

The Soroptimist SWP

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HIGH
person you shall be!
Secondary School
Award Presentation
May 2014

“Membership Matters”



a global voice
for women

Soroptimist International

Federation of the South West Pacific





Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific

(ACN 147 990 627)

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From the Editor

The theme of this issue is "Membership Matters" in the broadest sense. SISWP President Carolyn Hudson has provided an inspiring message about new initiatives to reach out to students who are our potential members.

SI Barossa is a wonderful example of a dynamic club that continues to attract new members (is it due to all that good wine they produce in the Barossa Valley!).

SI Sydney, the oldest club in the SISWP Federation that received its charter in 1938, has celebrated its 77th anniversary, with members ranging in ages from 21 to 92 years! Remarkable!

SI Port Pirie shares some ideas on how to attract new members, while raising the profile of Soroptimism.

And the youngest club in our Federation is SI Bunbury in Western Australia, chartered this month on 21 February 2015. Congratulations!

Triena

Triena
 SI (Singapore) Garden City



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SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL A Global Voice for Women

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

Soroptimists 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, Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls. Soroptimist 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: SI (Singapore) Garden City President Alicia Tong (in pink) with SISGC members & girls at the club's annual bursary awards ceremony, Mayflower Secondary School. (See story page 4.)

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Message from the President

I am delighted that Triena, SISWP Magazine Editor, has decided to devote this edition of *The Soroptimist SWP* to focus on membership. SI South West Pacific is the smallest Federation by far, about a quarter of the membership of the Federation next in size, and we have about half the membership we had 20 years ago even though we have more countries.

When I stood for election two and a half years ago, I challenged each club in this Federation, either alone or in conjunction with one or more nearby clubs, to start a "daughter" club. This hasn't really happened yet but I do urge you all to share the pleasures and challenges of Soroptimist with others – either as a club or an individual. Do not be jealous of your SI membership – it is something that improves and develops as you spread it around.

I am excited to be chartering my first club in February – Bunbury in Western Australia. In WA it was always believed that Bunbury was an area where we had no hope of starting a club; that BPW, Zonta and, later, Rotary and Lions, had taken all possible members. How wrong can you be? It just takes one person with the energy and enthusiasm to break down barriers.

After that I will be looking forward to travelling to Indonesia and Malaysia to charter SI Kemang (Jakarta, Indonesia) and SI Malacca (Malaysia). I hope we can keep up the momentum with charters in other parts of the Federation.

Chartering new clubs is only one way to expand our membership. Last year, the Federation Board approved trials of two innovative types of membership – student members and a five-year trial to set up an on-line membership community.

Our Board agreed to have a two-year trial inviting students who are in their last two years of secondary school to become members. The joining fee was set at AUD \$25 no matter what time of year they joined. Clubs have the freedom to create their own procedures as, being a trial, nothing is set in concrete.

This trial programme started in New Zealand early in 2014. SI Gore has four student members, SI Westland five and SI Invercargill three. It was originally thought that these student members would not want to come to meetings but that proved not to be the case with the students attending meetings when their study and exams allowed. They have also taken part in local projects including "Walk the Talk: Stop Violence Against Women". Enquiries have been sent to Membership Convenor Anne Gover from other clubs in New

Zealand and also clubs in Australia.

A number of these student members will be leaving school and moving to attend university or other tertiary study in 2015. We want to encourage them to stay as members – as members of a local club, as attached members of their club or possibly as members of the On-Line Community. Eventually, when they graduate and start work, we hope they will become full fee-paying active members in a club close to them.

Of course, student members are not the only young members we can have. Some clubs have university students or young professional and business women. We must cherish and nurture these younger women – as we should all members – but, as was pointed out at one of our recent region meetings, we must treat them as "members" not curiosities! They value the range of membership ages and experience as much as the rest of us do.

I wish you an exciting time in 2015, recruiting new members and retaining existing members, so that we end the year with a net gain of members in as many clubs as possible.

Carolyn Hudson
 President
 Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific



SISWP President Carolyn Hudson attended the Geneva NGO Forum - Beijing+20 in November 2014, giving visibility to SI South West Pacific at the highest international level.

CHARTER OF SI BUNBURY, NEW CLUB, MORE MEMBERS!

