

THE SOROPTIMIST SWP

a global voice
for women

Soroptimist International



Federation of the South West Pacific



The Federation of the South West Pacific has clubs in:

- Australia
- Cambodia
- Fiji Islands
- Hong Kong SAR China
- Indonesia
- Malaysia
- Mongolia
- New Zealand
- Papua New Guinea
- Samoa
- Singapore
- Solomon Islands
- Thailand



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Soroptimist International of the South West Pacific

(ACN: 147 990 627)

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"Birthing in the Pacific"
SI President Alice chosen the SWP Project 'Birthing in the Pacific' for her 2011 President's December 10 Appeal.

*IPP Leigh has stepped up to be the Chair of the SI Organisation Development committee. To focus on her international duties and avoid any conflict of interest she relinquishes her role as SISWP officer. We congratulate Leigh on her new role. Past President Lorna indicated that she was fully committed at this time and we are delighted that Past President Eileen was willing to fill the vacancy.

THE SOROPTIMIST -SWP The Magazine of SISWP



From the Editor

Here I am again in my garden showing off the Jaune Desprez roses that are blooming despite the diligence of our local possums to desecrate them. Working in the garden is excellent

exercise as well as enjoyable and regular exercise is always important, but as we get older it becomes vital. I have recently joined a local gym knowing it will force me to take the extra exercise I need to keep fit. My 90 year old aunt walks a kilometre every morning to keep herself active, independent and out of a nursing home.

SI Australia has been running a campaign trying to alert our politicians on the need for early screening at menopause for Oestoporosis in women. Of course a good diet and regular exercise can assist with the prevention of this disease as with so many other problems that can occur as we grow older.

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The independent State of Papua New Guinea is located in the south-western Pacific Ocean. The majority of the population, of approx. seven million, live in traditional societies and practise subsistence agriculture. Many live in extreme poverty.

The Project aim is to increase the skills of birth attendants and improve facilities to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity.

All donations should be marked "December 10 President's Appeal" and forwarded to your Federation Headquarters.

The deadline for the February 2012 SWP Magazine is 30th December 2011. The theme will be Programme

Articles, letters and all other matters appearing in this magazine do not necessarily express the official views of Soroptimist International or of the Editor of The Soroptimist SWP.

Thank you to Yvonne Simpson and Karen Eagles for photographs used on front cover, & pages 3, 4 and 5. Also to Rita Jenkins and Monica Rylance SI Geelong on page 6.

Our President

"spelling it out"

So, how do YOU respond when you are asked, "Who are you and what do you do?" "You are a soropti – what?"

The fullest answer covers the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. To give that kind of information it might be best to carry a written summary. We have, at Headquarters, a resource designed by Public Relations convenor, Christine Johnstone, which is pocket sized and therefore handy to carry in your purse: a concertina brochure that folds to the size of a business card. Easy to carry – and has added value when shared with a prospective member.

VISION & MISSION

"SI" is in the centre of "ViSlon", and "MisSlon". This serves to remind us that our focus needs to be our Mission and Vision. Let us keep in mind that we are a service organisation and the "what", the purpose of SI, is service. Our VISION is what and where we are striving to be: "Soroptimist International is a vibrant, dynamic organisation for today's professional and business women. We are committed to a world where women and girls together achieve their individual and collective potential, and have an equal voice in creating strong, peaceful communities worldwide."

Our MISSION is how we go about achieving our Vision:

"Soroptimists inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls through a global network of members and international partnerships."

The need to support vulnerable women and girls is huge and in order to make a real difference we need woman power to implement the ACTION, to raise AWARENESS, and to provide Advocacy & Programme. It is helpful to have a summary ready for when you are asked about Soroptimism. I use the words "SHE HELPS" as a coat hanger from which I can hang the parts of our programme goal and talk to them.

SHE HELPS

S = Safe
H = Healthy
E = Environments



Yvonne addressing young female students at Papauta school in Samoa during her recent visit

H = Human Rights
E = Education
L = Leadership
P = Practical
S = Skills

The official definition is very similar. Our goal for programme is "Soroptimists will ensure that women and girls enjoy equality, live in safe, healthy and equitable environments, have access to education and have leadership and practical skills." We have chosen Education and Leadership as our main foci.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Goal: Soroptimist International will have a dynamic, flexible and responsive membership, with an international point of connection, committed to the delivery of its vision and mission.

SISWP encourages its members to attend international conferences, conventions and training. When we join we have over 90,000 sisters in 125 countries with common values and purpose. The international nature of our organizations is one of the highlights for many members.

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Goal: SI will be a strategic organisation with dynamic and proactive leadership at all levels, able to deliver results and ensure its vision is achieved.

