



## President's Message



**W**HERE have the months gone? It is now the eighth month in my tenure as Regional President but the last SIGBI conference where I received my chain of office seems like yesterday!

One of the main milestones in my journey of office has just passed with what I think was great enjoyment and inspiration. That was the Joint Regional conference

with the theme Victory over Adversity held in May at Daresbury DeVere Hotel.

We had inspiring and informative speeches from a Judge who came to the UK as a kinder child, a victim of domestic violence who developed a women's refuge, someone with first hand experience of working with trafficked women, a Soroptimist who looked after a Chernobyl victim and a doctor who advised on keeping your health with age.

We had fun with a sari wearing competition, Sri Lankan dancing by three English girls and we listened to the beautiful

voice of Lois Powell and were fascinated by the Marimba playing by Geoff Shaw. My sincere thanks to the joint Regional Committee for great team work and all members who attended. There is more detailed news of the conference on the back page of this newsletter

I have already attended many charter meals and a large number of club events and I am very proud to see such innovative and talented members we have in our region who work diligently over the years and I have enjoyed every occasion and learnt a lot.

I would urge all our members to consider attending the Federation Conference in October which is going to be on our doorstep. It is an event which has to be experienced to get the real feel of the internationality of our organisation.

Last but not least remember the Rose Bowl Competition. This time it is on Publicity. All that you have done or have planned between 1st of January to 30th of June for Publicity should be presented in the form of a book/dossier and I have seen some wonderful work by many clubs.

*Sriya*

## GOLDEN CELEBRATIONS

**P**RESIDENT Eunice Garside of Oldham scored a double whammy earlier this year when not only did she celebrate 50 years as a Soroptimist, but she also visited the club's friendship link in La Spezia, Italy for their club's 50th anniversary celebrations.



SI Oldham had planned a special celebration lunch for Eunice in January but this had to be abandoned because of the severe winter weather, so with many of her friends and relations in attendance at the Charter Dinner in March, this seemed an appropriate time for the club to present her with a long service certificate, a gift of a

CD player together with a celebration cake, which was enjoyed by all present along with many cards of good wishes.

In early May despite the threat of volcanic ash, Eunice made the trip to Italy to celebrate La Spezia's 50th Anniversary weekend, where she was made welcome by long standing friends Alessandro and Lena Cori.

She took a water carafe and glass engraved with the Oldham crest as a gift for the club and in return brought home a banner, DVD and book on the history of La

Spezia, which still boasts two founder members amongst their number, Lena being one of them. Eunice's chain of office was cause of great admiration as they do not have them in Italy.



# OUT AND ABOUT IN THE REGION . . .

## STOCKPORT

International Women's Day was celebrated in great style at Stockport's Art Gallery on Monday March the 8th. The evening was hosted by Stockport Soroptimists and was made possible by a generous Big Lottery Grant.



President Jane Doyle welcomed everybody and spoke of the origins of a day for women all over the world which started 99 years ago.

Participants had the run of the whole Gallery with its fascinating displays and pictures.

For the first hour there was the choice of

joining a Courage to Sing session with Maggie Lowe and lively aerobic dance sessions with Elspeth Furlonge Clarke. For the less energetic, students from Stockport College offered soothing hand massage and nail treatments, and a sumptuous finger buffet was appreciated by all.

Sue Shore, Stockport's Team Manager - International Liaison introduced the two speakers from our twin towns of Beziers and Heilbronn. - Madame Sophia Belkacem from Beziers who is a student lawyer and at 26 years old the youngest Town Councillor. Frau Anne Meier is a teacher of English. The third speaker was Sirya Kulupana, originally from Sri Lanka and now President of Soroptimist's Lancashire Region and a Forensic psychologist.



All the speakers talked of the plight of many women all over the world and the situation of women in their own areas. The evening ended with lively discussion after which a vote of thanks was given by Councillor Linda Holt.

## LIVERPOOL

Soroptimist International of Liverpool, recently, held their fifth, successful Public Speaking Contest, at Broadgreen International School. The competition was open to 12 to 14 year old students from secondary schools in Liverpool.