A warm welcome to SI Bunbury in Western Australia who received their charter on 21 February 2015. For those lucky enough to attend their celebration, there was a tour to neighbouring Gnomesville in the Ferguson Valley. This amazing place has thousands of gnomes left by visitors from all over the world. Soroptimists attending the Charter were invited to bring along a gnome. What a unique and memorable idea!

Triena Ong
 Editor
 SISWP Magazine



New Member Initiatives



HERE'S A GREAT IDEA!

In Port Pirie, South Australia a market is held on the second Sunday of the month in the main street.

Due to the generosity of the market committee, one stall is offered each month free of charge to a community volunteers group. SI Port Pirie members have taken up this offer each year. One year we displayed Birthing in the Pacific project information together with knitted baby billums holding a doll and a teddy bear.

In 2013 and 2014 we sold books of lottery tickets supplied by a national Credit Union (People's Choice) which we used as a fundraiser for our annual leadership bursaries for two senior female students at local secondary schools.

Such displays result in many ladies enquiring about our club. Their details are passed on to our Membership officer, who follows up and hopefully this results in their attendance at one or more meetings. Our most recent new member was gained in this way. The enquiries tend to come from women who have recently moved into the town for work and who are looking for ideas on how they can best fit into the community.

Being part of a Community Volunteers stall at a local market is certainly a good way to attract prospective new members!

Heather Hunt
Publicity Officer
SI Port Pirie

TWELVE NEW MEMBERS!

SI Barossa Valley is delighted to report that 12 new members were inducted in 2014. The photo shows six new members who were inducted in September 2014. Another two members were inducted in December 2014: Sarah Kroehn and Kerry Forge. Our membership currently stands at 42 in total.

Allison Hobbs
SI Barossa Valley

SINGAPORE HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS

SI (Singapore) Garden City has been providing bursaries for needy students at the local Mayflower Secondary School. This is the school that was visited by Soroptimist International President Lynn Dunning during her term of office when she visited Singapore in 2006. Her visit was marked by a plaque and the unveiling of a sculpture by SISGC member, Dr Elsie Yu, an eminent Singaporean artist who has received national awards for her many art contributions to the community.



Our bursary fund was augmented by the generous donation bequeathed to our club by the late Tricia Ng, a Past President of SISGC.

Inspired by the two-year trial initiative started by SI NZ in 2014 and approved by the SISWP Federation Board, SI (Singapore) Garden City is now discussing how to engage young high school students in our SI community service projects with a view to eventually welcoming them as full club members. (For further details about the SISWP trial initiative, see the Message from SISWP President Carolyn Hudson on page 3 of this Magazine).

Alice Ng
SI (Singapore) Garden City

MEMBERSHIP: ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE

During my time as Federation Extension Convenor, I often wondered why some clubs maintained an enviable longevity, while others folded after a relatively short period of time. Demographics undoubtedly play a part, transitory populations being a fact of life in our modern world. But there seemed to be more to it, and I set about trying to find why this was so.

Many ideas have been put forward as to what keeps a club successful. Meaningful projects, business-like meetings, good speakers at meetings, are all quoted as being the way, and all of this is true. However, I believe the magic ingredient is the friendships forged over the years and the feeling of inclusion some clubs seem able to engender. SI Sydney celebrated 77 years of service in October 2014 with an age range of 21 to 92 years, and is the oldest club in the Federation. This year the club has been privileged to induct eleven new members, a record in the club's long history. Already these women are making a wonderful contribution and are brimming over with new ideas, while embracing the true spirit of Soroptimist International. One of these new members, Elise Johnston, placed a message on her blog. I believe that what she has to say will resonate with all Soroptimists. It is our very core.

Elise Johnston (age 24 years) wrote:
"Service for the Soul"

Joining a service club can be tricky. We convince ourselves that the gold coin donation we gave to the Salvo's last week was us doing our bit. But, at least for me, there was always a desire to want to do more, and be more active. In February this year, I joined SI Sydney, and it's been one of the most rewarding and special things that I have ever done.

I felt compelled to write this tonight, after attending the monthly meeting of SI Sydney. The structure of the meeting was no different from any other. We inducted three new members after hearing from our guest speaker and then broke for dinner. After dinner we had our business meeting and exchanged quick pleasantries with those who we did not get to speak with earlier. It is true that we had the pleasure to host the President for the Region of NSW and the Australian National Representative, but aside from this, there was nothing remarkably different about the meeting.