I believe that SI provides personal and professional development to our members. Leadership opportunities in an organisation that empowers women and girls is an attractive benefit for belonging.

We advocate for others – it is time to also advocate for Soroptimist International.

Spell out to all the advantages to them personally and how SI meets their need for social responsibility. Share with them what our programme of service involves. Get them involved in project work.

Take our current members and advocate to them too. Encourage them to understand and embrace the global nature of our organisation. (The federation is encouraging membership growth by offering incentives for attending the conference of clubs.) Use training, planning and financial accountability to show that we are a professional organisation with robust systems and procedures.

Embrace the theme for the biennium:

E = Enjoy
D = Develop Your Skills
U = Understand the Issue
C = Communicate
A = Active Programme
T = Theme – Education and Leadership
E = Extension
and CELEBRATE

Encourage members to attend the Conference of Clubs 2012:

A = Amazing Scenery
B = Bring your Partners
C = Celebrate all that is Soroptimism – Programme and Friendship

Make it clear. Keep it Simple Soroptimists (the KISS principle). Be visible (wear your badge) and be vocal. We have a lot to shout about.

**Yvonne
President**



Houses wrecked and abandoned after the 2009 tsunami

Congratulations and thank you to SI Samoa

SISWP President Yvonne Simpson and I visited Samoa from 26-31 August. We were embraced by the friendship and care of our Samoan sisters. We visited two recent projects and celebrated the success of many others

SI Samoa was chartered 32 years ago and has achieved a raft of excellent projects. Maris King was the instigator of SI Samoa in late 1970s and some founder members are still actively running the club.

Education for girls is extremely important and it is a credit to the club that they continue to support two girls at the Papauta Secondary School through to year 13. This means a quality education and boarding is maintained for these students. They also give a prize to the top Home Economics student each year. Schooling for children is compulsory now until age 14. The girls at Papauta school gave us a huge welcome through song, laughter and dance, and we joined in too!

A more dramatic visit was in store when Agnes Curry drove us over the mountain to the Lepa, Amaile and Satitia districts where a tsunami struck in September 2009. We met nurses at the Lalomanu District Hospital who had been identified as needy recipients of the water tank project. President Sally Betham's trucking company assisted with transport and in 2010 club members made a trek to accompany four water tanks the club had donated to this devastated coastal area. Boats were washed ashore, the high

school was closed, homes flattened and businesses wiped out. This was two years ago! These have now been relocated onto higher ground, however there is only so much the government can do. It was humbling to realise that although a home has been provided, families still have to arrange their own sanitation. The basic desire for a house is strong, and the SI Samoa water tanks provide a much needed facility. We soon realised that there is still a great need even two years later. Many families only have a 44 gallon drum for water storage.

Visiting Minister for Health Hon Tuitama Dr Leao Talalelei Tuitama discussed traditional birthing attendants, the role of women as leaders in traditional Samoan society, and the need for examination of laws relating to women in Samoa. Support for education on non violence was also needed.

The current Executive of SI Samoa have much to celebrate and Joan Williams discussed the possibility of putting together a short historical account of SI Samoa. Other members, Greta Percival, Mutzi Stanley, Yazzi

Yazdani, past National Representatives Rhonda Macdonald and Runa Curry helped develop strategies to grow the membership, keeping in mind strong family links, work life balance, and community and church work

One other area with which SI Samoa identified is that many members visit other countries for part of the year to see family members. During these visits they would like to touch base with SI clubs in Perth, Auckland, Sydney, and Brisbane. So as the SISWP family becomes more internet based please welcome members from SI Samoa, as they would welcome you in Apia .

President Sally Betham recounted the wonderful past projects which include supporting a family of triplets with clothing, milk supplements and assistance for schooling as the children grew older.



Yvonne with Mutzi Stanley after church

Active SISWP Friendship links were discussed and this can enhance project work also . With more funds available the water tank project can be expanded. SI Samoa will facilitate this, identify the cost of tanks, seek out families in need, and place criteria around the need for tanks. Perhaps your club could link dollars with friendship and assist in this way?

After attending Church and enjoying wonderfully uplifting music Yvonne, Runa Curry and I were welcomed into Sally Bethams family home for a "toonai" which is a term for a Sunday meal shared together. What a privilege and honour to be part of her family. Runa also



The nurse recipient of a water tank with Yvonne, Karen and Sally



Yvonne, Sally, Runa with Carol Ah Chong

arranged for us to meet Baby Miracle , who the club also support through their love and practical help. Miracle is now four years old and is cared for by Carol Ah Chong in her home. Miracle's story can be found at www.carepages.com.... register....sign in..."baby miracle"....you should then be on her page.The fact that she is loved and cared for each day is a story in itself .

