

# The Soroptimist

SWP

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“ From **Flower Power** 2012-14  
to **Challenge the Future** 2014-16 ”



a global voice  
for women

Soroptimist  International

Federation of the South West Pacific



# Sorooptimist International of the South West Pacific

(ACN 147 990 627)

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## From the Editor

**G**reetings from Singapore! As your new SISWP Magazine Editor, I must say that it is with some trepidation that I have agreed to take on this huge task!

Kerry Garrett has done an amazing job of producing the Magazine for the past 8 years. Not only has she produced the magazine but she has also handled much of the packing and despatch using her personal time and resources. A big thank you to Kerry!

Having spent the last 35 years in the book publishing industry, I am excited to be able to contribute my time now to the SISWP Magazine. I look forward to sharing your news reports and photos. Do keep them coming!

However, for this issue I was overwhelmed to receive more than 300 photos! I'm afraid that I have therefore had to hold back coverage of the Kuching Benuk project that was a COC excursion as well as other club news.

With warm regards

*Triena*  
*SI (Singapore) Garden City*



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## SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL A Global Voice for Women

The Sorooptimist SWP is the Magazine of Sorooptimist International of the South West Pacific.

Sorooptimists are business and professional women who work to maintain high ethical standards in their business and professional life and who use their talents and energy in the service of their local and global communities.

Through international partnerships and a global network of members, Sorooptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls. Sorooptimist International (SI) is a Global Voice for Women working through AWARENESS, ADVOCACY and ACTION.

One of four Federations globally, SI of the South West Pacific (SISWP) is the smallest in terms of membership with 13 member countries. The other federations are SI of the Americas, SI of Europe, and Great Britain and Ireland.

### An Expanding and Dynamic Federation

Since its Charter as a Federation in its own right in 1978, SI of the South West Pacific has grown from three member countries -- Australia, New Zealand and Fiji -- to include 13 countries including Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands as well as many in Asia, namely Cambodia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Singapore, and Thailand.

Clubs within the Federation provide service to their local, national and international communities.

**Front cover:** Photo of Immediate Past President Siew Yong Gnanalingam, together with President Carolyn Hudson (centre) and President-Elect Theresa Lyford, during the Conference of Clubs, April 2014, in Kuching, Malaysia

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The **deadline** for the November issue of the SISWP Magazine is **30 September 2014**. The theme for the next issue is **Friendship, Goodwill and Understanding** to commemorate SI Friendship Day that falls on 3 October. Tell us about your events and your Friendship Links.

# Message from **SISWP President CAROLYN HUDSON**

**I**t is just over 2 months (at the time of writing) since IPP Siew Yong handed the President's Jewel to me. It is a great honour to be President of this marvellous Federation. We may be small but, as someone described us recently, we bat well above our average. We are very active and hold our own on the international Soroptimist stage.

I would like to pay tribute to the wonderful Presidents who have worn this jewel before me. Four of them have become International President – Margaret Lobo, Jane Zimmerman, the late Joan Banks and the late Betty Loughhead-Turland – and Yvonne Simpson is currently SI President-Elect, soon to be SISWP's fifth International President. Then there are 13 who were Federation Presidents and a further 12, going back to 1956, who were Presidents or Chairs of the Coordinating Committee of Clubs prior to the Charter of the Federation. Of these 30, only one served two terms - Betty Loughhead - COC Chair 1967-69 and SISWP President 1980-82. Betty's recent death was a great loss to our Federation.

Each in her way has achieved great things for this Federation and that we are such a marvellous Federation is due, in no small part, to the work they did and in many cases, are still doing. Twelve of these marvellous women were present in Kuching.

It is rather nerve-wracking and extremely humbling to be following in their footsteps, to be expected to perform to their standards.

As I said "each in her way" and each of my predecessors did have her own way, her own theme and her own achievements. At Conference I was able to share some of my "Vision for the Future" and my theme for the coming Biennium: 2014-2016.