On my way home, it struck me how fortunate I am to be involved not only with an organisation that does such

meaningful and positive work around the globe, but also with a group of women who, in the short time that we have been acquainted, have brought out the best in me. Because they are supportive, because they are welcoming and not least of all because we are a family.

We are women from all walks of life. We are women who believe in other women, and their right to feel empowered and educated. We are feminists in a traditional sense in that we believe in gender equality, and that to achieve gender equality we should involve our men in club activities. We lovingly refer to the men in our lives as our 'Soroptimists' and embrace them as part of the family."

Elise goes on to say:
"Tonight I felt immensely proud to be part of Soroptimist International. These professional, kind women have allowed me to be pushed out of my comfort zone, to reach for the stars, because they are behind me 100%.

They have put their trust in me to take on extra responsibilities. They have taught me what it is to be an empowered and assertive woman, that just because I am what I am, I don't have to settle for less or keep quiet about things that I believe to be wrong.

Being a part of a service club, is not only about serving your wider community, it is also about filling a need within yourself to be in a place where you are accepted, no matter your age, your beliefs, the colour of your skin, or whatever it is that sets you apart. It is about belonging and being among friends. These women have truly taught me so much about who I am and what I am capable of and I've known them for less than a year. In the next 12 months I hope to share more about our wonderful organisation and the things we are doing to help our wider community."

Doreen Todd
Extension Convenor
SI Sydney



FROM TOP:
SI Sydney Charter Dinner, 1938;
SI Sydney members, 2014;
Back row from left: Lyn Moir, Sarah Bousfeld, Penelope Cunningham, Sarah McCarthy, Elise Johnston, Melissa Vandayar. Centre: Elaine Sadler
Front: Grace Barnes, Christine Lopacinski, Joanne Lomas. Absent: Louise Taffa



From left to right: Barbara Ludlow, Bronwyn Lillecrapp, Karen Davies, Margaret Harris, Joylene Seppelt (SIBV President), Dianne Potter (SI South Australian President), Cate Atkinson, Terry Savage.

Walk the Talk: Visibility, Advocacy and Awareness

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SI Malaysia Walk The Talk with Men on Board

On Sunday, 30 November 2014, Soroptimists from the Klang valley gathered at Petaling Jaya, and Walked the Talk (WTT) with Men on Board to Stop Violence against Women (VAW). There were about 700 participants including university students, 20 vintage cars with their male owners proudly leading the way, and a fantastic 60-member marching band from a local school. Weightlifters, body-builders and their supporters were also present.

The total walk was about 4 kilometres attracting the attention of passing vehicles, local residents and shopkeepers. Puan Sri Siew Yong Gnanalingam, Immediate Past President of the Federation of SWP and the adviser for WTT, flagged off the walk together with Professor Dato' Dr Mohd. Amin Jalaludin, Vice-Chancellor University of Malaya, and SIROM (SI Region of Malaysia) President Nora Lam. The police escort provided a measure of safety and seriousness to the walk. Soroptimists and organizations that supported the cause carried our flags high.

The Minister of Youth and Sports the Honourable Mr Khairy Jamaluddin delivered a moving and inspiring Opening Address highlighting the need for men to recognize that violence against women was not just a female issue, but one that affected the men as well. His impassioned plea for greater involvement of men in eradicating violence against women made a huge impact particularly on the university students.

Soroptimists garnered the support of several young male ambassadors for this cause. "The Men's Perspective", a panel discussion with the views of two clinical psychologists, a Deputy Superintendent of Police, a lawyer and a Women's Aid Organization representative received an enthusiastic response from the audience. There was a lively exchange of questions and answers. Participants learnt about the psychological viewpoint where the need for "safety" for women was a key word and various police efforts in strengthening regulatory reforms and arrest powers.

Similar WTT events were held across Malaysia in the states of Penang on 30 November, Malacca 6 December and Ipoh 7 December.

SI Penang had members of the public signing a Petition to Stop VAW. They creatively set up a board pinned with photos for a contest centred on the theme - Zero Tolerance, Zero Victims and Zero Violence. This made an impact and raised awareness among the Penang crowd that occupied the entire length of Beach Street, a major thoroughfare.

In Malacca, SIROM worked with potential Soroptimists and after a mass zumba warm up, some 150 participants



walked through the city with cars honking and acknowledging their support of the message to stop VAW. An excellent write-up in the local Chinese and English newspapers helped publicize the event.

