

# The Soroptimist

SWP

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“**LET'S MEET  
IN SYDNEY!**”

**CoC 2016**

a global voice  
for women

Soroptimist  International

Federation of the South West Pacific



# Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific

(ACN 147 990 627)

President: **Carolyn Hudson**  
President-Elect: **Theresa Lyford**  
Immediate Past President: **Siew Yong Gnanalingam**  
Secretary: **Sue Latta**  
Treasurer: **Wendy Logan**

E-mail: [hq@siswp.org](mailto:hq@siswp.org)  
Tel: +61- 2-8096 6072  
Fax: +61-2-9690 2261  
Website: <[www.siswp.org](http://www.siswp.org)>

SISWP Headquarters &  
SISWP Shop  
Attn: Administration Officer  
PO Box 746  
Surry Hills  
NSW 2010  
AUSTRALIA



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## From the Editor

Having served as Editor of this SISWP Magazine for the past 2 years 2014-2016, I am now ready to hand over to the new Editor for the next term 2016-2018.

Editing and producing the SISWP Magazine has been a lot of work but a most enjoyable journey for me. I feel I have made many new SI friends through the communications when receiving articles and emails from all over the Federation. And I never cease to be amazed at the variety of projects that clubs write about.

I hope you have enjoyed the themes and selection of articles as well as the design and layout. I dedicate this issue to my Mum, Mary Holmes, still an active member of SI Christchurch at the age of 91 and a true role model.

Best wishes to all for good health and joy in the ideals of Soroptimism.

Triena  
SI (Singapore) Garden City



## 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:** Australia's beloved koalas are a symbol of the country's warmth and uniqueness. Sydney looks forward to welcoming all delegates to the SISWP Conference of Clubs, 29 April-1 May 2016.

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### MAGAZINE EDITOR

Triena Ong, SI (Singapore) Garden City  
E-mail: [swpeditor@siswp.org](mailto:swpeditor@siswp.org)

### EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Kerry Garrett, SI Benalla  
Indrani Manuel, SI Damansara  
Denise Smithson, SI Albany

# SISWP CONFERENCE OF CLUBS 2016 SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, 29 APRIL - 1 MAY 2016 "WOMEN ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE"

**H**ave you registered yet?? The closing date for registrations is 31 March 2016. Registration details and the registration form are available through the SISWP Website and the Conference website, or email [swpconferencetreasurer@siswp.org](mailto:swpconferencetreasurer@siswp.org) for a form to be sent to you.

The Region of NSW Conference Committee is working hard to provide an exciting and memorable Conference. There is time for renewing friendships and making new friends at the social events, and the Gala Dinner. Saturday night will be a free night for your own activities.



Exciting guest speakers and stimulating workshops are planned, as well as a traditional indigenous welcome ceremony.

The Conference of Clubs 2016 website – [www.soroptimist-swpcoc-2016.com](http://www.soroptimist-swpcoc-2016.com) – will be updated constantly to ensure that everyone has the latest information. Please check it regularly.

Members of the Region of New South Wales who are working hard to host the Conference of Clubs in Sydney.

*Carolyn Hudson  
President 2014-2016  
Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific*



# SI ALBANY ASSISTS VIOLENCE VICTIMS

At the end of 2015, SI Albany helped Essentials for Women of Albany (EfWoA) by collecting donations of personal care items for women and children. There were drop-off points in Albany and Mt Barker.

EfWoA supports the Albany Women's Centre/Refuge (AWC) a not-for-profit organization, which offers assistance to women and children affected by family and domestic violence. The centre relies heavily on donated items to provide its clients with day-to-day needs such as toiletries and clothing. The programme's goal was to raise awareness of the needs of clients at the centre.

This was our inaugural participation and the club was overwhelmed by the response of the donation drive. A vast range of items was collected with the most popular being body wash/shower gel/scrub, toothbrushes and toothpaste, deodorant, shampoo and conditioner, sanitary items and soap.

Donees included chemists, schools, businesses, community groups and individuals. Four members had a busy afternoon just before Christmas where the donations were collated at the AWC. Coordinator Jo was very appreciative of SI Albany's involvement and promised commitment for 2016.

Special thanks to Janet who liaised and coordinated on behalf of SI Albany – an excellent contribution by one of our new members who was inducted in April 2015.

*Bronwyn O'Shannessy  
Reporter/UN Liaison 2015  
SI Albany, Western Australia*



Jo from Anglicare, Lorraine & Janet, SI Albany members.



## SI GRIFFITH'S WALK IN HER SHOES

On White Ribbon Day 2015, we held our second “Walk a Mile in Her Shoes” event to further raise awareness about men’s violence against women.