What is the future I'm challenging? It is a future without service clubs – it is said that service clubs are a phenomenon related to the baby-boomer generation, and as the baby-boomers retire or die, service clubs will gradually vanish. It is a future where SISWP fades away, or gets absorbed into another federation or even a future without Soroptimist International in the countries of our Federation.

This is the **FUTURE** that I **CHALLENGE** - Soroptimist International **WILL NOT DIE** in this Federation!

**However, to survive we need to work differently.**

Membership is a marketing exercise – and we must consider our market. Today's younger women want instant responses, instant actions – they expect to communicate immediately. They don't want boring meetings, lots of protocol, long debates – just decide what needs to be done and do it. They don't necessarily want "cheap" but they do want meaningful things to do – that is the benefit they are seeking, not

newsletters and conferences (though those are great). They want to make a difference – and they want to do this **NOW!**

**We must invest in our future!**

Recently the Board approved the trial of two new types of membership - **SISWP Independent Member Online Community** and **High School Soroptimist Groups** within clubs. Other ways we will be investing in our future include reviving the concept of **Corporate Membership**, drafting some rules and ways of promoting this, and the **SI Public Speaking Contest 2015**. At the same time, **Walk the Talk** will continue as an annual event and we will look for some way to repeat the **Educate-Exchange-Connection** programme, maybe next year.

**Birthing in the Pacific** will, of

course, continue as our Federation Project for another 2 years and some exciting things are happening there.

Of course, we can invest all we like, but if we don't retain the members we already have, we will not succeed. It will be like pouring the water into the bucket with a hole in the bottom. I urge all clubs to remember the needs of their members and, above all, please remember "*The Sincerity of Friendship*" - make your club a bullying-free zone!

Join me to **Challenge the Future** through the coming biennium! Let us make SISWP a thriving Federation.





# "THANK YOU FOR

Handing over of Chain of Office at Gala Dinner

Finalists of the Uniqueness in Diversity Award receiving their awards from IPP Siew Yong Gnanalingam. Witnessing the ceremony are Robyn Cain, SWP Programme Director (1st from left) and Hillary Ratcliff, International Programme Director (3rd from left) who selected the best overall winner.



Malaysian SI members performing "Thank You Soroptimists" at the Friendship Night

As only 350 members attended the 19th SISWP Conference of Clubs, 2-4 May 2014 in Kuching, Malaysia, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of SISWP for having given me the unique honour to serve as your President from May 2012 to April 2014 and to thank you for your kind support. For those of you who were unable to attend the CoC, I would like to report that the conference was positively responded to by the delegates.

The COC Organizing Committee had worked really hard to pull off a very unique conference, leaving no stone unturned to make the conference beneficial in terms of learning

experience and fun social functions for bonding opportunities.

There were many panel sessions with well-known speakers on the theme of Women's Empowerment and Leadership and several training sessions for leadership and self-development. Delegates agreed that speakers had delivered inspiring speeches on unique topics.

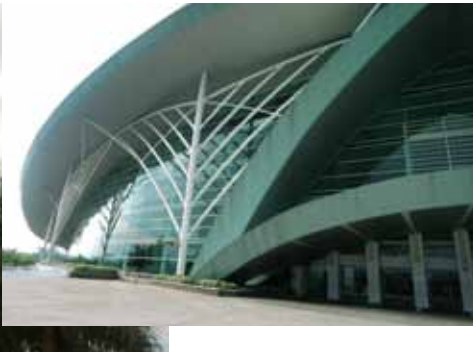
The opening ceremony and social events were uniquely special experiences imbued with a flavour of the multicultural diversity of the host state, Sarawak and country, Malaysia.

The Conference Friendship Night themed "Call of the Wild" saw the delegates draped with a sarong in their unique style. For the Gala Dinner to cap the conference, delegates dressed glamorously to the theme, "The Beauty of Flowers". It was my great pleasure to hand over the Chain of Office to incoming President Carolyn Hudson at the Gala Dinner.

