

# The Soroptimist SWP

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**PROJECTS,  
PROJECTS,  
PROJECTS**  
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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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# WELCOME!

## SI Kemang

SI Kemang in Indonesia received its Charter at a ceremony on 18 April 2015, officiated by SISWP President Carolyn Hudson. It was a unique event held outdoors at the location of the SI Kemang project in the Taman Kenanga park in South Gandaria, a sub-district of Jakarta. The celebration included a mini bazaar of food and a showcase of products made by the local women as part of SI Kemang's programme "Stand Up, Speak Up: Together Uplifting Women to Realize Their Power". Working in cooperation with Jakarta's Family Welfare Education Team and Gandaria Selatan's Family Welfare Education Team, the Club's programme is empowering local women to become entrepreneurs and earn an income. Guests and the village community were also treated to cultural performances of dance and music at the Charter – a fun-filled and memorable day for all.

*Yanti Nisro*  
President  
SI Kemang, Indonesia



## SI Bunbury



After twenty months in the making, Bunbury finally became a member of Soroptimist International. It all started over a coffee session and grew from there.

SI Bunbury was chartered by SISWP Federation President Carolyn Hudson on Saturday, 21 February 2015. Guests, who came from far and wide to help celebrate the occasion, enjoyed a wonderful dinner and speeches. The bonhomie continued next day with a visit to Gnomesville in the Ferguson Valley where gnomettes from the attending clubs were "planted" to commemorate the chartering. A wonderful lunch was enjoyed at St. Aidans, a winery nearby. It was a fun day and fun way to wrap up the proceedings.

Founding President, Sue Hensby, is looking forward to leading her club into the next chapter, and all the members are ready to take on all that being a member implies.

Welcome aboard, SI Bunbury!

*Bobbi Buckle*  
SW Liaison SIWA Extension, Australia



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## From the Editor

The focus of this issue is club projects. I find it fascinating to read about the wide variety of meaningful projects being carried out by our Soroptimist members – all making a difference in the lives of the SISWP communities they serve.

Also included in this issue is coverage of the Charter of two new clubs: SI Bunbury in Western Australia and SI Kemang in Jakarta, Indonesia. We extend a warm welcome to our new members in Australia and Indonesia!

One of the best benefits of being a Soroptimist is the opportunity to meet women from all over the world and make lasting friendships. See my photo here with my new friend, Kerry Garrett of SI Benalla, Victoria, Australia (the former editor of this Magazine) who was visiting Singapore last month.



### 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 SI of 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 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 Logan won the Best Practice Award at the SISQ Conference, for their SEW (Soroptimists Empowering Women) project. Pauline Light is seen here with Kokopo High School students, Papua New Guinea as she instructs them using the sewing machines donated to their school in SI Logan's SEW project.

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*Triena*  
SI (Singapore) Garden City

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# PROJECTS: Educate, Empower, Enable

## SI NELSON'S TEEN PARENT UNIT

The establishment of the Nelson Teen Parent Unit (Young Parents' School) by SI Nelson is a long story that started in 2011 but finally by November 2014 all the boxes were ticked. The project now provides teenage mothers with the opportunity to continue their education while caring for their babies.

As we had found a suitable venue, provided free by the Impact Church, and a teacher from the Able Tasman Education Trust we decided to take a leap of faith, had an open day in April 2011 to assess the interest and then started two days a week. During that year, the girls achieved 61 Unit Standards. It was the first Teen Parent Unit in NZ that was operating before receiving any government funding.

By 2012, funding came from not only our club, but also the Able Tasman Education Trust, other charities and the Ministry of Education.

The Unit is now located at Auckland Point School with the teen parent education provided by Nelson College for Girls. Two teachers were employed in 2013 and the name changed to the Young Parents' School.

