



Garstang Soroptimists

*Women inspiring action,
transforming lives*

Welcome to Our Second New Member

This month we are very happy to welcome Kathy, our second new member since our AGM. We look forward to sharing our work with this enthusiastic lady! We are sure she will be a valued member of Garstang Soroptimists.

President Susan's Charity 'Classrooms in the Clouds'

The charity chosen by our President for this year is 'Classrooms in the Clouds' - a UK charity, it exists to support children's education in the remote villages of Nepal. Working with Nepalese partners, 'Classrooms in the Clouds' build new classrooms, sponsor teachers, support teacher training, and actively encourage the employment of female teachers in Nepal. At our meeting on the 14th June we felt privileged to meet Dawa Geljen, a Samden Sherpa, here on a visit from Nepal, who could tell us first hand of the overwhelming need to provide education for its children.

Dawa told of his personal reasons for the tireless work he does for this charity (in addition to his full-time job as a Sherpa mountain guide). As a child Dawa's responsibility was a daily trek into the forest with the family's goat herd, while they grazed he must collect wood for cooking and heating, returning the herd safely each evening. The nearest school was a good hour's walk each way, too far for an unaccompanied child, his parents could not afford the time to take him. When Dawa was 10 years old he defied his parents rule and ran way to school. Too afraid to face them, he slept in the barn and went again to school the following day, then he was then allowed to attend.

But this is not a fairy story, and as a young married man with three daughters, he faced the difficult choice, with no school in his village, of keeping them at home to love, enjoy and teach their native culture and traditions, or sending them away to school. He chose to send them to school in Kathmandu, it saddens him that his daughters missed out on specific cultural and family traditions throughout their childhood. His driving force is for education to be equally accessible for girls or boys and that training is available for female teachers; hand in hand with this target is the provision of clean water and gender specific toilets including sanitary products (girls currently miss one week of school every month due to lack of facilities) This is the situation that Garstang Soroptimists are seeking to address by supporting this charity. For more information and to see a short video of Dawa's story visit www.classroomsintheclouds.org.

Market Stall Reminder

On Saturday 1 July we will be having a **Bric-a-Brac** stall outside the Market Hall on Garstang high street, come and have a chat and pick up a bargain!

Backpack Project Update

Since the last issue of Focus we have sent another 25. Thank you for your continued support.

Why don't you join this boundless network? ***It could be the best thing you've ever done!***

We meet twice a month at the Garstang Hotel and Golf Club. 7.30pm, on the second and fourth Wednesday. Interested ladies from throughout the Over Wyre and Garstang district are always very welcome.

Muriel Burnham-Airey
01995 606604
Membership Co-ordinator

Take a look at what we do:

www.sigarstang.org.uk

www.facebook.com/SoroptimistsGarstang

www.twitter.com/GarstangSoropt

Please drop off your used Back Packs at- The Mustard Seed Café, Park Hill Road (Opposite the Wheat Sheaf Pub) - open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday 10.00am to 2.00pm.