Well done SI Samoa – we are amazed at your great project work . The whole Federation can see how much you have been quietly achieving over the 32 years. Our Samoan sisters value education and have demonstrated this through project work, health, human rights and status of women. They offer wonderful hospitality and friendship, caring and support to one another We support them and wish them well as they expand their membership which will allow more excellent projects to be undertaken.

SWP President Yvonne & Karen Eagles SWP Extension Convenor 2010 -2012

Lunch with members of SI Samoa



18th SISWP Conference

**4th-6th May 2012
West Coast of the South
Island, New Zealand**

Our conference preparations are moving along nicely. In this report to you all, I would like to detail the programme in brief so it is clear what is planned. As we said the conference will begin on May 4th at 7.30am on the Christchurch Railway station. On the train we will have our first workshop, the Programme of Service members will meet, and we will have some time for mixing and mingling. All of this will of course be with the fabulous back-drop of the trip across the mountains.

When we arrive in Greymouth, you will be taken to your accommodation to settle in, before being collected by the buses to travel to Shanty Town for our opening ceremony. The opening ceremony will be inspiring and set us in the right frame of mind for the continuation of our conference.

An evening of fun and fellowship will follow on immediately from the opening conference session and we have some surprises planned for you during this time. We will introduce you to some of the things that make our country special and you will have the chance to experience ' New Zealand' in many different ways. The buses will then take you back to your accommodation for a well earned rest.

On Saturday you will be collected bright and early by our buses and returned to the conference venue. Saturday is 'work day' with conference business and workshops to keep us occupied. The last session for the day is available for Country meetings. Saturday evening is free.



Again on Sunday you will be collected by the buses. There will be two pick up times as the day will begin with a spiritual time for those who wish to attend. Conference will then start after this. You will be asked to indicate whether you wish to attend the spiritual time as we will need to arrange transport accordingly. The Sunday session will comprise completion of business, and there will also be a presentation by the



incoming President. We will finish by 4pm and you will be taken back to your accommodation for a brief rest before being returned to Shanty Town for our final dinner. We will celebrate 75 years since the first charter of a club in our federation during the evening, as well as have the formal changeover of the Presidential positions.

We are thrilled to see we already have some registrations, and some of the post conference tour options have been booked. SI President Alice has also indicated that she is looking forward to coming – her first visit to New Zealand.

We believe this is definitely going to be a memorable occasion and we are really looking forward to sharing this time with you all.

Christine Roche
Chairperson 18th SWP Conference
swpconferencechair@siswp.org



Inspiring speakers

SI Victoria Conference was held on Saturday 8 October 2011 in Geelong. Registration started at 10am and within minutes of having morning tea SI Victoria Inc Region President, Anne Binkley, was welcoming the SWP President Yvonne and the National Representative of Australia, Catherine Evans.

Margo Kelly was the MC for the day. The first of three excellent speakers, Tricia Caswell, was Past CEO Australian Conservation Foundation and she spoke of her sustainability role whilst working in third world countries. Using PNG as an example she outlined the affect of the mining industry on the communities involved.

Susan Jackson, founder of the Women's Financial Network in Victoria gave us an entertaining presentation on *Managing your money*. Susan gave us many tips on how to take control of our financial situation without making a budget. She told how to assess our current position and develop new money behaviour. The third speaker was Jan Golden, a local consultant. She introduced three themes on *Learning and opportunities for the future. Measuring on achievements; Education, empowerment and enabling opportunity; and Life by learning.*

After an excellent lunch and lots of chat we reassembled to listen to Catherine Evans tell us how to invest in your National Representative. "Be comfortable with the fact that SI is a service organisation". Then the next step is Awareness, Advocacy and Action. Take on national activities, for example our Osteoporosis petition (see page 7), and the continuing problem of caring for the older person.

SWP President Yvonne gave us a repeat of the presentation she gave at the Montreal Convention.

We finished a wonderful day with a Region Council meeting and afternoon tea.

Editor

From the top:
Margo Kelly, Sue Whitehead, Yvonne.
Anne Binkley, Catherine Evans
Carla Farrell, Anthia Hinson, Rita Jenkins
Val Trinder, Monica Rylance
Susan Jackson, Margo, Kerry Garrett
Maggie Mitchell, Yvonne, Karen Thornton



Happy 40th Birthday

SI Palmerston North (SIPN) celebrated their 40th birthday with a dinner at Manawatu County Club on August 11th. The event was attended by over 40 guests including Central Regional President Jane Stent, Audrey Jarvis President of Manawatu branch of NCW, SIPN club members past and present, their partners and friends, and members of other Soroptimist clubs.