Special thanks go to Wendy Logan, SI Nelson member in her role as CE of Nelson-Tasman Kindergarten Association and to Donna Kennedy and Judy Miles, particularly who went each week to help care for the babies. Thanks also to our other members for help and support and to SI of Waimea for funding and also to their members for regularly caring for the babies.

The school has been visited by the Minister for Education, Hekia Parata. Students are able to access government agencies when required. Our club now sponsors a prize for the student who has shown the most Personal Development during the year.

In 2014 Nelson College for Girls purchased a van which picks up the students and their babies as many do not have transport. It was officially opened by the Prime Minister, John Key, in June which was a highlight for the girls and our club.

Quotes from some of the students: "TPU has helped me get somewhere in life, ensuring that my 4-month-old son has a good mum." "Having my son had inspired me to return to study."

Joy Oakly  
Past President  
SI Nelson, New Zealand

Nelson Soroptimists with young mothers at the School's prizing in December 2014. Back row from left: Joy Oakly, Rachael Taylor SI Nelson President; Middle row: Young Mother and Wendy Logan



## SI LAUTOKA PROTECTING OF THE ENVIRONMENT

SI Lautoka has been promoting protection of the environment since 2011 through urban primary schools but this year decided to involve five rural primary schools. The club worked in collaboration with the Lautoka City Council's Health Department and presented compost bins to Gurukul, Drasa Muslim, Amichandra, Saru MGM and Tuvu Primary schools.

The programme on Reduce, Reuse and Recycle was run as a competition to determine which school made the best use of the compost from the bins in their school gardens. Saru MGM Primary emerged as the winner and all the schools received gardening tools and certificates in recognition of their efforts.

During the presentation of awards, Chief Guest, Director of Health Services Mr Gyaneshwar Rao expressed his appreciation to SI Lautoka club for their initiative and vision to promote a secure and better environment.

Zareena Bi  
National Representative,  
Fiji



Pupils of Saru MGM Primary School, at the prize-giving ceremony.

## SI LOGAN'S BEST PRACTICE AWARD

Our celebration on 3 March 2015 at Sapphires Restaurant was very special: the Shailer Park High School hospitality students prepared all the delicious food and drinks, the event marked International Women's Day, outgoing SI Logan President spoke of the year's projects, and the new President and committee were installed. Drinks and canapés were served in the School's Art Gallery before adjourning to dinner. All marveled at the creativity and sophistication of the art works by Shailer Park students. SI Logan was pleased to support the school's students in this way.

Guest Mayor Pam Parker spoke of her passion and love for Logan, its remarkable job growth and her determination to help all residents in Logan. Gail Harrower and Julie Books showed examples of the incredible service they do for the Logan Community, through Mission Possible Volunteers. They have a small army of volunteers who sew and knit for the sick, elderly and needy in the community.

Outgoing President of SI Logan, Wendy Lihou thanked the executive and welcomed new President Tracey Finlay. SI Logan won the Best Practice Award at the SISQ



Left photo: Best Practice Award: Bev Ditton, Ralda Forzin, Cesarina Gigante, Maria Mijts  
Right photo: Tracey Findlay, Julie Brooks, Mayor Pam Parker, Gail Harrower

Conference, for their SEW (Soroptimists Empowering Women) project where Maria Mijts organized the sending of 14 sewing machines to Kokopo State High School in Papua New Guinea, visiting several times, once with Rose Warsow, Pauline Light and Sandra McNeil instructing the teachers and students on how to use the machines and complete projects.

Bev Ditton  
Extension Officer  
SI Logan, Queensland, Australia

## SI HOBART-SI JAKARTA EDUCATE TO LEAD PROJECT

The overall objective of the SI Hobart (SIH)-SI Jakarta (SIJ) "Educate to Lead" SISWP \$5,000 grant joint project was SI Goal 1. Objective 1: Increase access to formal and non-formal learning opportunities. An underlying objective was "to nurture the students to become active advocates for disadvantaged and vulnerable women and girls in their respective communities...and in doing so, create young leaders."

