



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



Specialist Provision in Education
Great Britain State Conference

SPRING 2018

Volume 16 No 2

CONTENTS

From the Editor

State President's Report	3
The Antoinette Hotel	4
DKG International Convention 2018	5
European Forum Committee Meeting	6
European State Conferences 2018	8
Joanna Corden: an Obituary	9
Sarsen Stone: Kingston on Thames	10
Emirate Teachers in Abu Dhabi	11
GB State Conference 2018	12
Mental Health	14
DKG International Scholarships 2018	15
Alpha's Visit to Charterhouse	16
Alpha Chapter Report	18
Burma Railway Man	20
Rusthall Arts Festival	21
Women Aviators Making History in Time and Space	22
Gamma Chapter Report	23

The picture of Hampton Court on the front cover, and all pictures of the conference hotel, are used with permission of the Antoinette Hotel who kindly allowed us to take and use pictures from their website.

As there is no conference to report on in this edition, there is room for more reports on Chapter activities, both talks and visits. Always good to see how many enjoyable times we get together in our Chapter meetings.

You will also find on the centre pages information on our forthcoming GB conference, which this year is to be held in Kingston-on-Thames. A good hotel, plenty of interesting talks, and an opportunity to explore the area. Oh, and a very good restaurant for our dinner on the Saturday! You will find a registration form with this edition of GB News—please complete and return the form, and make our State President a happy woman!

There is also some information on the forthcoming International Convention in Austin, Texas, other European State Conferences, and DKG International Scholarships, 2018. So much to benefit from in DKG International.

The next edition of GB News will include reports on events at our State Conference in April, plus of course reports on Chapter activities. I will, as usual, be seeking `volunteers` for these reports later!

Reports as always in Word, sent as an attachment to an email, by 7 May please.

Diane Billam. dbillam@hotmail.com

Kathy Hodgson

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT 2015—2017



Another year has flown by, and by the time you read this, 2018 will have descended upon us – where does time go? My theory is that we spend so much time planning for events in the future, that we sometimes forget to enjoy the present. However, these things do need preparation, and much hard work is undertaken on behalf of our organisation, both at chapter and state level.

Not least of this is the planning for our state conference in April, in Kingston (London – sadly not Jamaica!). The theme of the conference is **Specialist Provision in Education** and we have a wide range of speakers and performers. You will read about the planned activities in the centre pages of this issue.

As always, we have to pay deposits to secure hotel and restaurant bookings – several months before the event. Therefore, I would ask you if you would book early. To this purpose, you will also find a registration form enclosed, newly printed and desperate to be used.

The hotel where we intend to hold the conference is central, comfortable and, for London, surprisingly inexpensive. So, what better excuse for a weekend away? Bring a friend or a spouse (that could even be the same person!). Mid-April could be just the time to enjoy a run in a London park before breakfast – I'll see you there.

At this stage I have to thank four extremely hardworking individuals for their unceasingly hard work in organising the conference: Evelyn and Joan, for finding and visiting the hotel and locating speakers; Diana, for her never-ending ideas and willingness to take on writing activities so that I don't have to; and finally, Gloria, for being my guide and mentor and keeping me – mostly – on the straight and narrow.

Since this is an even numbered year in the DKG calendar, we need new chapter officers – presidents, vice-presidents and treasurers. Please consider taking on one of these roles. **Nominations need to be sent to Mary Wardrop by February** and full training will be provided at the State Conference, where we will be announcing the names of the new officers.

*Antoinette Hotel:
Hampton
Restaurant*



The biggest event in the biennium is the International Convention, this year in the birthplace of DKG – Austin, Texas. The cost of attending may be proving to be prohibitive for many of you; however, your contribution to the proceedings there are invaluable. In the new year, DKG News will be sent to you. In that edition you will find proposed changes to the constitution. I would urge you to read through them and, particularly if you feel strongly for or against any of the proposals, please let me know; one of my roles at the International Convention is to vote on behalf of GB. I know one or two matters to be discussed concern me – not least possible changes to our voting system – so please tell me what you think.

I hope to see many of you in April.

Kathrin Hodgson (GB State President)

THE ANTOINETTE HOTEL, KINGSTON UPON THAMES

Congratulations to Joan Carroll and Evelyn Goodsell, who found this hotel for our GB Conference, details of which are set out in the middle pages.

The Royal Kingston Suite, is described as an impressive setting for a successful event, offering natural daylight and direct access to the gardens, with a covered outside area.

The Coronation Room is an intimate suite which is individually air-conditioned, accommodating between 2 and 30 delegates, and can be used in conjunction with the Royal Kingston Suite.

The single bedroom pictured below is £50 per night. A family room is pictured right.



The Royal Kingston Suite pictured below is one of the conference rooms we will be using.