The winning school received a Trophy to retain for one year and the overall winner, Alexa Penketh from Archbishop Blanch C of E High School, a cash prize. All other contestants received a certificate and a book voucher.

Alexa and the runners up, Kate Edgar from Broughton Hall High School and Joe O'Neill from St Francis of Xavier's College also

received a prize of visiting the Ferries with the opportunity of going on the bridge of a vessel and were also invited onto the Monday morning Breakfast programme of BBC Radio Merseyside.

We wish to thank College of Experts and Merseytravel for their help with sponsoring our event.

## MANCHESTER

Members of Soroptimist International of Manchester have been supporting Water Aid for the last four years and this year is no different. Presented with the challenge to raise "75 for 75" we opted to think of our figures and forego the pleasure of a tea party. Instead, on Sunday, March 28th we had a bucket collection at the monthly Farmer's Market at Marple's Wyevale Garden Centre. We made the right choice! Dressed up (to disguise our winter-enhanced figures) we collected a splendid total of £135



## ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE

When Jill Dewsnap became Club President in 2009 she wanted to raise funds for The Young Oncology Unit at Christie Hospital. Her daughter Kaye has a very rare form of cancer and spent a lot of time in treatment at YOU when she was 17 and Jill was very grateful for all the help Kaye received.

With £468 raised by the Big Bra Project added to funds raised by the Club at the Flower Evening, Quiz night and Treasure Hunt the total for YOU was £2,489.96. Jill handed the money over to Howard Newhall at the Distribution of Charities on 6 April 2010.



# ... WITH NEWS FROM THE CLUBS

## WIGAN

In March SI Wigan hosted their 9th Annual Charity Ball and during its lifetime the club has raised over £50,000 for local charities. Joint Presidents Kate Fussell and Eva Novak are photographed with the Mayor and Mayoress and the other photo shows most of the Ball Committee



## BOOTLE

Mrs. Dorothy Wilson celebrated her 100th birthday recently. She was joined by his Worshipful the Mayor of Sefton, Councilor Alf Doran and his Mayoress, together with family, friends and fellow Soroptimists.

Dorothy joined Soroptimist International of Bootle on 1st April 1971, and throughout the thirty-nine years, the club has benefited from a valued and inspirational lady whose commitment is ongoing today.



## WIDNES

In response to the earthquake in Haiti, SI Widnes decided to fill an Aquabox. Jennifer Lewis who grew up in the Peak District agreed to collect and return the Aquabox from Cromford whilst visiting relatives who still lived in the area and thus saving the club the cost of transport, which was donated towards the cost of transporting the box to its destination in Haiti.

After collecting the empty box, donations poured in from club members. Since the club had last packed one of these boxes, the recommended contents have now been changed with an emphasis now on rebuilding for the future, rather than clothes for immediate use. After semi packing the box, Jennifer and her mother returned to Cromford "in a snow flurry", where the contents were checked and re-packed, using every millimetre of space.

They were both welcomed like old friends and offered refreshments then taken up to where the boxes are checked and packed and a customs manifest applied. Many of the donations received are unsuitable and these are sold at a stall on Bakewell Market, raising funds for the much needed transportation costs. Over 1500 boxes have been sent to Haiti and the response from Aid Workers over there, shows how much these practical boxes are appreciated.



## BOLTON

Nearly 3000 people attended the big volunteer event in Bolton's Town Square on Saturday 22nd May. The event "Helping Bolton To Help Itself" sponsored and run by Soroptimist International of Bolton where over 30 local volunteer groups showcased their services and brought people interested in volunteering closer to local volunteer groups.

The event was opened by the Mayor of Bolton who spent over 90 minutes talking to each group in the marquee. Other visitors included all three of Bolton's M.P's, David Crausby, Julie Hilling and Yasmin Quereshi who spent several hours talking to volunteer groups and members of the public.

The public response proved to be amazing, with eight groups including Bolton Little Theatre, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Bolton Mountain Rescue and Samaritans, saying how many people were keen to join them and find out more. Five people also wanted to know more about becoming a Soroptimist.

Outside the marquee entertainment was on hand all day, where kids of all ages were entertained with juggling, plate spinning and diabolo skills. There were also soccer skills specialists, and a special appearances from a dance troupe and theatre youth section who added extra drama to the day.