Ade Rizky, 21, was the grant recipient of SI Jakarta through their partner NGO, Titian Foundation. Ade is a final-year Accounting student at Diponegoro University in Central Java and the first girl from her village to attend university. Her study tour to Tasmania took place in October 2014. Lucy Haass, 19, a student at the Faculty of Nursing, University of Tasmania, was the SI Hobart recipient. Lucy visited Indonesia in February 2015.



From left: Any Ariany, Lucy Haass, Ade Rizky, Julie Marsaban and Heidi La Plagia.

The Project was jointly launched by SIH President Julie Marsaban and SIJ President, Any Ariany at the 65th Anniversary of SIH on 4 October 2014. SISWP President Carolyn Hudson and President-Elect Theresa Lyford were official guests along with two SI Jakarta members, Isla Winarto and Chris Richardson. Tasmanian dignitaries present included Hobart City Lord Mayor the Hon Damon Thomas, Deputy Mayor the Hon. Ron

Christie, and Cmdr. Stacey Porter, the first female commander of the Tasmanian Navy.

Both students experienced local culture, met leaders of the community and learned about the work of Soroptimists in Java, Indonesia and Tasmania, Australia respectively.

Julie Marsaban  
SI Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

## SOROPTIMISTS OF EXCELLENCE SI SOUTH QUEENSLAND REGION

The Florence Drury Award for Excellence as a Soroptimist is a South Queensland Region Award (Australia) initiated by SI Gold Coast in 2009 in honour of the club's Honorary Life Member Florence Drury who has been a Soroptimist for 53 years! Florence has just celebrated her 95th birthday! Recently, she was a speaker at the South Queensland Region Annual Conference - voicing her reflections on feminism from the past!

The Florence Drury Award gives Soroptimists in the Region the opportunity to recognise a member each year who they feel has made a significant difference in the lives of women and girls. This year, there were six worthy candidates for the Award - Jacky Burkett (SI Bayside), Bev Ditton (SI Logan), Machellee Kosiak (SI Moreton North), Pat Redknap (SI Brisbane South), Liz Rivans (SI Beenleigh) and Elwyn Syers (SI Gold Coast).

The 2015 Recipient is Machellee Kosiak from SI Moreton North. Machellee is an Australian Wiradjuri woman, who is a registered nurse, practising midwife, academic, educator, mentor and author. As one of only 100 registered Aboriginal midwives in Australia, Machellee's professional influence and practical experience in reducing maternal and infant mortality rates amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island families have been outstanding.

SI Moreton North said, in its nomination of Machellee for the Award, that she "walks her talk in excellence as a Soroptimist each and every day". Congratulations, Machellee!

*Janet James  
Publicity/Public Relations Convenor  
SI South Queensland Region, Australia*



2015 Florence Drury Award nominees: Back row: Elwyn, Pat, Bev, Jacky, Liz; front row: Machellee and Florence Drury.



**SI ERDNET'S BRIDGE TO PEACE**

To mark International Women's Day on 8 March 2015, SI Erdnet, Mongolia, participated in a parade with the theme "Empowered Women Are the Bridge to Peace". Soroptimists joined in the walk with students from youth clubs, colleges and universities inviting all to join women on the bridge. The parade also conveyed the message that women and the community must speak up against domestic violence. SI members are holding little roses made by children as symbols of peace.

*Munkhzul Serod  
SI Erdnet, Mongolia*

## SI (SINGAPORE) GARDEN CITY PROJECT FOR THE AGED SICK

For several years, members of SI (Singapore) Garden City have been conducting free hair-trimming services to residents of the Sree Narayana Mission Home for the Aged Sick. This is a charitable organization that provides welfare services for the elderly. Most of the residents are wheelchair bound or bed-ridden and their families are unable to provide full-time care at home.