I would like to take this opportunity

# THE BIENNIUM"

FROM SISWP IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT



Borneo Convention Centre (left); State Legislative Assembly Building (far left) Below: Eminent speakers



YB Dato' Sri Rohani Abdul Karim and IPP Siew Yong launching the Conference with the pounding of the Alu-Alu



2012-2014 Biennium Team of MC, Board, NRs, Convenors and Appointees

to thank the COC Organising Committee, comprising members from Peninsular Malaysia and Kuching for helping me deliver this wonderful conference. In particular, I would like to single out Host Conference Chair, Audry Wan Ullok and Conference Secretary Joyce Kee for delivering on the small details, so important to the success of the conference.

Congratulations also go to SI Ipoh (Malaysia) winning the Overall "Uniqueness in Diversity Award" with

the Edufun Project and all the finalists – SI Townsville (Australia), SI Ba (Fiji) SI Darkhan (Mongolia) and SI Lae (Papua New Guinea) for each carrying out an inspiring and unique project in their community and to represent their respective countries. All the projects were most deserving, I must add.

I would like to thank the Host Club SI Kuching for handling the two optional events: an evening at the Sarawak Cultural Village and visit to the Kampung Benuk Project. These

events were absolutely enjoyable and unique -- a real treat for those who attended.

Overall, I hope everyone who attended had a great time and felt it has been the memorable and unique conference as promised.

Although I have officially thanked the Federation MC and Board, NRs, Convenors and Appointees at the conference, I would like to put on record my appreciation for their support and great work in their respective portfolios during my biennium.

I wish to conclude by saying "Congratulations" to our new President, Carolyn Hudson, and to wish her all the best for an enjoyable and great biennium "Challenging the Future".

*Siew Yong Gnanalingam  
SISWP IPP 2014-2016*



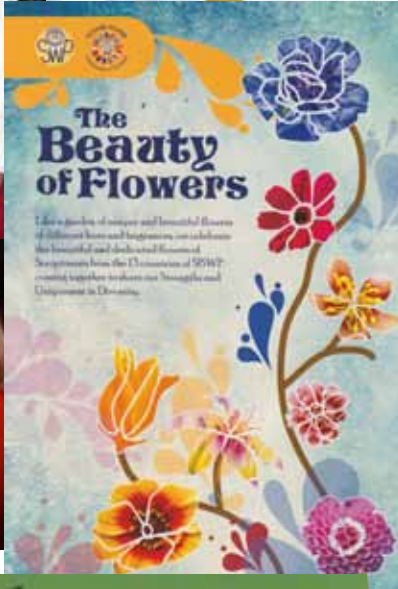
# THE CONFERENCE

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP



# SISWP Conference of Clubs

2-4 May 2014, Kuching, Malaysia



## WE SALUTE MARGARET LOBO

At a ceremony during the Conference of Clubs in Kuching, May 2014, Margaret Lobo was conferred Honorary Life Membership in recognition of her many years of dedication and outstanding service to Soroptimism. She joined SI Perth in 1975, held many positions including President of her club, President of the Region of Western Australia, President of the Federation of the South West Pacific, and the highest office of President of Soroptimist International.

In 2011 Margaret was recognized in the Queen's Birthday Honours List and became a Member of the Order of Australia in the General Division. Her citation read "for service as an advocate and promoter of the status and health of women, particularly through Soroptimist International".

Margaret is truly a role model for all Soroptimists to aspire to.

*Triena Ong  
SI (Singapore)  
Garden City*



Margaret Lobo with a young member from SI Lautoka.

## SI BEENLEIGH

SI Beenleigh has participated in the annual Cane Festival Parade since chartering, but this year we went one step further and sponsored an entrant in the Cane Ambassador Quest. We were put in touch with a wonderful young lass, Ainsley, who is involved with the local Theatre Group and studying Primary Teaching. It is usual for the parents of the entrants to organise the fundraising events, but Ainsley's mother is fighting a battle with cancer, so we took on that roll.

On Awards Night, Ainsley won the Charity Queen crown and the overall crown as Cane Queen. The Cane Festival is run by the local Rotary Club who distribute the money raised to the community. Recently Rotary decided to give 75% to the winner's chosen charity. This meant we received 75% of the money Ainsley raised, amounting to \$3,000, which helps us to fund our projects for the rest of the year.

