkar, President Elect Jill Dewsnap and David Heyes MP at the start of the Pyramid which grew considerably by the end of the afternoon!

As President Jill Dewsnap's first speaker, SI Ashton under Lyne were delighted to welcome Anne Macdonald who spoke movingly to the Club about her recent Study Trip to Project SIerra.

Also present was Bob Clowrey from the local newspaper, The Tameside Reporter, who visited the Club to gain an insight into how SI operates and to interview Anne about her role and recent trip. Each member at SI Ashton contributes to the Quadrennial Appeal, for each year of every Project and found the visit from Anne both enlightening and moving.



The photo shows Bob interviewing Anne at her display table.

ROCHDALE

CONGRATULATIONS are the order of the day for Mrs Margaret Geoghegan from SI Rochdale who earlier this year received the freedom of the Borough of Rochdale from the then Mayor Cllr. Robin Parker in recognition of the work she has done for Springhill Hospice, in Rochdale.

The award is the highest honour that a local authority can bestow and a presentation was made to Margaret at a special ceremony held in Rochdale Town Hall.

Margaret launched a campaign to raise funds for a Hospice in the Borough in 1984 and it opened in 1989,

so is thus celebrating twenty years of service this year. It is also recognised as one of the top ten Hospices in the country.

Many top civic leaders paid tribute to Margaret who is also an MBE for her work at the Hospice and said how proud they were to bestow this award on her.

Margaret has been a member of SI Rochdale since 1986 and was President of the club during its Golden Jubilee Year in 1993-94. The Rochdale club has a long history of service to the Hospice and many of their members currently work as volunteers.

SOUTHPORT

In March President Margaret Davies, helped to organise a very enjoyable Irish Night at Southport Masonic Hall in aid of a local charity 'Light for Life'. Around 75 guests came along to raise money for the charity which supports over 2,000 Southport residents who become homeless each year. Entertainment was courtesy of the talented pupils of the Alexander Strange Academy of Irish Dance some of whom were as young as five. After a traditional Irish Dinner guests danced to music provided by the Gallimaufrey Ceilidh Band.

The money from the Irish Evening was added to the total collected through the year and the Club had the pleasant task of deciding which local charities should benefit and subsequently representatives were invited to a 'Cheque Presentation Evening'. The latter included Ken Jones of the Christmas Shelter, Greta Morphet of Light for Life, Val Martyn Beck of Macmillan Nurses, Jan Reagan of the KGV Vulnerable Students Fund, Brian Halliwell of Queenscourt Hospice, James Ashton of Merefield Re-United and Alexander Strange.



On April 26th President Margaret then handed over her title to President elect Gillian Ribis at the 77th Charter Luncheon which was held at The Ramada Hotel Southport. After entertainment by the Ambrose Barlow's Steel Band an excellent lunch was enjoyed by all. Guests included Bernadette Platt, President of SI South Lancashire and Rev Canon Rod Garner.

... WITH NEWS FROM THE CLUBS

BURY

We are coming to the end of President Joan's year and we have raised the record sum of £3,350 for her charities. It started at a Virgin Vie evening of fun and glamour last May to raise funds for Leukaemia research. In July we held a French themed evening on Bastille day for Osteoporosis and other charities. That was followed by a 40's themed Sunday Best Party where many of us turned up in hats and gloves and the social committee went so far as to draw black pen lines up their legs A la wartime stocking shortage. The money raised there went to Epitome an organisation supporting bereaved parents of children who died of epilepsy.

The 5th November went off with a bang with a 'sparkling Flower Demonstration' and supper for osteoporosis. Next came a shoe party for an operation to repair a cleft pallet. Many pairs were bought and we all had a great night.

The final event was held on Sunday 15th March where the above photo was taken. It was a charity luncheon attended by 110 people to raise further funds for Leukaemia research and other charities. The majority of our total was raised here, being £1450 which was the most we have managed. Many other clubs attended all our events and President Joan wishes to thank everyone for their support.



RAMSBOTTOM

SI Ramsbottom have ended a successful year by donating over £3000 to charity. The photograph shows President Barbara at the Cheque Presentation Evening with representatives from her main charities. Money was also distributed throughout the year to a number of local causes.

From left to right, Dr. Azavedo from Orbis, Jo Roberts from North West Air Ambulance, President Barbara Hallam, Pam Turnbull from Kidscan, Louise Ingham from the NSPCC.



The other photo shows President Barbara Hallam at the Annual Dinner presenting Stella Openshaw with a bouquet and Certificate to commemorate 50 years as a member of SI Ramsbottom.



CROSBY

Members of SI Crosby recently presented their "Margaret Yarwood Woman of the Year" Award. This year the calibre of nominations was so high that the selection panel chose two winners.

Denise Miller is a support worker for mental health patients in Waterloo. Nominated by her clients, she supports them in their own homes but also organises a wide variety of outings and activities. She is always willing to go that extra mile. Denise has opened up new horizons for them and – by doing so, they say – has massively increased their confidence and enhanced their lives. As one client put it, "She helps us leave our prison of aloneness".