DKG INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION 2018

The International Convention in 2018 will be held in Austin, Texas, from 16-20 July. The convention will be held in the JW Marriott Hotel in downtown Austin, which has all the amenities we associate with recent convention hotels. Room reservations start on 2 January 2018.

Our International Headquarters are also located in Austin, and when you register for the convention, you can also sign up for the HQ Tour! Members who have visited in the past have found it most interesting.

There will be a series of `2018 International Convention Times` in the next few months, giving information to help you plan your visit. It's also worth looking up the hotel on the internet: very impressive!

Kathrin Hodgson (GB State President)



Austin Texas,
State Capitol Building.
General view.
Left is looking down from
one of the galleries above.



State Capitol Building,
Right, looking upwards
at the dome.
All pictures taken by
Kathy.



EUROPEAN FORUM COMMITTEE MEETING

HELSINKI, 3—5 NOVEMBER 2017

The second Forum Committee meeting of my tenure as Forum Chair took place at the beginning of November in Vantaa, Helsinki, just a stone's throw away from my last European journey to Tallinn, for the Regional Conference.

Once again, flights were on time, clean and comfortable. Things began to go awry as soon as I landed. The passengers from my plane were sent to carousel number 6 to await the unloading of our suitcases; some twenty minutes later, the carousel had still not begun to move. Another passenger, facing her friend, and so looking in the opposite direction from the rest of us, suddenly announced: 'Hey, that's my suitcase!'. Behind us, another carousel was happily displaying our luggage – and had been for some time.

Having been unnecessarily delayed, I headed for a bus stop immediately outside the airport where, I had been informed, I could catch a 'free' shuttle bus to my hotel. As predicted the bus turned up and began to ferry passengers to their respective inns. It was a great opportunity to see Vantaa from the comfort of a coach; my concern began as the last occupant alighted, and the sky was beginning to darken. Conversation with the driver followed; yes - it was a shuttle bus, sadly not mine. He helpfully dropped me off, back at the airport, with full instructions. The correct bus arrived and deposited me at my hotel – a little later than scheduled.

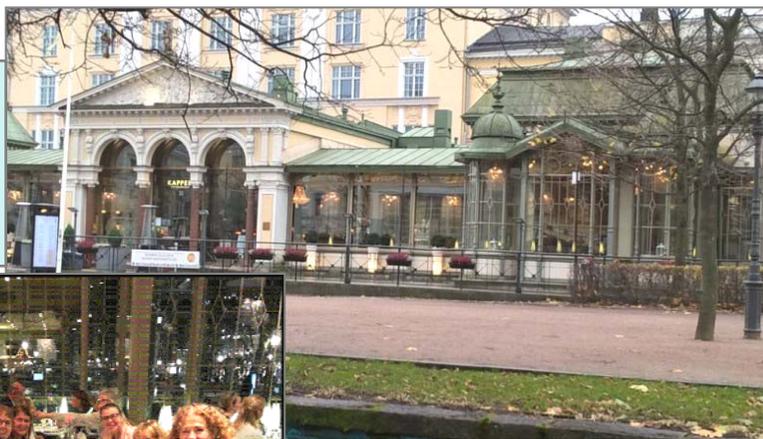
We were due to meet later that evening at the home of Iida Hyvonen, the Finnish member of the Forum committee, for our meeting and dinner. Three of us met at six o'clock and decided to walk to Iida's without a guide, using a map Iida had left at the hotel reception. With hindsight, and in view of the day's previous events, waiting for someone to show us the way may have been a better option. But – what could go wrong? I have, in a previous report, confessed to having failed one exam during my life – Geography 'O' level; holding the map upside down as we left the hotel is probably an example of my geographical skills, and our journey began badly. We did arrive – eventually – taking 75 minutes to complete a 15 minute walk. At least we were hungry when we arrived for dinner!

So – what of the purpose of the visit to Helsinki? I hear you ask. Well, we dealt with the agenda items efficiently, in particular making initial plans for the European Breakfast and Forum Meeting at the International Convention in Austin. Much work still needs to be done in this respect via email.

We discussed the issue of continuity with the Forum Committee, particularly in light of the failure of our proposal in Tallinn; several countries plan for their representative to remain for a second biennium, so the problem has been resolved, at least for another two years.

We rekindled friendships and welcomed a new member to the committee; due to pressure of work, the previous Estonian representative, Lillia Oberg, has had to hand over the role to one of our younger members, Terttu-Triin Tomusk. She has much to offer, and it was a pleasure to get to know her.

Beautiful exterior of Kappeli's Restaurant in Helsinki.



The Forum Committee enjoy their dinner in Kappeli's restaurant.

On Saturday evening, we rewarded ourselves by travelling into Helsinki and had dinner by the harbour at a beautiful restaurant - Kappeli's – that has been in existence for one hundred years or more. The food was delicious, the company entertaining and the location was stunning.