The club was honoured to have Wyvern Campbell who proposed the toast to Soroptimist International at the charter dinner perform the same service at the birthday celebration. Wyvern's wife Jo, who is a member of SIPN said a grace written by Molly Atkinson for the clubs' 25th Birthday.

The evening included a presentation to Ngaire Finkle of a memory book of her service to Soroptimism and some plants for her garden. Diana Neild author of the Piggity Wiggity series of children's books was a very entertaining guest speaker. The evening concluded with coffee and birthday cake.

Life member of SIPN, Helen Elder and President Pam Turner cut the cake which was baked and iced by club member Barbara O'Driscoll and featured the SI logo.

Pam Turner
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Above: Pam Turner and Helen Elder prepare to light the candles



Members of SI Adelaide who gathered for a photo opportunity after their last meeting

Osteoporosis Action

In 2009, SI Adelaide Inc started gathering signatures for a free osteoporosis early intervention screening at menopause - around 50 years of age instead of 70, Professor Chris Nordin an endocrinologist from the Royal Adelaide Hospital was trying to get the introduction of this early intervention health measure. Current technology now identifies women at risk at 50, allowing for early intervention strategies, such as supplements to be given immediately. By waiting until 70, the disease is entrenched and more difficult and more expensive to treat. Marrion Saunders, SI Adelaide Inc, heard him speaking on the radio, asking women's groups to support him in his effort and she made contact with him, offering our support.

This led to us drawing up a petition. We sought help from a local politician Senator Nick Xenophon and he and his staff guided us through the appropriate documents and procedures to be followed. Petitions in Australia must be formulated in particular ways, otherwise they will not be accepted by the parliament. Once the wording was acceptable, SI Adelaide began collecting signatures. Then in February 2010 we took this to a region meeting and it was agreed that all clubs in SISA would support us in the collection of signatures. In 2010, following the Gold Coast conference, SI Australia clubs joined in too and between May and the end of August we collected 8500 signatures from supporters around Australia. The petition was tabled but unfortunately no further action was taken by the government.

In 2011, with support from Professor Nordin, we drew up another petition with different wording, as one cannot present the same petition twice. This time we

had support from most of the clubs in our region and many clubs around Australia. We've collected signatures from end of May until end of August, with a total of 6229. The petition has recently been sent to the Federal Government in Canberra.

SI Adelaide enjoyed being out in the community talking with people, hearing their stories and spreading information about our goals for the petition and about Soroptimist International. We think this promotion of SI has been extremely valuable.

SI of Adelaide is now moving to the education phase of Osteoporosis Action. Our club will be sending shortly, to all clubs in Australia, a DVD from Osteoporosis Australia and a CD containing audio resources and a pamphlet "How Much Sun is Enough" distributed by the Cancer Council, but formulated in partnership with Osteoporosis Australia, College of Dermatologists and the Australian and New Zealand Bone and Mineral Society, so you can see it has credibility.

We'd like all SISWP clubs to hold an osteoporosis and Vitamin D health focus night for their members (and friends) or perhaps a community event, by the end of August 2012. Perhaps invite a relevant speaker, someone from Osteoporosis Australia, maybe a dietician or an exercise specialist, or have a panel of local experts.

Vitamin D levels are a vital part of managing bone health. Vitamin D levels of young women are said to be low from using sunscreen for many years. They too, need to be taking action on osteoporosis. It's a health issue for all women, and men, young and old. Education is very relevant to understanding this issue.

Pam Lacey
SI Adelaide Inc. SA



Malaysia visit

Beatrice Hitt from SI Fremantle visited Kuala Lumpur on the return journey from the Convention at Montreal. She spent some time in United Kingdom visiting friends and relatives. Bea was warmly welcomed by her friend Lucy Loh (formerly of SI Bangsar) and her husband and family with whom she stayed. She visited Janda Baik, which Bea described as 'a mountain with such serenity' and met up with Soroptimists there too.

On her last day she was invited by SISWP President-Elect Siew Yong Gnanalingam to lunch with SISWP representative on SI e-TIS committee, Indrani Manuel, and Indira Naidu, IPP Region of Malaysia. Renewing friendships and visiting each other's countries is a Soroptimist activity that is surely to be encouraged.

Editor

Above: Indrani, Siew Yong, Bea and Indira



Daffodil Day

SI Chisholm raised over \$1100 for the Cancer Council of Victoria by selling Daffodil Day merchandise at Box Hill Centro Shopping Centre on 1 September 2011. Members who took it in turn to work on the stall included Audrey Holder, who is a retired member, Christine Leyshan (IPP), Pam Keenan, Bronwyn Best, Alison Tolstrup and Anne Coker who is the current President.