SI Ipoh partnered with the Perak Women For Women Society to hold this event. As their theme colour was orange, SI Ipoh made orange goody bags with the SI Ipoh logo printed on it and stuffed it with an orange fan each carrying the word "STOP" on it. "Gen -Y," a youth movement in Ipoh helped to liven up the atmosphere with music and a skit of a scene involving abuse of a woman and

the public running to her aid. Thirty energetic student nurses from Fatimah Hospital School of Nursing, created a flash mob that attracted mass involvement. The male supporters of women's rights also addressed the crowd on why women should be supported in this cause.

Nora Lam
President
SI Region of Malaysia



Having decided to continue supporting the SISWP initiative "Walk the Talk: Stop Violence against Women" in 2014, a committee was formed from four of the city clubs and convened by the President of the Region of South Australia.

Our first meeting took place on 1 March 2014 to plan the programme for the walk on Sunday, 23 November 2014. This year's walk had the benefit of knowing the strengths and weaknesses identified from the 2013 Walk the Talk. This enabled us to work with and implement the strategies that had been identified from 2013. There was to be an address on the steps of Parliament House.

Letters of invitation were sent to politicians, organizations, and the speakers who would be opening and closing the function, flyers were placed in libraries, there were media releases and a Facebook Event page. A sum of \$700 was available for all clubs who were participating in Walk the Talk events in our Region for printing/advertising.

The event was opened at the Convention Centre, Adelaide by Atena Abrahamzadeh, who had experienced domestic violence in her family as a child. Her mother was tragically killed by her father.

However, with only days to our event, we received a number of apologies from our state politicians who had agreed to attend but were now unable to participate due to the memorial service being held at the same time for the Honourable Bob Such MP.

This also created a problem for the closing but we were very lucky to have Maria Hagias, Executive Director of the Central District Violence Service, step in and speak at the Botanic Gardens. Maria has extensive experience in domestic violence and associated issues. Her position involves undertaking community education, as well as the many board and committee positions that she holds.

The politicians who did join with us were Gerry Kandaleers, John Dawkins, Kelly Vincent and Steph Key. A group from the Gender Consortium from Vietnam and Mongolia joined us, too. There were also members from SI Adelaide, SI Barossa Valley, SI Eastern Districts, SI Port Pirie, SI Northern Highlands, SI Southern Districts and SI Torrens all wearing our WTT T-shirts and carrying our banners and posters.

Sandra Richards
Public Relations
SI South Australia

Walk the Talk: Visibility, Advocacy and Awareness

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ANGER SI OF THE HILLS



The 6th Healthy Relationships Seminar took place successfully on 4 December 2014 with participants from Parramatta, Blacktown, Hawkesbury and the Hills district. It is a free annual seminar organized by SI of the Hills and supported by The Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Committee. Speakers covered a wide range of topics from healthy and unhealthy relationships, parenting skills and legal issues.

The keynote speaker was Ken Nathan who founded Interventions Plus to work with teenagers with anger issues. He talked about "breaking the cycle of anger before it turns to violence".

The event is widely covered in the local press such as the *Hill Shire Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, and *The Hills News*, raising the profile of Soroptimism and its advocacy work. Earlier in the year, SI of the Hills held a forum on Elder Abuse as part of its ongoing Building Healthy Relationships programme that also received wide press coverage.

SI of the Hills is proud to have worked tirelessly to educate women and contribute towards the betterment of the community.

*Carmen Lalebzari
SI of the Hills*

SI of the Hills members: Robyn Murray, Janine Drummond, Bev Richardson, Judy Todd and Carmen Lalebzari with comfort dolls given to attendees at the talk on Building Healthy Relationships Forum at Castle Hill.



WALKING THE SOROPTIMIST TALK

In the Soroptimist world "Walk the Talk" refers to the 16 days of activism in late November and early December every year.

The concept of "Walk the Talk" was introduced by the Immediate Past President of Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific Siew Yong Gnanalingam in 2012 during her term as SISWP President. All members were encouraged to synchronize this advocacy event across the Federation for greater awareness.

In Fiji, sheer hard work paid off for the SI Sigatoka club when they organized a very successful awareness event on the riverbank in Sigatoka town attended by more than 50 men, women and children.

The strength of this programme were the speakers from different religious bodies who talked about women-related issues like respect, care, equality and understanding according to the religious teachings of their respective holy books.