Our members go to the Home every few weeks to give free hair-cuts. The residents who are all elderly and infirm look forward to the visits, to meet familiar faces and have a chat while having their hair cut. SISGC member Linda Gan has co-ordinated this project for several years, training herself and others to become more skilled at hair-cutting. She is assisted by other SI members.

*Alicia Tong  
President  
SI (Singapore) Garden City*



## SI GIPPSLAND'S LANTERN PARADE

SI Gippsland had an opportunity to assist the fire affected community with a generous donation from the South West Pacific Region of Soroptimist International. The people of the Latrobe Valley, especially Morwell, suffered serious health risks and material loss from the 2014 coal mine fire which lasted 45 days.

Club members wanted to do something that gave hope and a sense of community-building to those who were affected by the natural disaster. Inspired by the concept of a lantern parade, that involved collaborative art works and a sense of overcoming adversity, the "Shine the Light Lantern Parade" was born.

We organised lantern-making workshops for community groups to create a symbol that was meaningful to them and that represented hope. Ten local primary schools, one high school, four Gippsland Multicultural Service Aged Care Groups, Morwell Guides, Morwell Neighbourhood House, Salvation Army, Relationships Australia, Gippsland Women's Forum, social, art and community Groups, individuals and families worked together. Twelve huge lanterns were created - the biggest lantern being a Rainbow Forest survivor bird that was 5 metres long and 2.2 metres wide. A dove of peace, an aboriginal woman, stars, a house, a giant flower and a flying fire-truck were just some of the amazing lanterns that lit up the night. Over 600 hours by over 60 people went into those lanterns.

The marvellous "Shining the Light: Communities Recovering Together Lantern Parade" at Kernot Lake in Morwell was attended by an estimated 2,000 people on 17 October 2014. The parade was the grand finale to an evening



of music, food and togetherness that focused on the positives of the resilience of the Latrobe Valley community. The music included the Italian Pensioners' Choir, an aboriginal dance group, a male choir and a female Acoustic group. The food stalls included the local Rotary Club, Brass Band Coffee Club, spiral potatoes, Dutch pancakes, corn on the cob and Thai food. A dynamic drumming group and brass instruments led the parade to set the pace.

We received tremendous feedback on the positively charged atmosphere the parade created in the community.

*Samantha Brick  
President  
SI Gippsland, Victoria, Australia*

## SI MORNINGTON PENINSULA-SI PHNOM PENH PROJECT

SI of the Mornington Peninsula (SIMP) has developed strong links in Cambodia and a commitment to our Cambodian colleagues. SIMP has a Friendship Link with SI Phnom Penh and supports the work of the Women's Resource Centre in Siem Reap

In 2014 Sue visited the Women's Resource Centre with Teachers Across Borders colleagues and met with Pisey Khim, Managing Director and Sally Douglas, who had since become a member of the SI Phnom Penh club. They discussed the WRC's Strategic Plan and commitment to building the capacity of women and girls in Cambodia. The inspiring work of Pisey and Sally led to their being invited by the Global Freedom Network to the private quarter of The Vatican on 15 and 16 November 2014, to participate with seventy young people from across the globe to present recommendations at the Symposium entitled "Young People Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking: The greatest violence against human beings".



Sally reports: "We arrived in Roma and gained special entry into The Vatican for this event. All seventy presenters either work directly with survivors or were survivors themselves of sexual violence. Many told harrowing stories but they were uplifting and participants at this symposium were filled with determination and commitment to end this modern form of slavery." Pisey's presentation was one to remember, she held the audience captivated as she emotionally shared her experience working with survivors of labour and sex trafficking in Asia; women who had sought support from WRC after

being rescued and returned home to Cambodia. Pisey was met with cheers and applause at the end of her presentation. There was not a dry eye in the room. Pisey was thanked and acknowledged by a survivor for sharing her story.