Christine Leyshan
SI Chisholm, Victoria

News from the Clubs

SI Cobram Barooga have been busy, busy

SI Cobram Barooga provided two scholarships for the Cobram Secondary College in 2010. One for a Year 11 girl and one for a Year 12 girl. Girls receiving these awards have recently spoken at our monthly meeting telling of the educational opportunity the scholarships had provided.

Alana Street [ex SI Business on Collins] visited and gave a very informative presentation on "Birthing in the Pacific". Inspiration from our club has been on going with surgical equipment and crocheted bilums [baby carriers] being sent to Papua New Guinea via Janet Askern. Alana also took five boxes of bras to distribute in PNG.

SI Cobram Barooga gave support to local Helen Doonan, travelling to Siem Reap, Cambodia to work in schools and an orphanage. Donations provided would assist two young women to attend university. We have provided funding to the "Ian Thorpe Indigenous Education Project" for a Literacy Backpack.

Earlier this year floods swept through many areas of Australia. Our club assisted Charlton and Rochester, in Victoria, with the delivery of many beautiful knitted rugs done by the local community. Also many gardens in Rochester were devastated by the floods and Cobram Barooga supported a Plant Drive organized by the Rochester Community Centre and Garden club. President Mary Nixon and Secretary Irene Twigg loaded the utility and car to the fullest with plants donated by local residents and travelled to Rochester. A very rewarding day for all.

Also receiving assistance from us was SI Beenleigh for their "Target 10" Appeal. This appeal provided library bags with school essentials to disadvantaged



Plants to Rochester

schools in flooded areas. A very worthy project.

Selling fabulous cotton pyjamas made by the girls from "Project Hope", Chup, Cambodia enables us to support another worthy enterprise. Project Hope is administered by a Cobram women, Liz Hoban with assistance from family and friends. For ten years we have conducted a stall for Daffodil Day to support the Cancer Council. In the last three years we have sold over \$13,000.00 worth of merchandise. Two Girl Guides were assisted in their fundraising to attend the International Jamboree held in Sweden.

All work and no play does not happen in this Club. We had a fun "Pizza and Red Wine Night" at member, Karen Bruce's home and a "Christmas in July" held at Lalaly Hall was a great fundraiser, social, dinner dance.

We have catered for a number of events and our expertise was also required at the annual Cobram Historical Society Antique Fair to provide lunch for the weekend.

Pam O'Dwyer SI Cobram Barooga, Victoria

Cobram Historical Society Antique Fair- SI Cobram-Barooga members, Margaret Dick, Barbara Noonan, Lynn Knight and Mary Backhouse busy preparing lunch.



Extension success

SI Moreton North Inc. membership now stands at 14. This is an increase of 9 members since March. This month we have inducted two new members Marney Perna who is a practising Kinesologist. She was inducted during our Grant of Friendship dinner for visiting Soroptimist members from Switzerland Ulla Lundquist and Philippa Egger. Our second member inducted



was Sue Bradshaw, (pictured above with SI Moreton North President). Sue is a local Pharmacist and is already helping us with our mothers and baby packs for the Caboolture Hospital to assist young Aboriginal and Torres-strait islander mothers. Our SISQ Region Programme UN Liaison Margaret Niethe attended our last meeting and gave members an update on the SI Convention in Montreal and the new Programme Focus.

Our club has been involved in advocacy issues regarding raising awareness of cluster munitions prohibition treaty, asylum seekers being deported to Malaysia, and promoting the last documentary Trafficked - The Reckoning and International Peace Day distribution of doves to local orphanages around the world.

SIMNI members have been involved with a presentation to the State Executive Council of Girl Guides on the partnership between SI and WAGGGS. SISQ Region President Maree Lubach also attended this event and met with the new State Commissioner Monica Elliott. Further discussions will include PIP Margaret Lobo and WA Region members who have appointed a Region SI WAGGGS representative. The purpose is to strengthen our links with WAGGGS especially in The Andrew Petrie Region where our club is.

Chris Knight SI Moreton North Inc. QLD



Film night for education funds

A small committee of SI New Plymouth recently held a most successful fundraising evening at the Arthouse Cinema, a small community based cinema in the city. The evening comprised a pre-film soiree with nibbles provided, a short explanation of the aims and objects of Soroptimism and the projects to which proceeds were to be allocated (including "Birthing in the Pacific" and our local education scholarship for girls), followed by the screening of the film "The Concert".

The evening was publicised by way of a poster prepared by one of our members and by word of mouth. The Arthouse cinema holds 75 and we had a full house on the night. Patrons were encouraged to enter into the spirit of the occasion dubbed "A Grand Night at the Theatre" by wearing appropriate dress including furs and pearls.