As reported by SI Sigatoka President Savitri Lingam, the speakers were Reverend Daniel Sahayam from the Anglican Church, Pundit Shivnesh Sharma from Sanatan Dharam, and Moulvi Mohammed Tazim from the Sigatoka Town Mosque.



"Apart from the religious speakers members from ten different civil societies, government departments and women's groups participated in our awareness programme.

"We were active in this aspect last year as well but this year we decided to involve religious leaders to raise more concern and touch more hearts," said President Lingam.

*Zareena Bi
NR Fiji*

WTT AT SANTA PARADE SI INVERCARGILL

SI Invercargill made an impact with a difference for their Walk the Talk 2014. We decided to have an SI float and participate in the local Santa Parade in November. Our club members (and my Soroptimister, David) helped to decorate our float (a truck belonging to Lorraine's Soroptimister, Kevin). Not only did Kevin offer the use of his truck, but he had agreed also to chauffeur us on the day. Our float included not only our members and two junior members, but also grandchildren and friends.

The number of people who turned out to watch the parade was overwhelming! We gave out white ribbons, brochures on our club, and flyers for the SI speech competition. SI member, Una, even presented the Mayor of Invercargill and the Mayor of Gore with a white ribbon when she spotted them at the end of the Parade. The exposure our club received through being part of the Santa Parade was great!

*Joanne Fannin
President
SI Invercargill*



SI JAKARTA'S "WALK THE TALK"



SI Jakarta's "Walk the Talk" started off at Indonesia's national monument, Monas. Approximately 25 members and friends participated in this important annual event.

What a fabulous crowd - fun, laughter and a bit of seriousness - proud women (and men) all gathering on a Sunday morning to raise awareness to Stop Domestic Violence against Women.

After taking photos, the SIJ group headed down JI Sudirman, the main road running through Jakarta. We met friends on the way, saw people dressed as Indonesian kings, and many more of the general public enjoying the "Car Free Sunday" in Jakarta. Great visibility for SIJ and our message of advocacy.

With SIJ's "Stop Violence Against Women" polo shirts, kindly donated by Titian Foundation, awareness was raised among many people. Many stopped to ask about and learn more about Soroptimist's united front on "Walk the Talk". At the completion of the Walk, all SIJ members and friends had brunch at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Jakarta.

A great day for a great cause!!

*Karen Bilton Butterfield
SI Jakarta*

Pink Party, Bra Decorating Back L to R Maria Mijts, Wendy Lihou, Tania Gibson, Joanna Lee, Angela Philbey, Cesarina Gigante. Front: Bev Ditton, Dr Azra Potapov



FUN DECORATING BRAS FOR A GOOD CAUSE SI LOGAN'S PINK PARTY

It was a Pink Party with a difference. Logan Soroptimists had a fun-filled event as they enjoyed a High Tea, answered Trivia questions with Pink in the question, guessed the number of pink lollies in a jar and showed off their creativity in decorating bras -- all for a good cause to raise money for breast cancer. The delicious food was a bonus. Angela Philbey won the best Decorated Bra and Jennifer West, Best Dressed in Pink.

Our Christmas Breakfast was very successful, raising \$250 for the White Ribbon Event and a hamper of food and presents for local needy families. A record 23 of the 25 members were able to attend -- our best number of members at a function!

Bev Ditton
Extension Officer
SI Logan



SI Logan members at the Christmas Breakfast Back: Ann McFarlane, Di Fensom, Maria Mijts, Kim Cotterelle, Rita Matilla, Sharon Hansen, Rose Warsaw, Pauline Light, Tracey Finlay, Sally Kuyateh, Desley Scott MP, Dr Jan Stewart, Helen Brown, Joanna Lee. Front: Celia Moore, Dr Azra Potapov, Dr Jane Simon, Dr Edina Hutanic, Wendy Lihou, Bev Ditton, Tania Gibson, Lilijana Sorban, Sandra McNeil, Cesarina Gigante (Absent: Maureen Mopeo-Jane, Nicky Paull)

BROADWAY NIGHT

SI Bangkok (SIB) held its annual charity gala in early September 2014. Under the theme of "Broadway Night", the gala featured a 3-course dinner, leading local vocalists singing beloved tunes from Broadway musicals, and over 200 supporters decked out in their finest attire.