*Jean Fornasier  
SI Beenleigh*

Ainsley with SI Beenleigh club members when she was crowned. Logan City Council Mayor Pam Parker, who is an honorary member, is to the left of Ainsley.



## WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SI Eastern Districts of Adelaide held their annual morning tea and presentation of certificates to women who volunteer in the community. The function was held in April and we had four recipients who spoke to the group about their activities.

From left to right Elizabeth Flint (Club President), Joyce Hammill, Lois Allen, Marjon Martin, Allison Gaskin

*Louise Bruce  
SI Eastern Districts*



## SI DEVONPORT

On Saturday, 18 May SI Devonport club members entertained a group of residents from Karingal Aged Care Community to a special afternoon tea in appreciation of their knitted contributions for the ongoing Federation Project Birthing in the Pacific (BIP). These contributions were a result of our member and mid-wife Lyn Johnson's BIP presentation to them last year.

As a result of their contributions, and others from the general community and club members we have to date sent over 500 knitted items to the project. Pictured are the ladies proudly displaying some of their knitted take-home jumpers.

*Jan Grey  
SI Devonport*

## SI ERDENET

SI Edernet, Mongolia, was extremely grateful to receive some hand-made jumpers from Thelma Luxton. The jumpers were given to disabled children and poor children of Erdenet City on Children's Day, 1 June. SI Edernet is so thankful to all the Soroptimists for the kind donation. The children are delighted with their jumpers.

*Munkhzul Serod  
SI Erdenet*



## SI OF THE HILLS DISTRICT

SI of The Hills District, Sydney has been providing financial support to students at the local Technical and Further Education College, offering encouragement and emphasising the importance of education to improve their lives and gain meaningful employment.

In March 2014 members Janine Drummond and Beverley Richardson attended the Graduation Night to present Scholarship Awards of \$1,000 each to two students who have undertaken courses to enter the workforce in the areas of Community & Disability Health Programmes. Belinda and Josephine, both mature aged students, have persevered with their studies and overcome personal difficulties to achieve their goals. Both have managed to obtain employment in their chosen field that fits with their family commitments.

At the Graduation Ceremony Janine Drummond, a former President of our club, spoke to the audience about Soroptimism and the importance of education to assist women and girls to improve their lives. Both ladies were invited to a club meeting where they spoke to members about their families and the employment opportunities that have opened up to them as a result of their studies.

*Carmen Lalehzari  
SI of The Hills*

L to R: Beverly  
Richardson,  
Josephine,  
Belinda & Jenny  
Mcglashan



## SI LOGAN

President Wendy Lihou again co-ordinated our annual Year 10 Leadership Day. It is a day where girls experience a professional conference, with inspirational speakers and the chance to network with students from other schools. Three speakers

from diverse backgrounds provided insight into many facets of life — business, educational and personal. The satisfaction and importance of giving back to the community was a common thread. A highlight was the last session where the students gave presentations of their experiences of the day with posters, poems and songs.

On another occasion, we hosted the Everyday Women Seminar with the National Council of Women of Qld. Guest speakers included Rob Wintour, a financial consultant, who stressed the importance of financial planning for the future. Educational Consultant Dianne Fensom's presentation about the ageing of the brain and ways to keep it active was both informative and entertaining. President of the Grandparents' Association, Maree Lubach, outlined the difficulties grandparents encounter when they become the carer of the children.

*Ann McFarlane  
Publicity Officer, SI Logan*

## NEW MEMBERS WELCOMED TO SI JOONDALUP

SI Joondalup is very pleased to have welcomed five new members so far in 2014. Clair Parry, Susan Cromb, Margie Jordaan, Helen Tudge and Debra van der Spoel felt it was time to put something back into society and chose to join a women's service club. All had been told about Soroptimist International by friends, and the choice to join SI Joondalup was purely through the geographical position of the club.

SI Joondalup is a very active club, and it is often the projects that attract new members. The next project for SI Joondalup is a "Christmas in July" for a dementia Day Care Centre.