As part of the purchase price of the ticket, patrons were entered into a draw to win a trip from their home to the venue in a vintage car and we contacted the local newspaper, which had a big photograph and an article in the following day's edition - great publicity for our club and the objects of Soroptimism!

One of our members canvassed various businesses for donations towards a raffle which was drawn on the night and we have received many positive comments from those who attended. We raised approximately \$1,000 and are looking at holding another film evening prior to the end of the year.

Judith Bennett
SI New Plymouth, New Zealand

Member of SINP Mary Rutherford, with Glenys Horsfall and Sue Cunningham arriving in a 1929 vintage car at Art House theatre in New Plymouth

Zareena's update from Fiji

Sigmatoka's focus

A very commendable project has just been completed by Soroptimist International Sigatoka. This is a housing project in Olosara for a widow, Sushila Wati, and her two sons who are both high school students.

Mrs Wati lost her husband almost six years ago which left her with no source of income. Her case was highlighted by a former SI Sigatoka member so the club identified her need and decided to assist.

Mrs Wati's family was living in a lean-to house in a low lying area which was prone to flooding and the family went through a lot of distress in the rainy season. SI Sigatoka approached the Ministry of Welfare for funding through their Poverty Alleviation Fund to build a new house for the family on the same land but higher ground since the land belonged to Wati's late husband.

The Ministry approved a grant of \$5,000 towards the project. The total cost of



the project is \$17,000 and the rest of the funds have been collected through donations from business houses. SI Sigatoka also raised some funds which were mainly used for the labor cost.

SI Sigatoka also assisted Mrs Wati in the legal process to transfer the land in her name. The family now has a two-bedroom comfortable house to live in due to the hard work of the 17 members of the SI Sigatoka.



SI Lautoka's Successful multi-cultural night

The SI Lautoka Club organized a multi-cultural evening performance on September 10th to raise funds for education projects.

The performers were mainly school students who performed on goodwill since the club had assisted most of these schools through their education projects throughout the year. The good cause also attracted the performers from the Sri Lankan community in Fiji who

kept the crowd entertained with their colorful and exciting performances.

The performances also comprised Island dances, Indian Cultural dances and songs from popular local singers. The support of the schools and performers for this event was indeed overwhelming for the club.

In all, this has been a very successful fundraiser and SI Lautoka wishes to thank its

sponsors Islands Electric wholesalers, Punja & Sons, and Tappoos Limited for their kind support. SI Lautoka also wishes to acknowledge the support of the Indian Cultural Centre for this event.

The support of the local media has also been good and a very special thanks to our media partner, the CITY STAR Community newspaper, who has gone above and beyond expectations in their promotion and coverage of this event to add to the success.

News from the Clubs



Assisting Rural Midwifery Leaders

The successful candidate of the SI Randwick/Eastern Suburbs third Rural Midwifery Scholarship (RMS) for 2011 was Narelle McKenzie, Midwifery and Nursing Unit Manager, Tumut Hospital NSW.

As part of the scholarship programme Narelle spent four days at the Royal Hospital for Women, Randwick (RHW) where an extensive programme tailored to her interests was organised. Comments from Narelle suggest this was a worthwhile experience for her as she had consultations with the maternity mental health team, the midwife responsible for high risk pregnancies, the midwifery diabetic educator and the lactation midwifery consultant. Narelle has already started to implement some of what she learnt in her Unit at Tumut.

The scholarship also enabled Narelle to attend the two-day NSW Midwifery Conference. The conference registration fees, travel and accommodation costs are all part of this scholarship.

SI Randwick/Eastern Suburbs work in partnership with the midwifery staff of the RHW and the NSW Midwives' Association in conducting this Scholarship. The principle aim is to encourage the leadership skills of a rural midwife, and this will indirectly support rural women who need access to maternity services. The final word belongs to Narelle, *I learnt a lot in the short time I was there and I am very appreciative of the opportunity the Soroptimist ladies have provided.*

Lesley Potter

SI Randwick/Eastern Suburbs, NSW



Deakin's Japanese Project

SI Deakin has a Friendship Link with SI Nara Maharoba, located near Kyoto in Japan. What began as a shared project with their club to recognise and celebrate the 2010 International Friendship Day has proved to be a significant and valuable activity with an on going positive impact in light of the Japanese earthquake disaster.

This Friendship Project, using local primary schools in both Australia and Japan had students depict their interpretation of their family life. The emphasis on backyard bbqs, cricket matches and days at the beach compared to families sitting serenely with formality surrounded by cherry blossom, provided a wonderful comment on cultural differences between Australia and Japan. The results were so popular and admired that SI Deakin decided to make up a set of gift cards from the varied artwork of these family drawings.