It was a great night of fun and fundraising to benefit SIB programmes, including palliative care, such as temporary housing for out-of-town families with gravely ill children undergoing medical treatment in Bangkok. With a number of corporate supporters, we also held a successful silent auction of a variety of items, from jewellery to weekend beach getaways, as well as a raffle draw for numerous wonderful prizes. It will be hard to top this next year!

Voralak Surwanvanichkij
SI Bangkok

VACCINATING AGAINST CERVICAL CANCER Soroptimist International Bayside Inc. & ACCF

Soroptimist International Bayside President, Gail Lawrence, presented a cheque for \$3,740 to Erin McCabe, National Community Engagement Officer for the Australian Cervical Cancer Foundation (ACCF) at a recent dinner (see photo). Following a highly successful "Favours Auction" held earlier this year, SI Bayside raised the funds to support the Foundation's vaccination and screening programme in the Solomon Islands. These much needed funds will go directly to support the work of the ACCF in providing protection for women and girls against this deadly disease. It is understood that the ACCF works with SI Solomon Islands as part of the programme.

The Favours Auction relied on members and friends offering to undertake an errand or act of kindness which people bid for on the evening. Favours ranged from cooking muffins and cakes or mowing the lawn, through to luxury cruises on the Bay and photographic sittings. It was indeed a lot of fun and a wonderful fundraiser for a good cause.

Catherine Heiner
Publicity Officer
SI Bayside Inc.



75TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATED AMONGST THE FLOWERS, SI WELLINGTON

SI Wellington celebrated its 75th anniversary at Waiopahu Gardens on Saturday, 8 November with Soroptimist sisters, friends and family. A warm and sunny day saw the group enjoying morning tea and lunch on the lawn and exploring the many walks and colourful delights the extensive gardens offer.

The day had echoes of the historic occasion in the Centennial Restaurant at the Exhibition in Wellington to celebrate our charter in 1939. The Mayor and Mayoress, and the wife of the Prime Minister were among the guests at that dinner party where *The Evening Post* reported the "tables were a delight to behold", with decorations of yellow roses, blue cornflowers, delphiniums, and irises in the club colours of gold and blue. Golden roses were worn by all the women.

Proceeds from the anniversary function have been donated to projects for 2014, including the Wellington branch of Bellyful, whose network of volunteers provide meals at no cost to families with newborns, and families struggling with illness where they have little or no family or social support. The Club has donated \$4,000 to Bellyful this year.

The photos show Wellington Club President Kristeen Johnston at the celebration, wearing Te Amo, the traditional ceremonial Maori Cloak specially made for and gifted to New Zealand's Soroptimists; Wellington club founding members in 1939; and current members of the Wellington club and guests.



Source: Ref# F-18963-1/1 Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, NZ. Reproduced with permission.



Jane Chapman
SI Wellington

WATER PROBLEMS SOLVED

A Huge Friendship Link Achievement for SISWP

Safe drinking water is the greatest need during and after natural disasters. For the rural communities of Drasa and Naviyago in Fiji, water issues during trying times have been solved by SI Lautoka especially during the 2012 floods.

SI Lautoka started their Disaster Management water project with support through friendship links as well as the local SI clubs in Fiji. The overseas clubs that were a part of this project are SI Hong Kong, SI New Zealand South Region, SI Mount Gambier Inc. South Australia, and SI Barossa Valley Inc. South Australia with local support by SI Sigatoka, SI Rakiraki and the *City Star Newspaper*.

In April 2014 at the request of the area Advisory Councilor Mr Sheik Saheb, seven water tanks were installed in the Drasa Seaside, Drasa Bila, Lavni Vanua settlement and Naviyago Seaside areas.

The handover was officiated by the Minister for Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation, Rosy Sofia Akbar, on 25 October at the Drasa Muslim Primary school. The school received a 5,000-litre water tank as this is the evacuation centre for this area, while the communities received 2,000-litre tanks.

Zarena Bi
NR Fiji



SI BENALLA

SI Benalla Inc has an ongoing partnership with Honeysuckle Regional Health (HRH) to support the HRH Student Training Programme.

HRH incorporates two Aged Care Centres: the Violet Town Bush Nursing Centre with 64 beds and Bentley's Aged Care in Bendigo with 68 beds.