Visitors to the event wrote comments on a board, including, "Great event, I didn't know there were so many volunteering opportunities in Bolton", "Very good work for the people of Bolton", "Good event, gave me some ideas on what to do".

A directory containing information of each volunteer group accompanied the event explaining what each group did and the type of volunteers they are looking for. The event and directory was funded by local businesses, without whose help it could not have taken

place and the members of SI Bolton offered their thanks to all of them.

# JOINT REGIONAL CONFERENCE

On Friday 14th May delegates assembled at the Daresbury Park Hotel. Old friends were greeted and cases unpacked. Friendship night that evening was an informal affair. The buffet gave us a delicious flavour of Sri Lanka with a mild curry and accompaniments. Three young girls entertained us with a beautiful Sri Lankan dance and President Sriya instructed us in how to wear a sari with the help of her two beautiful daughters.

Saturday's programme started with a Sri Lankan lamp-lighting ceremony, followed by an inspirational address by Federation President Jackie Mosedale.



The theme for the weekend was 'Victory Over Adversity' and on Saturday our speakers were:- Judge Bernstein who told the story of her childhood in Vienna prior to 1939, and the moving story of how she was evacuated from Nazi oppression to England and taken in by a Liverpool Jewish family. She went on to tell us how she studied law and became a champion of justice.

Anushya Kulupana, our President's daughter described her work for TARA (Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance) in Glasgow which helps the victims of trafficking by establishing safety, promoting healing and enabling them to move on from the trauma they have suffered.

Eleanor Maddocks, who suffered in an abusive relationship many years ago found the courage to leave her partner with the help of her family. She spoke plainly and with humour

about her many years of work to establish and run a women's refuge. Her words were touching and inspirational.

Carolyn Wolsentholme and her husband have worked with the charity 'Friends of Chernobyl's Children' for many years and have welcomed a girl called Valeriya into their home for the past four years.

On Saturday evening the Gala Dinner was attended by those in their best outfits and others who chose the optional extra of trying to wear (and remain elegant in!) a sari.

The entertainment was provided by Geoff Shaw who told us about and played the marimba and Lois Powell who delighted us with her soprano voice. Lastly the sari wearers paraded to be judged and Christine Adams took the prize for 'Best Sari Wearer'.



On Sunday morning Dr Alex McMinn gave a most entertaining talk about wellbeing in later life, and his work with the University of the Third Age in Ormskirk, and this was followed by Programme Action presentations from both regions.

From South Lancashire members of the Ormskirk club gave a presentation about their ongoing project to help rebuild a community in Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami.

Loveline Ntube from Kuma club in Cameroon then spoke about the work of her club and the support received due to the Friendship link they have with the North West England and Isle of Man region.

## NEST EGG CHALLENGE !!

After quite a bit of thought, and after running my ideas past the Regional Officers, I have decided on the contest for the 2011 Regional Rose Bowl. To encourage fun and friendship in clubs and knowing that money can 'make a difference' - I'm challenging you to grow your own 'nest egg'.

Each Club will receive a cheque : your 'nest egg' loan. You will have from 1st August 2010 to 30th April 2011 to increase that amount in any way you choose (with the usual proviso that it's legal, decent and honest!).

At the end of the challenge, you will have until our AGM on 18th June 2011 to sort

out your finances and prepare your club's entry. This can be in any sturdy (portable) form - boxfile, scrapbook, portfolio, nest, etc. However, with anything electronic, please also supply a hardcopy.

My opposite number from North West England and Isle of Man, Judith Grocott has kindly agreed to lead the judging of the entries. The criteria will include club members' involvement, planning/execution of projects, breadth of sales opportunities, publicity efforts, presentation of entry and income earned. The Rose Bowl will be presented at our 2011 Regional Awards event, which is usually held in September. All nett income will go to charity. Full details of this challenge will go to each club.



I look forward to your nest eggs hatching out, your imaginations flying and the proceeds coming home to roost. [All egg 'yolks' welcome : Why couldn't the chicken find her eggs? Because she had mislaid them!]

**Jenny Stanistreet**  
President-Elect