With the horrific tragedy of 2011 Japan Earthquake, SI Deakin has continued to produce multiple sets of the family cards to sell. The project was extended to include the making of Kokeshi dolls. Kokeshi dolls were originally hand crafted by peasant farmers to be given away as tokens of love and friendship. As a gift, they represent a common connection shared by people all over the world.

Current and future funds raised from both activities have been sent to SI Nara Maharoba to go towards the provision of education scholarships for girls who lost parents in the earthquake disaster.

Gale Jurkiw

SI Deakin, Victoria



A day at the movies

Members SI Penang had a very fulfilling day on August 20th when we played a part in SI Malaysia's nationwide screening of the Movie "Cars 2". We were grateful to all who responded so generously to our requests for support in this Charity event. Through their kindness and our members' continuous commitment we gave over 220 orphaned and handicapped children and some adults, a very happy time at the movie theatre.

It was a very satisfying day for our club members to see the joy on each child's face when they arrived at the theatre. This was something very new and exciting for many of them. We could hear them laughing and clapping their hands, throughout the movie.

SIP also presented each child with a bag full of goodies (donated by our members) to eat while watching the movie. What touched us most was when they started to share the contents of the goodie bags among themselves so they could save the other goodie bags for later and to share with those who could not attend the movie.

We must truly appreciate how blessed most of us are. The day at the movies would just be a normal movie day for many of us. But for those kids, it was a very rare and special occasion. We are so pleased that we could make this day possible for them.

In addition to the joy we gave to these less fortunate children, from the balance of the proceeds collected for this event, SI Penang is happy that to be able to kickstart SIP's Education Fund to help needy students in Penang gain a technical or vocational skill.

Anita Skelchy Pater

SI Penang, Malaysia



Roses from the ashes

The SI Victoria Bushfire appeal committee and the Gippsland Soroptimist group have been given the opportunity to distribute roses to about 100 residents in the towns ravaged by the 2009 bushfires.

Boolara residents, Samantha Brick, Lori Mansfield and Gwenda Pither (above) were among many recipients of the 512 bare-rooted roses kindly donated by Treloar Roses from Portland, Victoria. Treloar also organised the delivery of the roses to Gippsland.

The Jeerlang North Hall and rebuilding committee also received some bushes for their planned memorial garden. The Soroptimists have helped to rebuild the hall donating audio-visual equipment and money towards a tank.

**Samantha Brick
Gippsland Soroptimist group
Victoria**



Life membership

SI Taupo enjoyed Saturday brunch at the Acacia Bay Brasserie when they presented long-serving member Olive James with her Life Membership badge.

Olive joined the original Taupo Soroptimist group in 1976, twice



Art in wattle time

The Soroptimist Wattle Time Art Show was held on 5/6/7 August this year in the Cootamundra Town Hall.

This annual art show celebrated 32 years this year. The town business people, Cootamundra Shire and Hills Shire support the work done by a small dedicated band of enthusiastic Soroptimists. Entry forms are compiled and sent to prospective artists. With the prize money of \$12,000 the response is excellent, and with a limit on the number of works exhibited the standard is very high.

A Champagne opening and a weekend of viewing and sales produces a profit of up to \$10,000. The speciality stalls and wonderful display provides a weekend of cultural significance and enjoyment for both the locals and visitors from the surrounding area. The local High School Art Class help to hang the works, the Girl Guides assisted with the supper which was served by the young Cadas Kids, and the Primary School P & C provided a delicious lunch each day. Lions Club and Rotary members help with heavy work. So with such community involvement and our limited numbers the Art Show was once again a huge success!

**Helen Hamilton
SI Cootamundra, Riverina**

assuming the role of President and holding other positions of responsibility until the club's demise several years later. Olive was also Club Delegate at region, NZ and SISWP conferences.

When it was mooted to re-form the club in the 1990s, Olive was a driving force behind the move, encouraging the idea that Taupo be a branch club of Rotorua until such time as it had sufficient members to form a club in its own right. Whilst a branch club, Olive was publicity convenor and made sure that Soroptimist Taupo, Rotorua Branch



Bursary winners 2011

In August, SI Bendigo Secretary Anne Cooper presented awards to LaTrobe University recipients.

SI Bendigo awarded bursaries to the value of \$1,000 to three regional women who are completing their clinical training to qualify for registration in midwifery. The women were selected from regional rural areas to assist them with travel to complete their training.

\$500 was presented to Deanna Lahn from Leitchville who has 40 further clinical days to undertake in Bendigo in order to fulfil the registration requirements as a midwife. Rising fuel prices have impacted greatly on the family income which has also been reduced somewhat during the past seven years of drought. Deanna made the career change from banking to nursing and her academic results indicate exceptional progression. This student was considered extremely worthy of the Soroptimist Bursary.