Jane Morgan, head of midwifery education at Edge Hill University, was nominated for her voluntary work in Africa. Since 2001 she has campaigned for maternity services in Shyira (north-west Rwanda). In partnership with many members of St Luke's Church, Formby, she has raised funds to build a new maternity hospital and to pay for midwifery education. She also uses some of her own holidays to work in the hospital and help the staff. Many women and children in Rwanda owe their life and health to Jane's efforts.

President Pat Williams presented Denise and Jane each with an engraved trophy, a framed certificate and a bouquet. She said, "Our award recognises outstanding service to the local community. It perpetuates the name of our former member, Margaret Yarwood, herself a tireless worker on behalf of others. We congratulate Denise and Jane, the recipients of this year's award."



LEIGH & DISTRICT



S.I. Leigh & District raised over £800 at their Spring Fair and will be sending £600 of this to Project Sierra a family and a future. In the picture Wendy Harding and Pat Quigley with a Waterfields Chocolate Bunny. Other stalls included, jewellery, toiletries, chocolate, plants, this was a great team effort.

OBITUARIES

Doreen Walker - SI Oldham
Rita Lord - SI Rochdale
Maureen Kelly-Hewitt - SI Ramsbottom (formerly SI Haslingden)

OLDHAM

At the AGM in April, Eunice Garside became President of the Oldham club for the second time. This is a milestone year for Eunice as not only will she be President of the club, but will be celebrating 50 years as a Soroptimist in January of next year.

Eunice has chosen The Oldham Music Centre and The Christie Hospital as her charities for the year and the first event in her calendar was a Brass Band Concert featuring The Oldham Music Centre Youth Brass Band. The evening which was a great success was enjoyed by all, including the Mayor and Mayoress of Oldham and raised over £400 which was a superb start to our fundraising for the year.



WILMSLOW

The Wilmslow Club have been very busy in the last few months. In March the Grove Street Plant Tubs, were all replanted to draw attention to International Women's Day on 8th March and Water Aid Day on 22nd March.

Also in March valiant members persevered with inclement weather conditions in a "Litter Picking" session at The Carrs, Wilmslow's Country Park.

On 17th March a Pancake Evening held in the home of Marjorie Hay, raised £180 which was donated to Francis House Children's Hospice.

In April we were delighted to welcome Christine Miles to the club, a member transferring from SI Cardiff. We were also pleased to announce that Audrey Walker has been invited to join the Public Patient Line Liaison Committee, and has also been nominated to represent Age Concern at a forthcoming meeting with the local MP regarding care of the elderly.

President Wendy was able to hand over a cheque for £700 to MacMillan Cancer Care Nurses her nominated charity, before handing the chain of office to Jean Robb at the AGM.

STOCKPORT

This photograph was taken when we handed over the cheque for £5,000.00 collected in our 70th year. The money will be used to furnish a room in Stockport Police station with comfortable carpets and furniture etc. and is to be used for an interview room and sanctuary for victims of domestic abuse.



The picture shows Ben Jeffreys, (A local prospective Parliamentary candidate who has shown great interest in what we are doing). Chf Insp. David Turner, Greater Manchester Police Stockport, members Sue Wynroe, Joy Pilkington, Wendy Horne and President Liz McConnell

Note from the Editor . . .

Thanks to all the intrepid reporters in South Lancashire - there is too much information to put in one issue. Apologies to those which have been omitted. I will try to get these in a later edition.

WIDNES

A YEAR IN THE LIFE . . .

April is the beginning of the year,
No way back responsibility starts here.

May's a month for conferencing,
Water Aid and Wigan dinner.
Oh dear, not much chance of getting thinner

June brings a Regional meeting:
Ashton dinner has Indian dances,
And a holiday in the Balkans gives fund raising chances.

July we're up Everest in spirit,
intrepid Kirsty did the rest,
A quiz and Aintree too, but our Bowling victory was the best.

August is for holidays and Garden Parties,
but no one told the weather,
Cronton Chapel saves the day,
Soroptimist's downhearted, Never!

September was the cruellest month,
our Blue and Yellow Book took the prize,
We wore Sari's, learned about lavender and bowled our best while tears were in our eyes.

October, Bury, Bolton and Stockport dinners,
Barbara's sixty years give us inspiration.
The Charter Lunch is chocolate heaven,
thank you for such excellent organisation.

November, Rotary dinner, beetles amber and a new member.
Punctures, St Helens and Ripple Effect,
we also have time to remember.

December, Santa's float and Christmas carolling.
A chance to sneak in some train travelling.

January, Tuesday club extends an invitation,
Will Hillcrest changes meet our expectation?

February brings friends and celebrations, 65 years and still going strong.
I get my bus pass and join the pensioners throng.

March brings a party, fun and friendship,
time for reflection, I think I mean.
I've enjoyed it all with a few exceptions,
but now it's over to lucky Jean!!

*Jennifer Lewis - President
SI Widnes 2008 - 09*

Her year in Rhyme!!