*Sue Slater  
SI Mornington Peninsula, Victoria, Australia*

## SI SHEPPARTON'S IWD 2015



From left: Jenny Hardy, Carmel Johnson, Leanne Mulcahy, The Hon. Wendy Lovell MLC

On 5 March, more than 160 women and a sprinkling of men attended our Annual International Women's Day breakfast at the Quality Hotel Parklake, Shepparton. Carmel Johnson was our MC once again and our two speakers, Jenny Hardy (formerly Murray Dairy Chief Executive Officer) and Leanne Mulcahy (Corporate Manager, Moira Shire) had great life stories to tell. Both attended Shepparton High School and quit school early. Both proved you can do anything in life once you set your mind to it.

Special thanks to Margaret Webster for her tireless work of ticket printing and advertising, Ann Starritt for the amazing job she does with ticket selling and seating of guests, Bronwyn Palmer for organizing the lucky door prizes, Yvonne King and Robyn Neville who helped with the setting up of the room, Sally Cole and Rachele Cavallaro for looking after the craft stall and Carla Farrell for organizing the raffle and prizes.

All in all a wonderful morning for all, with messages of true inspiration to celebrate International Women's Day 2015.

*Jeanette Berry  
Organizing Committee  
SI Shepparton Inc, Victoria, Australia*

## SI ALBANY REMEMBERS GALLIPOLI

SI Albany was pleased to be a supporter of the Legends of Gallipoli Lectures held on 6, 9, 13 and 15 January 2015 as part of the 2015 Albany Summer School.

In November 2014 the City of Albany held the ANZAC (Australian & New Zealand Army Corps) Commemorative weekend to highlight the 100th anniversary of the departure of the first convoy of ships that carried the Australian Imperial Force and the New Zealand Expeditionary Force to World War 1.

As SI Albany has only a small membership, the logistics of getting involved in this event would have been prohibitive and meant that members could not have participated on a personal basis. It was decided that we would be responsible for the supper, which included ANZAC biscuits, at the lectures where we also circulated our brochures.

This one-off event received excellent promotion and visibility for the club.

*Bronwyn O'Shannessy  
Programme Convenor  
SI Albany, Western Australia*



Left to right: Bronwyn O'Shannessy, IPP of SI Albany, Professor Graham Sea, Curtin University, and Annette Grant, SI Albany member and organizer of the lectures. Below: Famous ANZAC biscuits, with the recipe from the Country Women's Association Cookbook.



## SI BRISBANE SUPPORTS THE 139 CLUB

For several years, members of SI Brisbane have provided support through service and the donation of goods to the 139 Club, a Homeless Drop-in Centre for men and women, located in the Fortitude Valley of Brisbane.

The 139 Club, established in 1975, provides a wide range of services for about 70 clients each day. These services include an Outreach Programme, Emergency Relief, Family Support and Social Inclusion Activities Programme. The 139 Club also receives support from various visiting services for personal, legal and health services, Centrelink and religious organizations, and an active team of about 30 volunteers.

Our members have donated toiletries and underwear for the women at the Centre, most of whom are homeless due to domestic violence. SI Brisbane has also provided funds to support the Women's Committee for trips for their women clients to visit various venues around the city to help re-integrate them into the life of the community.

In early February, club members Pam Boag, (co-ordinator for this activity), and Norah Blunden delivered approximately 150 30ml bottles of shampoo and conditioner to 139 Club's CEO Sara Harrup. "Empire Hair Salon" of Graceville generously donated the shampoo and conditioner product purchased in bulk. Labelling was organized by club member Anne-Marie Goes and Helen Graham of Cartridge World Ashgrove kindly donated the cost of printing. All bottles were labelled for product identification and with the Club's logo.



Norah Blunden with Sara Harrup, CEO of the 139 Club, and Pam Boag, SI Brisbane member and project co-ordinator.

Support given to the 139 Club meets a Soroptimist objective to eliminate violence against women and girls and ensure women's participation in conflict resolution.

