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A Global Voice for Women—Soroptimists transform the lives of women and girls

June 2010 Newsletter - Volume 12

## Soroptimist International of Gold Coast Inc

President : Marilyn Wilkes (L.O.A.)

President Elect : Janet James

Secretary : Dorothea Banner



Rosalba Gustin with Janet James and Dorothy Elliott wearing their *Heart of Mamma Lena* medals, while Robyn Isaacs joins in the occasion.



Rosalba Gustin, Majella House Coordinator Ruth Oldfield and SIGC representative Toni O'Rourke at the new Majella House Women's Refuge.



The inner courtyard in the grounds of Majella House.

## The Heart of Mamma Lena!



May Business Meeting – President-Elect Janet James and our Guest Speaker, Rosalba Gustin representing the Mamma Lena & Dino Gustin Foundation. Also showing Mamma Lena and Dino themselves in the photos on the wall.

We were very honoured to have as our May 2010 Guest Speaker, Rosalba Gustin from the Mamma Lena and Dino Gustin Foundation. Rosalba was a wonderfully vibrant and entertaining woman who recounted her life growing up and the lives of her amazing parents Lena and Dino, leading ultimately to the formation of this very generous Foundation. Rosalba Gustin was introduced to SIGC originally by our member Robyn Isaacs, with whom she has been friends for many years.

Rosalba spoke of coming out to Australia from their native Italy and her mother's fortuitous introduction to community radio in Sydney in the 1950's. From that followed Lena's long and successful time as a radio broadcaster and 'personality', well known to most Sydney-siders of the time.

From Lena's time on radio, came many contacts and stories of people in need and many generous listeners donated money. This eventually led to the establishment by the Gustin family of a Child Care Centre. Eventually, tiring of bureaucracy and red tape, the family decided to sell the Child Care Centre.

The funds from the sale then formed the basis of the Mamma Lena & Dino Gustin Foundation, whereby the interest earned on the sale proceeds is granted to those in most need by way of Grants.

This was then how SIGC, through the hard work of Janet James, was able to obtain a Grant for Majella House to purchase bed linen for their new home, and also the group which helps the homeless - 'You have a Friend' - was able to receive a Van to assist them getting around to even more needy people.

Following on from our May Meeting, Rosalba Gustin, Janet James and Toni O'Rourke visited the new Majella House Women's Refuge on Friday, 21 May. Coordinator, Ruth Oldfield, said she and the other staff have not stopped smiling since they moved in and neither have their clients!! The old Majella House offered only communal living, where the new units are independent living refuges with either two or three bedrooms, all with their own lounge, kitchen, bathroom and laundry, resulting in a more 'home-like environment' for the mothers and children. Rosalba was very impressed and Ruth invited her to visit any time.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A SOROPTIMIST?

\*Commitment \*Enthusiasm \*Decision-making skills \*A sense of humour