In 2014, we had 70 participants including 6 secondary school students. We raised \$150 for our local Women’s Refuge. In 2015, 300 participated in the Walk, including 150 secondary students. We raised \$1,100 for our local Women’s Refuge. Local primary schools were not left out: a colouring competition focused on respecting each other. The event is growing from strength to strength!

Press coverage raised even greater awareness when Event Co-ordinator, Sheila Brady, was guest speaker at a local primary school, also at a dinner meeting of a Rotary Club, as well as on two local radio stations and ABC radio.

*Will Mead  
Secretary  
Si Griffith, Riverina, Australia*



	<p><b>WALK a MILE in her SHOES</b></p>	
<p>   <b>SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL WHITE RIBBON DAY EVENT</b>   <b>WEDNESDAY 25 NOV 2015</b> </p>	<p>             Come on fellas, pop on some women’s shoes (any style) and join in to help raise awareness about violence against women. Show the community that you are willing to stand up and say violence against women is not OK.   <b>WHEN / 25 November, 12pm for 12.30pm start</b>  <b>WHERE / Starts in the carpark opposite Rossies Supermarket, finishes at Memorial Park</b>              Sausage Sizzle by Griffith East Rotary – proceeds go to the local women’s refuge through Linking Communities Network Ltd.  <small>For further information contact Event Co-ordinator Sheila Brady, Si Griffith on 0427 081 146.</small> </p>	



## SI PNG'S PROJECTS FOR VICTIMS OF ABUSE

SI Papua New Guinea held a Halloween Monsters Ball in October 2015 to raise the much needed funds for its short-term 4 Es project and long-term project to construct a training a resource centre in Port Moresby. It coincided with the SISWP ongoing focus to Stop Violence Against Women, held in November each year.

Soroptimist 4 Es (Equity, Equality, Education, Empowerment) aims to continuously raise awareness and help eradicate violence against women and girls. This project is designed to offer women and girls, who are victims of violence, a variety of opportunities with a view to improving their knowledge base and skills and more importantly to be independent.

Our long-term project is to establish a "Soroptimist Training and Resource Centre" for women and girls subjected to domestic violence and other abuse. Services will include counselling, vocational/educational training, literacy classes, and legal assistance, to empower the victims to face challenges in life and to help them reintegrate back into society as positive contributors.

The fund-raising ball was a success with over 300 guests and generous support from corporate sponsorship and donors. The evening was opened by our club President Seema Das-Raju who welcomed distinguished guests including high commissioners, Lady Winifred Kamit CBE, and heads of large corporations within Papua New Guinea. Our roaming entertainers ensured an evening of fun and enjoyment.

*Courtenay Salter  
SI Papua New Guinea*



From left to right: Monica Salter, SI PNG Treasurer; Peter Delmote. BIZ Print GM and major sponsor; & Alyson Young.



# SI OF THE HILLS DISTRICT CAMBODIAN PROJECT

SI of the Hills District’s September meeting was certainly a memorable one! We welcomed back Mike & Suzanne Pawley, a couple with enormous determination and energy to make a positive difference in the lives of young Cambodian girls.

Their story began on a holiday to Cambodia where their guide took them to a small village on the outskirts of Siem Reap. Distressed by the poverty, poor living standards and lack of education for the children, on their return home Mike and Suzanne decided to set up a charity to provide support for the village. Hence “Happy Days Cambodian Village School Inc” was born.

Over those few short years through the hard work of Mike and Suzanne and their supporters many changes have taken place at the village. The school now has permanent teachers and staff, and the children are provided the necessary equipment for their education, including sports. In addition, 120 junior school students are provided with a healthy meal 6 days a week. “Happy Days Cambodian Village School Inc” also provides support to the villagers who are experiencing financial hardships.



Education beyond primary school was unknown to the villagers so last year Mike & Suzanne took on another venture by organising accommodation, houseparents and schooling expenses for 10 of the girls in the village who showed dedication to their studies. The girls have flourished in their new environment and are all rating highly in their classes. Our members have pledged a three-year commitment of \$1,000 annually to support one of the students during their senior schooling.

At our Club Meeting in September, members were privileged to meet three of these students. Shy girls, they all stood up in front of Club members and spoke about their families and school and their hopes for the future. An emotional time for all the members with lots of hugs all round!

*Bev Richardson  
President  
SI of The Hills District (NSW Region), Australia*



# SI FIJI ANNUAL SI AWARDS



Every year, SI Fiji celebrates the accomplishments of all the clubs and recognizes the efforts of the members through the Annual Awards Presentation. The awards were presented by the Chief Guest, Hon. Acting Prime Minister, Attorney General Aiyaz Sayed Khaiyum. All the participating clubs received awards – but SI Ba scooped the most.