*Libby Townley  
Publicity Officer  
SI Brisbane, Queensland, Australia*



Norah Blunden, President SI Brisbane 2015, filling the shampoo bottles.

## SI ILLAWARRA ESSENTIALS FOR THOSE IN NEED

Members of SI Illawarra welcomed guest speaker Kathy Colyer of SAHSSI to our monthly meeting in April. Kathy is the CEO of Supported Accommodation & Homelessness Services Shoalhaven & Illawarra. This organization specializes in assisting those facing homelessness, domestic & family violence and people requiring women's services & mental health programmes. Kathy & her team manage three refuges & 26 transitional properties, a huge job I am sure you will agree. In previous discussions with member, Janice Walsh, Kathy indicated that they would appreciate "personal care packs" for women coming into their emergency accommodation programme. It was therefore our pleasure to present Kathy with these packs for distribution to those in need.



Bernadette Cortes Secretary; Kathy Colyer SAHSSI; Catharina Dressen, President; Estelle Sopp, Treasurer; & Janice Walsh, Member.

*Judith Gibbons  
SI Illawarra, NSW, Australia*

## SI NEW ZEALAND CONFERENCE

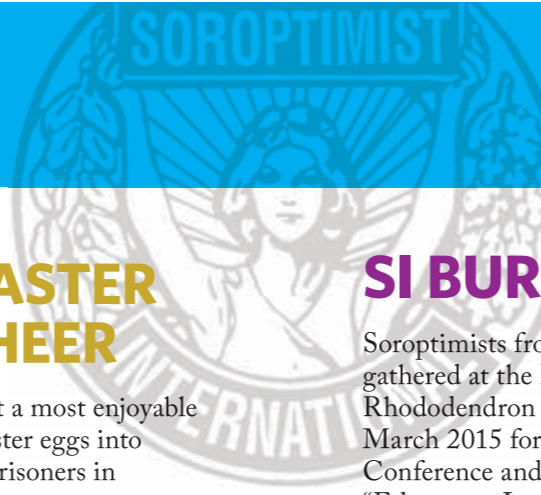
At the SI New Zealand conference held in Palmerston North from 21-23 March 2015, Valda McBeth became the new President of SI New Zealand Central Region. The photo shows Valda with Lyn Stewart, retiring President of NZ Central Region.

Yvonne Simpson was made a Life Member of NZ South Region at the conference, a wonderful honour

as she goes on to become International President for 2015-2017 when she will succeed President Ann Garvie at the SI Convention in Istanbul in July 2015.



*Karen Eagles  
SI New Plymouth,  
New Zealand*



## SI EDERNET AWARDED "BEST NGO" TITLE

An especially remarkable achievement by SI Edernet is the award of Best NGO (Non-Governmental Organization) in the Orkhon Province of Mongolia. The club President, Mrs Enkhsaikhan Gombojav, was honoured as one of the nine most outstanding residents and a leading woman in the Orkhon Province. Our club is delighted by such recognition of the work of our Soroptimists and thanks the many supporters who have contributed to our SI Edernet projects.



SI Edernet President, Mrs Enkhsaikhan Gombojav

Munkhzul Serod  
SI Edernet, Mongolia

## SI LOWER HUTT EASTER BUNNY BRINGS CHEER

Members of SI Lower Hutt recently spent a most enjoyable evening packing up a large number of Easter eggs into attractive parcels for children of women prisoners in Wellington.

The Easter eggs were all generously donated by local stores in Lower Hutt. The prison contact reported that the children were surprised and delighted when they received their presents from the Easter Bunny.