The Programme is to support financially any personal care worker employed by HRH who wishes to upgrade their qualifications in the nursing sector. SI Benalla raised Aus \$1,000 as their inaugural donation towards the Programme. The cheque was handed over by Kerry Garrett at the Violet Town Bush Nursing Centre AGM and was gratefully accepted by the CEO, Sam Campi, and John Hawkes, HRH board member.

Kerry Garrett
ICT Liaison
SI Benalla Inc



COMMEMORATIVE TREES

In November 2014, members of SI New Plymouth went on a "Spring Walk" through our local Pukekura Park to see the trees that have been planted by SI members in recent years.

First we visited the Tulip tree or Peace tree planted by our Friendship Link Club SI Suraga sisters from Japan in 2010. Their city Mishima is a sister city to New Plymouth as both have a perfect conical mountain nearby -- Mt Fuji in Japan and Mt Taranaki near New Plymouth.

The Peace tree or *Liriodendron tulipifera* is favoured by the Japanese. The lush greenery of the spring leaves made for a lovely photo with Adell Morton, Marilla Tyler and Marie Mitchell of SI New Plymouth. Our other trees include the Rimus planted in the famous rainforest garden "Pukeiti", several species of natives to the wetlands, and Kate Sheppard Camellias to celebrate the 100 years of women's suffrage.



*Karen Eagles
SI New Plymouth*

ANOTHER HELPING HAND AT CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a time when many families struggle to provide the basics for their children, and this is felt particularly by those women and children who have suffered domestic violence.

To assist these women SI South Perth presented 45 laundry baskets of food to Leanne Barron, CEO of Starick, seen in photo, with Ann Reed, President of SI South Perth. Starick works within the Western Australian community to provide crisis accommodation, support, therapy and advocacy services to women and children experiencing family and domestic violence. SI South Perth supports them throughout the year with donations and practical assistance. This includes contributing food baskets to Starick for well over 10 years. These baskets are filled with food staples rather than luxuries, but with increasing prices, a basket of food donated now costs over \$100. Friends, workplaces and local businesses also contribute.

"This annual event provides club members with the opportunity to make a personal contribution to those in need," said Club President Ann Reed. "We also look for other ways to assist refugees such as providing toiletry bags for women and children when they arrive, in most cases often with nothing."



*Wendy Wiley
Marketing Co-ordinator
SI South Perth*

SI NZ CENTRAL REGION MEETING

The New Zealand Central Region held the region meeting to coincide with the 30th birthday of SI Waitara. President Lyn Stewart welcomed us – there was perfect attendance with all eight Clubs represented. SI President Elect Yvonne Simpson brought us up to date. The upcoming SINZ Conference in Palmerston North that is planned for March 2015 was discussed, with lively input and useful suggestions. Hayley Denoul of SI Wellington led delegates in an exercise, matching these strengths and skills with skills that SI members might want to develop. It was very worthwhile meeting.



*Karen Eagles
Publicity Officer*

SI Wellington President Kristeen Johnston and Catherin O' Donnell, SI NZ Central President Lyn Stewart, Secretary Julia Risk and Paulette Mc Elroy, SI President Elect Yvonne Simpson addressing the SINZ Central meeting in Waitara.



USA FRIENDSHIP GRANT

The Northwestern Region Region of Soroptimist International of the Americas (SIA), which includes Alaska, Washington, Oregon, northern Idaho and Montana, is pleased to again offer a Grant of Friendship to one or two Soroptimists or a Soroptimist and her partner from outside the United States. The Grant is for 2-3 weeks in April 2016 and will include the Soroptimist Northwestern Region Conference, 21 - 24 April 2016 in Spokane, Washington.

Visitors will be responsible for their own travel expenses to and from the United States. Lodging, meals, hospitality and travel between clubs will be provided by the Northwestern Region. Spoken English is required. Please apply by 15 April 2015 to Carol Kerkow, Chair - Grant of Friendship Committee, e-mail rbkerkow@msn.com. Please include the letters "GOF" in the email subject line.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 8 March 2015: International Women's Day
- 31 March 2015: Deadline for submission of articles for SISWP Magazine (May 2015) on the theme "Projects Making a Difference". Action photos are preferred!
- 1-3 May 2015: SISWP Interim Board Meeting, Sydney
- 8-11 June 2015: "Living the Future: Soroptimists for Expo", Milan <www.soroptimistforexpo.com>
- 9-12 July 2015: SI Convention, Istanbul