A further \$500 was divided between Jennifer Blundell from Shepparton and Melissa McKenzie from Moama. These funds will assist both ladies in providing additional support for their young families and help defray travel costs whilst travelling back and forth to Bendigo to fulfil course requirements.

**Wilma Skidmore
SI Bendigo, Victoria**

was in the local newspaper after every fundraising, service or advocacy event undertaken.

SI Taupo chartered as a club in its own right in February this year, now boasts 22 members and is a prominent service club in the Taupo community. Olive was proud to be present at the Charter ceremony and SI Taupo is equally proud to bestow the honour of Life Membership upon this very deserving lady.

**Diane Hughes
SI Taupo, New Zealand**



President Yvonne visits the Riverina

The Riverina region in south western New South Wales is a far cry from the rainforests of President Yvonne's home in Hokitika NZ! A very well known poem by Australian poet Dorothea Mackellar speaks of "sweeping plains", "droughts and flooding rains". Riverina has experienced the droughts and the floods very recently, and in our four days of driving 1200 km around the region, we saw little else but sweeping plains, still very brown in mid winter!

Arriving in Griffith on July 20, fresh from the Montreal Convention, Yvonne was put straight to work, attending a dinner hosted by SI Griffith. President Louise Miller welcomed members and guests and Yvonne presented a memorable overview of the Convention and SI matters in general.

Cootamundra was our next destination. President Kerry Byrne and PP Helen Hamilton took us on a local tour, then dinner with Cootamundra members was a great way to finish the day.

ABC Radio was on the phone before sunrise Friday to set up an interview for later in the morning. Yvonne's excellent 15 minutes of air time was heard across the Riverina as we motored on towards Coleambally. After coffee at President Barbara Freer's home, Barbara and Lorraine Edwards, took us to several local venues, and finally ended with a guided tour of Turkandi Innaburra, a cultural centre for Aboriginal boys in danger of finding themselves in the criminal justice system. Following lunch in Darlington Point, President Yvonne was invited to induct three new members and to present Lorraine Edwards with her 25 year badge. Back to Griffith where we had coffee with the Mayor, then dinner

that evening with some members of SI Griffith.

Region President Elect Louise Miller joined the road trip for our weekend forays to other parts of the Region. Saturday we had a long drive to Deniliquin where President Rose Chick had organised a wonderful lunch hosted by SI Deniliquin. Members of SI Tocumwal and Finley

joined us for the lunch and we had the opportunity to meet Yvonne and hear her speak. Rose took us to see some of the work SI Deniliquin has done for the community – a rose garden at the cemetery, restoration and relocation of an original gas street lamp and the clock tower in the main street. Rose gave us some very sobering statistics about the effect of 10 years of drought.

Off again Sunday to Narrandera where we were met by President Bev Hughes and Secretary Veronica Barry at the railway station, now home to the local radio station where Yvonne had another interview. After morning tea we visited the Narrandera Fisheries Centre to learn about Australian inland fish. The manager had left one of his staff to do the tour, but after hearing Yvonne's interview decided he'd better come and meet this interesting lady! Lunch followed with members of SI Narrandera,

Home to Griffith again and time to pack. This proved an interesting experience as Yvonne had amassed a variety of extra belongings to take home.

Everyone across the Riverina felt honoured that President Yvonne had taken the time to visit our clubs. We appreciated the opportunity to see "THE CLOAK"!! I would finally like to acknowledge the outstanding hospitality and generosity of all the clubs we visited. As our Region President Jan Mills was still overseas following the Convention, it was my very great pleasure to host Yvonne during her visit.

Will Mead
SI Griffith

Above: Joan McCalman, SI Deniliquin. Yvonne, Esther Bryan, SI Tocumwal, Pat Cockayne, and SI Deniliquin President Rose Chick.



Birthing in the Pacific

Several SI Townsville Focus After Five members got together at my home and packed up the 120 nurses kits for midwives in Papua New Guinea. We packed them into the boxes the stethoscopes came in. I will now arrange for them to be shipped to PNG ready for distribution. The fob watches, reading glasses, safety glasses were all donated by SWP clubs. The rest were purchased by the project account.

Janet Askern
Coordinator SWP Project



Tomorrow Today Benalla

SI Benalla has agreed to help *Tomorrow Today* by donating funds for books. This local organisation is committed to fixing the problems facing the early education of young children within the Public Housing sector. With its aim to assist small children they are engaging the parents of these children to also help with the desire to learn. Our guest speaker from *Tomorrow Today*, Pat Claridge, is pictured standing between Janet Gourley and Karen Harmon.

Janet Gourley
SI Benalla, Victoria