Sheilah Downs  
Secretary  
SI Lower Hutt,  
NZ



## SI BURNIE HOSTS TASMANIA REGION CONFERENCE

Soroptimists from around Tasmania gathered at the Emu Valley Rhododendron Garden on Saturday, 14 March 2015 for the Tasmania Region Conference and AGM under the theme "Educate to Lead". Delegates heard from Burnie Mayor, Alderman Anita Dow, and Managing Director of Haulmax, Kelly Elphinstone, both of whom grew up in Burnie and are now leaders in the community. South West Pacific Federation President Carolyn Hudson gave us an update about changes to SI. Goods for Girls founder, Susanna Matters, spoke of the wonderful work being undertaken in Kenya ensuring that girls are empowered and attending school. Goods for Girls is a fantastic project supported by Tasmanian Soroptimists who raised funds by raffling a beautiful painting by the late



From left: Outgoing SI Tasmania President Margaret Wells, SI Burnie member Doris Ferrall and Marie Best, from SI Hobart.

Simone Gebner  
President  
SI Burnie, Tasmania, Australia

Gladys Gard, former SI Burnie member and mother-in-law of the outgoing Region Secretary, Marion Gard. The day was capped off with a celebratory dinner at the Burnie Arts & Function Centre where we were joined by SI Burnie life member, Doris Ferrall in her 100th year. Doris has been a Burnie member for 57 years. What an inspiration it was to spend the day surrounded by strong women, hearing from inspiring women, knowing that we can take our newfound knowledge and be strong Soroptimists in our communities, sharing our strength through our projects and activities.

## SI WELLINGTON'S BELLYFUL PROJECT

Excellent press coverage of SI Wellington's project was provided by the *Independent Herald* newspaper of Wellington. Journalist, Emily Elliot, reported "Bellyful branches across Wellington say they are delighted to have received \$4,000 from SI Wellington... Bellyful provides meals at no cost to families with newborns and families struggling with illness where they have little or no family or social support."

Bellyful is volunteer-run and non-profit. The donated funds are used to purchase ingredients to cook the meals that are then delivered to the community.

Jane Chapman  
SI Wellington, New Zealand

Kristeen Johnston of SI Wellington presenting a cheque to Jacqui Jago of Bellyful.



DONATION: Kristeen Johnston of Soroptimist International Wellington presents a cheque to Jacqui Jago of Bellyful. PHOTO: Supplied



## SI LAUTOKA'S IWD ORATORY COMPETITION

Twenty-four students took centre stage on 9 March at the International Women's Day Oratory Competition organized by SI Lautoka, sponsored by the Oceania Water Group Fiji. Sponsors for the prizes and refreshments also included FMF and Total Navutu Service Station.

The topic was "Make it Happen: Encouraging effective action for advancing and recognizing women". The fact that there were five male orators this year compared to one last year is very pleasing as SI recognizes the need for more male advocacy to make the IWD theme a reality.

Zalika Shameem of Lautoka Central Primary scooped the top award with a cash amount of \$100 and a trophy. The first runner-up was Lautoka Muslim orator Sabeeha Fatima while Angelica Joseph of Saru MGM was the second runner-up.

Zareena Bi  
NR Fiji

## SI WAIMEA AWARENESS DAY

On 1 March 2015, SI Waimea and SI Nelson participated in an awareness opportunity at the annual Race Unity Day in Nelson. The aim was to promote awareness, hand out information and generally engage with people. New Zealand Soroptimists have been supporting the printing and e-mail distribution of the ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) organization newsletter as our National Project for the past two years. They have also developed a pamphlet about Internet safety which we handed out to parents.

For our Awareness Day, we joined forces with Te Rito (anti-Violence Network), a partner during our "Walk the Talk: Stop Violence against Women" weekend in November 2014. We were also joined by a representative of UN Women. Helping us out was a visiting Soroptimist, Christiane Karsch from Cologne, Germany.

Race Unity Day is an annual event bringing together citizens from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds. Many of the participants wore their traditional dress; ethnic food stalls abounded. Members of the Scottish World Cup Cricket Team were in attendance, playing "backyard" cricket with the children and posing for photographs with the older generation.

The event was an amazing networking opportunity and increased the visibility of Soroptimism and its work in the community.