The function is not so much for the patients as their carers, who are mostly women. Christmas in July is an annual event where about 50 guests are treated to a full Christmas Dinner, gifts and

entertainment. Staff say it is a highly anticipated treat.

The second semester at Joondalup TAFE College will see four women given a second chance at education through SI Joondalup Scholarships. These scholarships are for mature women who may have just left a violent marriage, or even crossed the law. TAFE courses will greatly increase their chance of employment in semi-skilled jobs. Previous recipients have become nursing assistants, teacher aids and others. All have expressed their gratitude for the opportunities provided by our club.

Our new members are keen to become part of this busy and productive club. One member declared, "This is just what I have been looking for!"

*Jennie van Driel  
SI Joondalup*



Members of SI Joondalup  
BACK ROW: Jennie van Driel, Clair Parry, Susan Cromb. FRONT ROW: Margie Jordaan, Jill Broom, Helen Tudge and Debra van der Spoel



President Jenny Banks and Secretary Wendy Logan with the Mackay Red Cross.

## SI MACKAY INC

Our club donated \$150 worth of wool to the Mackay Red Cross Trauma Teddy Ladies, to help make children smile. A ball of wool, knitting needles and a bit of stuffing makes a Trauma Teddy.

Each year Mackay Red Cross Trauma Teddy Ladies distribute approximately 18,000 trauma teddies outside of emergency situations. Over the last three years approximately 3,000 have been set aside for the "storm season" throughout Queensland. Because of this high demand we now desperately need wool.

For example each month Mackay's Red Cross volunteers knit around 80 Trauma Teddies which they donate to emergency services at the Base and Mater Hospitals, for use by the ambulance staff, and for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Department. Volunteer Anne Hird (Convenor) says it's a big order to keep up with and they desperately need more knitters. One of the biggest users is the Emergency Services when there are cyclones, floods & fire. The teddies are used in emergency response, outreach, recovery and at evacuation centres.

In most instances when a Trauma Teddy and child meet, the child becomes calmer and is able to better handle the medical or emergency situation, which then helps the parent become calmer.

We have recently received a request for 500 teddies for the Philippines, as well as requests from Save the Children Fund and Protect the Kids – Bravehearts. Supplies also go to New Guinea with medical teams and some to East Timor.

So you can see these Trauma Teddies go a long way.

*Wendy Logan  
SI Mackay Inc*



## SI MALAYSIA

Soroptimists from clubs in Kuala Lumpur hosted SI President Anne Garvie to a sumptuous vegetarian meal at the Annalakshmi Restaurant during her stopover in Malaysia.

*Saradha Narayanan  
SI Damansara*

## SI MORNINGTON PENINSULA PROJECT LINKS IN CAMBODIA

Over a number of years Soroptimist International of the Mornington Peninsula (SIMP) has developed strong links in Cambodia. In 2013 SIMP funded three projects which build on this commitment to support the Cambodian connection. SIMP allocated funds for 2014 to support three projects:

- the Friendship Link with Soroptimist International Phnom Penh
- building on the work of the Hands Across Borders project with a specific focus on developing teacher capacity at Santepheap Primary School in Sampov Loun
- the development and support for the work of the Women's Resource Centre in Siem Reap

### Developing the capacity of teachers at Santepheap Primary School in Sampov Loun

Sue Slater presented and organised a two-day workshop at the Santepheap Primary School in Sampov Loun from 15-17 January. These workshop

sessions introduced critical thinking strategies and built on the teaching and learning focus of the 2012 workshops run at the school by Sue and Bronwyn van der Meche. This work was supported by the Hands Across Borders project, SIMP and three Teachers Across Borders workshop leaders.



Sue met with the Director and key staff to review the outcomes of the 2012 workshop in order to plan the next steps for implementing the critical thinking strategies introduced at this year's workshops.

### The Women's Resource Centre, Siem Reap

The Women's Resource Centre (WRC), established three years ago, is the only one of its kind in Siem Reap. It provides essential support, information and education to empower women and girls to address the vicious cycle of poverty. Topics include women's health, legal rights, domestic violence and positive parenting.