*Maria Doton  
SI Fiji*



## SI LAUTOKA'S PINKTOBER

Enhanced awareness regarding the symptoms and possible causes of breast cancer is vital to reduce the increasing number of female deaths that occur each year.

For more than 300 students and teachers of Lovu Sangam Primary School this vital awareness was facilitated by SI Lautoka club in October through resource persons from the Ministry of Health.

Dr Lynn Vateitei of the Lautoka Hub centre informed the students that breast cancer is the most common form of cancer in females and about 500,000 cases are identified each year in the world.

“One in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime.”

“Through the Pinktober breast cancer awareness campaign we hope to have early detection whereby treatment and cure is highly possible.”

The students were also informed of risk factors like obesity, alcohol consumption, over-use of cosmetics, and family history of breast cancer cases.

The symptoms of breast cancer were outlined. Students were advised to share with their female family members the need to visit their doctor for check-ups for early detection.

According to the school Head Teacher Anjili Ratnam this type of awareness is very effective for students.

“Such information is better understood by the students if a specialist is imparting the knowledge.”

“Also, we will encourage students to spread the message of early detection to their mothers, aunts, grandmothers and other close family members in order to save lives.”

*Zareena Bi  
SI Lautoka, Fiji*

## SI WELLINGTON HELPS TEENAGE MOTHERS



SI of Wellington donated \$3,130 to the House of Grace for teenage mothers in early December. The House of Grace in Newlands was SI Wellington's local charity for 2015.

It provides young pregnant women with important life skills and prepares them for parenting or adoption. The donation of \$3,130 will go towards the purchase of a minibus.

The photo shows SI Wellington President Kristeen Johnston (right) presenting the donation to the House of Grace Fundraising Coordinator Rebecca Bangman.

*Jane Chapman  
SI Wellington, New Zealand*



## SI PNG, BRINGING HOPE TO CHILDREN

Soroptimist International Papua New Guinea in partnership with the House of Hope (HOH) and Links of Hope PNG (LOH) organized the biggest Christmas Party and fun day for the children of Links of Hope. During the year, we hosted 119 children and more than 40 guardians and helpers.

In 2015 Links of Hope partnered with the Salvation Army at the House of Hope on Ela Beach, together with the HIV Paediatric Clinic at Port Moresby General Hospital. They now have over 100 children on their Child Sponsorship Programme. All the children are affected in some way by HIV. The programme is to pastorally care for the children and see them thrive in their communities by providing education, and basic healthcare. At the same time, training in trade skills and small business enterprise is made available for their carers, as well as offering them small business loans and running community education initiatives.

Much gratitude goes to all those friends, partners and sponsors who have continuously supported us in the past few years. Without them, our programmes would not have been possible.

*Courtenay Salter  
SI Port Moresby  
Papua New Guinea*



## SI VICTORIA REGION'S 9 PRESIDENTS

At the 2016 Annual General Meeting of Soroptimist International Region of Victoria that was the region's 59th AGM, nine former Region Presidents joined our current Region President for this photo. What a lovely photo of some dynamic women!

From left to right:  
Sue Whitehead (2013-15); Theresa Lyford (2010-11); Ilona Takacs (1991-93 & 2006-08); Joc Hanby (2002-04); Wilma Hannah (1989-91); Ella Gordon (1987-89); Helen Hutchins (2004-06); Kay Drysdale (2000-02); Leeanne Summers (2015-current); Christine Paton (1986-87).



*Robyn Rose  
Secretary  
SI Victoria Region, Australia*

# SI JOONDALUP IN EAST TIMOR

After 12 years SI Joondalup's association with East Timor has come to an end. What a productive and rewarding association it has been, for both East Timor and SI Joondalup.

It began in 2003 when President Elect, Jennie van Driel watched an interview with Zannana and Kirsty Gusmao on TV about their new fledgling nation of less than 12 months old. They appealed to Australia for help for this poorest of nations in Asia, and our closest neighbour.

Jennie responded by contacting Kirsty and together they selected a project for SI Joondalup. This project was to train young women in office procedure and computer literacy so that they could take up the secretarial positions left vacant by the Indonesians. This became Jennie's presidential project for which SI Joondalup received a "Best Practice Award".

It soon came to our notice that the widows and families of the Freedom Fighters who had died giving East Timor its independence were suffering from malnutrition. Their breadwinner was gone and there was no social security to sustain them: many were living on corn and the sago palm.

SI Joondalup's next endeavour was to foster chicken farming in remote villages in the North East of the country. Five widows were selected through the offices of The Alola Foundation and given the opportunity to establish a chicken breeding enterprise. They had to sign an agreement that the chickens would be used for their intended purpose (not eating them!) and they were given tuition in chicken management, 3 month's supply of chicken feed and they had to build their own chicken houses.