Annette Smith  
SI Waimea,  
New Zealand



Christiane Karsch, SI Cologne, Annette Greenland, President SI Waimea and Sheryl Waterhouse, Waimea club member.

## SI GEORGE TOWN PUDDING CLUB FOR BIP



Fund-raising can be fun but may not be good for the waistline! At SI George Town's monthly Sunday Pudding Club, members, partners and friends meet at

the home of a member where they sample three desserts prepared by the

hostess – accompanied by wine, tea, and coffee. The cost is \$10 per person and all money raised is donated to the SISWP Birthing in the Pacific (BIP) project in Papua New Guinea. Chocolate sweets and ice-cream seem to be the favourites when we vote after the tasting. Hopefully a little booklet of the most popular recipes will be compiled.

On 29 March 2015, we were treated to three Jewish delicacies lovingly prepared by Sue Bendtsen: Ruglach which are traditionally eaten during Hannukka, Hamantaschen which are eaten at the festival of Purim, and Poppy Seed Cake.

Nora Wood  
Secretary  
SI George Town, Tasmania, Australia

## SOROPTIMISTS ACT ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

“Human Rights and Children in Immigration Detention ... where to from here?” was a sobering topic discussed at the South Queensland Soroptimist Annual Conference held in Brisbane on 13-15 March 2015.

South Queensland Region has urged its clubs to support the call by keynote speaker and human rights lawyer, Prabha Nandagopal that “engagement by the broader community is crucial to advocate for change” following the handing down of the Australian Human Rights Commission The Forgotten Children Report on the negative impact of prolonged immigration detention on children’s health, well-being and development.



L to R: Presenter Madina Mahmood, Outgoing SISQ Region President Ralda Forzin and keynote speaker and human rights lawyer Prabha Nandagopal.

The Domestic Violence session included an audio interview with Dame Quentin Bryce about the Queensland Special Task Force report “Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence”. Counsellor Grahame Legg elaborated on the Relationships Australia programme “Alternatives for Aggression”, which works with men. Alexandria Liistro and Emma Peterson, both 18 years old, called for men and women to stand together to seek gender equality.

*Janet James  
Publicity/Public Relations Convenor  
SI South Queensland Region, Australia*



## SI PETALING JAYA CONTRIBUTES TO FLOOD RELIEF

Malaysia’s worst flooding in decades at the end of 2014 forced some 200,000 people to flee their homes. The worst hit were in the states of Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Perlis and Perak.

As Malaysians all over the country pulled together to help cope with the worst floods in 30 years, SI Petaling Jaya contributed to the efforts by sponsoring a three-tonne truck filled with basic necessities such as blankets, canned food, cereals, milk, baby formula, diapers etc. All members made personal contributions and Dato’ Anusha Santhirasthipam and Sharon Saw went shopping for the items on SIPJ’s behalf.

Now that the worst of the floods is over, the flood victims will have to rebuild their homes and lives — a long-term process. SIPJ will continue to support the flood victims over this trying time.

*Sharon Saw  
SI Petaling Jaya, Malaysia*

## STOP PRESS!

### ANUSHA SANTHIRASTHIPAM SISWP PE 2016-2018

President of the South West Pacific Carolyn Hudson is pleased to announce, “I have great pleasure in declaring Dato’ Anusha Santhirasthipam has been elected unopposed to the position of SISWP President Elect for the 2016-2018 Biennium.” Anusha, from Malaysia, was nominated by SI Helena, Western Australia, and seconded by SI Petaling Jaya, Malaysia.

## CONGRATULATIONS! TAN YAN RU & ROSE POTOI

Two young ladies have been selected to represent Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific for the SI Public Speaking Competition and will be off to Istanbul, Turkey to attend the Soroptimist 20th International Convention, 9-12 July 2015. Congratulations to Rose who is from Papua New Guinea and Yan Ru who is from Singapore.

