



4-8 July, 1999 XVI Soroptimist International Convention,
Helsinki, Finland

Tomorrows Member

by *Kate Goddard, SI Beverley & District, Yorkshire Region, SIGBI*

This plenary session was a joint presentation by members of the SI outgoing committee for Extension and the new incoming team. It was led by Lorna Mead (well known chat liner) currently the SI International Extension Coordinator and Joan Cromer the incoming Chairman of the International Extension Committee, note the change of title for this international office.

Each Federation then presented its figures for overall membership, recruitment figures and changes in the countries represented in their Federation. Both SIA and SIE reported growth in membership. But despite the increase in the number of new clubs in SIGBI and to a lesser extent in SISWP, the total number of members has been showing a fall. The decline in membership seems to particularly affect the UK and Ireland with a high turnover of new members. SISWP believes that the Asian financial crisis has affected retention in their Federation.

A further statistic showed that in 1998 11,190 members were recruited and 11,381 ceased to be members. There is no doubt that retention is an issue about which we cannot be complacent.

Tomorrows Member Is Today's Woman

- embarking on a career
- achievement orientated
- a professional person who may have to retrain or change occupation several times in her lifetime
- very likely a mother
- concerned with the advancement of women

Vital Ingredients for Our Future

- adopt structures to reflect changing needs
- tackle issues that make a significant difference for women
- devise stimulating programmes that inspire members
- ask yourself, if your club projects make a real difference for women
- a sense of achievement is necessary to retain members, involve your new members and work together.

Ten Tips for Retention

1. Resources - your member's expertise
2. Tolerance - value the differences
3. Delegation - share responsibilities and cultivate leadership
4. Personal Development - develop the new member's potential and skills
5. Empowerment - value and promote new members
6. Communication - effectively disseminate information
7. Mentor - nurture new members

4-8 July, 1999 XVI Soroptimist International Convention, Helsinki, Finland

8. Awareness - understand issues affecting women
9. Flexibility - review traditional practices of your club
10. Action - devise challenging programmes for positive outcomes

Remember we are still the largest classified service club for women in the world.