Each widow was given about 6 hens and a rooster. The chickens were to be kept in their houses, but let out in the jungle in the afternoons after they had laid their eggs. They were coaxed back to their pens and safety at night with some grain.

This was a most successful project.

When a delegation from SI Joondalup visited this project in 2008 there were chickens everywhere and it was deemed a most successful and life-changing project for those villagers. One lady had up to 80 chickens, and she was selling chickens and eggs to her neighbours.

A second village heard of the project and asked us to start a second chicken raising venture there.

SI Joondalup's next venture in East Timor came as the result of a second delegation from the club travelling there in 2010. As guests of The Alola Foundation we were entertained at a kindergarten at Buaro in the Los Paltos district in the far East

of the country. We were shocked to see the primitive conditions in which these 80 children were taught. There was no play equipment, and the building was just a cement shell with no furniture at all. The children sat on the floor and the teacher stood in the front of a chipped blackboard.

A medical member of the delegation identified conjunctivitis in many of the children, and as a result we bought the entire stock of an antibiotic ointment from the local supplier

SI Joondalup donated money for play equipment that would develop the children's gross and fine motor skills.

Our final project in East Timor was with Kirsty Gumao as "The Goodwill Ambassador for Education". Together we identified the need for tertiary trained women to take over leadership roles in government and industry. Young women came to Kirsty desperate to better their lives through education, but unable to through poverty or cultural inhibitions. Six young women were selected on past educational performance and their strong motivation to succeed.

These young women had suffered great hardship and trauma during those dark days of unrest and rebellion. One had seen her family locked in a church which was then burnt down, some from violent or drunken homes, and all of them touched by poverty. Some of these girls were still in year 11 of high school.

To encourage these girls to continue we not only paid for their educational fees, but also their books and uniforms, travel expenses and a small living allowance. It's been a long road to finish five years of tertiary education in a country that sees a

women's role as that of wife and mother, but four of these girls have persisted, and SI Joondalup has been with them all the way.

Our moment came when Maria and Pascoela graduated with a Science Degree with honours from Dili Institute of Technology in November 2015, and have been offered prestigious employment opportunities.

*Jennie van Driel  
SI Joondalup, Western Australia*



**From top:**

- Members of the SI Joondalup Delegation meet their Scholarship students in East Timor
- A typical chicken house built by the women.
- Maria Guterres B.Sc (Hons)
- Pascoela Barreto B.Sc. (Hons)

## SI SINGAPORE GARDEN CITY BRINGS CHEER

Over the years, SI Singapore Garden City has supported the Singapore Cheshire Home in various ways.

The Home is a place for the rehabilitation, encouragement, stimulation and happiness of its residents and clients. It provides care for the seriously disabled who have no or limited means and whose families, if any, are unable to provide adequate care.

Efforts by SI Singapore Garden City have included a donation of a wheelchair, helping with spring-cleaning, providing afternoon teas, and bringing cheer such as the recent ballroom dancing performance by our member Triena Ong and her husband, Steven.

*Alice Goh  
SI Singapore Garden City*



## SI SOUTH PERTH WINS COMMUNITY AWARD

SI South Perth has been recognized for its contribution to the City of South Perth community by receiving the Premier's Australia Day Active Citizenship Award in the Community category.

Club President Vida Corbett received the award on behalf of the club at the City of South Perth's Citizenship ceremony and breakfast conducted on Australia Day on 26 January 2016.

Ms Corbett said in her acceptance speech: "It is a great honour for our club to receive this award which is an acknowledgement of our clubs ongoing support to our community. We participate in many of the community activities and in particular have contributed for many years to the Australia Day Celebration Zone manning the entry points and information booths where we proudly display our SI South Perth banner."

*Wendy Wiley  
Publicity and Marketing Coordinator  
SI South Perth*



## A WELLINGTON ICON CELEBRATED

Wellington's Soroptimists held a function at the New Zealand Portrait Gallery in early December, a special occasion when they donated a photographic portrait of Sister Loyola Galvin to the Gallery.

Sister Loyola has devoted her life to the community and will be remembered as the subject of the film "Gardening with Soul" and as Wellington Gardener of the Year in 2008. She also has a QSM and was made a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 2013. The photographer Bev Short talked about her at the function and, although Sister Loyola could not be there herself, some of her convent community attended.

The photo shows (left to right) Sisters Sue Cosgrove and Josephine Gorman, photographer Bev Short, SI Wellington President Kristeen Johnston, Sisters Margaret Anne Mills and Veronica Hurring of the Home of Compassion.

*Jane Chapman  
SI Wellington, New Zealand*