Sue Slater visited the Women's Resource Centre (WRC) and met with the Director Pisey and Sally Douglas, a former Mornington Peninsula resident who works in a volunteer capacity at the WRC and who is now a member of SI Phnom Penh. Sue was able to report back to SIMP on the work of the WRC to date. We were able to meet Sally Douglas in person and learn firsthand about the WRC's long-term plans and issues when she visited in April and gave a talk to SIMP members.

*Sue Slater & Helen Beeby  
SI Mornington Peninsula*



Ripeka Reiri  
Eden Power  
Phoebe Wilson  
SI Westland President  
Jill Mitchell  
Tayla Cadigan  
Tara Robinson

## SI WESTLAND'S HIGH SCHOOL GROUP

The Link Group are high school students who have joined SI Westland (SI New Zealand South). Five were inducted at the club's May meeting as full club members with the option of attending club meetings and /or operate as a closed Facebook group. They chose the name to indicate the link between the generations, the present and the future, and the school and the club. The girls organised an awareness day at their school for "Bring Back Our Girls NZ" to support the Nigerian schoolgirls who were abducted in April (a campaign that was instigated through Facebook by SI Gore high school member Caitlin Addison), and assisted with a club fundraiser.

*Yvonne Simpson  
SI Westland*



## SI ULAANBAATAR

Soroptimists in Mongolia have shared these beautiful scenes of their country, seen through the eyes of artists. The exhibition was held in June-July 2014 to raise funds for their SI projects.

*Togsuyun Sodnom  
SI Ulaanbaatar*

SI Kapiti Coast members Nic Veltman and Mavis Smith sorting blankets



## WINTER WARMER

It came to the attention of a club member that some families in our area had insufficient warm bedding for the winter months. SI Kapiti Coast members decided to do something about this and submitted an article to our local newspaper requesting warm blankets for redistribution to needy families. A great response came from the community, especially from older folk relocating to smaller homes and no longer requiring the bedding. Members collected the bedding and

by partnering with “Birthright” were able to identify families that needed more warm bedding for winter. Over 60 items were distributed.

This project raised the profile of SI Kapiti Coast while providing a worthwhile community service. It gave older folk an opportunity to donate excess bedding to families that needed it.

*Barbara Heaton  
SI Kapiti Coast*



## BETTY LOUGHHEAD-TURLAND, MBE JP

It is with sadness that we report that Past International President Betty Loughhead-Turland died on 10 July 2014.

Betty, a member of SI Christchurch, New Zealand, was both a Past Federation President of SISWP and a Past International President of SI 1983-85. She was the first New Zealander to hold the position of International President.

The Betty Loughhead Soroptimist Scholarship was started in 1987 for women over the age of 25 on a course of study at a recognised educational facility in New Zealand. The scholarship is intended to help women gain a qualification to enter the workforce or further their career or change occupation.

Betty is a role model for all Soroptimists to aspire to. She will be remembered for her many years of dedication to Soroptimism.

## GRANT OF FRIENDSHIP - SI NEW ZEALAND SOUTH REGION

This grant is offered to a Soroptimist, two Soroptimists travelling together or a Soroptimist accompanied by her spouse or travelling companion. Travel period hospitality is March 2015 and is offered by clubs for a maximum of 21 days. Return travel to New Zealand and travel between clubs is at your own expense. This grant of friendship only applies to the South Island of New Zealand.

Enquiries to Friendship Grant Coordinator, Maree Gentle, email address: mareegentle@gmail.co.nz

Closing Date: 30 September 2014

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 21 September 2014: UN International Day of Peace
- 3 October 2014 : SI Friendship Day
- 10-12 October 2014 : SI Bruges, West Flanders, Belgium European Meeting. Register online at: <www.Soroptimist.be/events>
- 6-8 November 2014: SI Great Britain & Ireland 80th Federation Conference
- 25 November 2014: UN Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
- 10 December 2014: SI President's Appeal, See Solar, Cook Solar
- 9-12 July 2015: Soroptimist 20th International Convention, Istanbul, Turkey