Finally, on Sunday morning, three of us, whose flights were later in the day, travelled once again into Helsinki, and embarked on a coach tour. What a beautiful city it is – and we were lucky enough to be sitting on the top deck in the front seats, so the views were incredible. At the end of the tour, I was to return to the hotel before my two Norwegian friends, Bjorg Nakling and Anne Marie Solstad. Strangely, they insisted on walking me to the bus stop, and waiting until I was on the correct bus. I wonder why that was.....

Kathrin Hodgson (*Chair of the European Forum*)



A Finnish classroom. Note: the notice above the left-hand display says `SHOW AND TELL` - in English!



Helsinki skyscraper

EUROPEAN STATE CONFERENCES IN 2018

If you cannot attend the International Convention in Austin Texas this year you may prefer to think about attending one of the State Conferences of our European members. This is the information we have so far:

- Estonia: Parnu, in April.
- Finland: Tampere, 21 April.
- Germany: Rastede. 11-13 May
- Iceland: Egilsstaoir, 4-6 May
- Netherlands: 26 May
- Sweden: 16-18 March.

Norway is not holding a conference this year.

The next European Regional Conference will be held in Iceland in 2019.

JOANNA MARIA CORDEN 1947—2017: AN OBITUARY



Jo, a member of Alpha Chapter, died on the 16th December after a severe stroke on the 13th November. She had just reached her 70th birthday in August.

Jo was born in Bologna, Italy, where her Polish mother, having escaped the Russians during the war, had met and married an Australian Major. He was posted back home and she was given permission to live in the UK. She joined her brother, (who had worked with the Free Polish Air Force during the war), along with 3 year old Joanna, in Harrogate, Yorkshire.

After studying history at Sheffield University, Jo gained her Masters in Archive Administration at University College London. She worked for a year in Huntingdon before taking up an archivist's job with Barnet Council.

Her flatmate introduced her to James Corden. They married in 1971 and had three children; Gregory, Andrew and Louise (my Goddaughter). Both boys are married, and there is now one grandchild.

Having worked for many years as the archivist for The Royal Society, officially Jo retired in July 2017. Alpha members will remember Jo taking us into the archives and allowing us to see, and touch, many ancient documents, including those written by Christopher Wren, and introducing us to The Royal Society Summer Exhibition, what a treat.

Jo was a lovely, pleasant, kind and straightforward person with the most wonderful 'velvety' voice. Sadly she hadn't been able to attend many DKG meetings for a while because of some mobility issues. She will be very much missed.

Diana Bell (*Alpha Chapter*)



Jo on holiday. Happy times. Photo courtesy of Louise Corden.

THE SARSEN STONE IN KINGSTON UPON THAMES

An article in the *Geographical Magazine* caught my attention as our State Conference is to be in Kingston this year.

The article was about a grey stone, about 60cm high and 30cm—50cm wide. This stone sits on a plinth outside the Guildhall in Kingston High Street, near the bridge over the Hogsmill River, not far from the Thames. It is surrounded by blue railings and fancy pillars,

The stone is made of Sarsen, like Stonehenge. Sarsen is made from compressed sand and mud and very hard wearing. It could be up to 66 million years old. It was possibly transported by glacial melt waters, as this type of stone is not usually found near London, or it might have been transported from the South Downs.

Opinion has been divided over its historical significance. The stone has been used for many purposes over the centuries: to help you mount your horse, as a piece of a long-lost chapel, but the best bit is that it probably played a part in the creation of England.

It is thought that the ancient Church of St Mary, which collapsed in 1730, was where coronations took place. The stone was recovered from the ruins and since then has been regarded as a coronation stone. It was decorated, probably because it hosted royalty. It is thought that between two and seven Saxon Kings had their coronations here during the 900s, but it wasn't until the Victorians realised it had some significance that the ornate memorial was built.

It is not certain if the stone was used for coronations, but it is interesting why Kingston was chosen for their location. In Saxon times England was divided into a number of Kingdoms; the River Thames was the border between Wessex and Mercia. Athelstan wanted to unite England under one king and probably chose to have his coronation at Kingston for its geographical location and symbolism. He was crowned there in 925. After this he conquered Northumbria and became the first King of England. Later kings thought to have been crowned there and named on the plinth, include Aethelred the Unready in 979.

I hope to find this rock during our conference weekend, but in case I don't, if you do see it then please take a photograph or two for me.

Diana Bell (*Alpha Chapter*)

EMIRATE TEACHERS IN ABU DHABI 2010-2015

Riitta Hanninen, a lead expert in the Finnish Partnership with the United Arab Emirates, explained her experiences of the Professional Development Programme. It focused on child centre learning and tools for everyday schoolwork to create understanding for school development. For the students, intensive support with a human touch was required to give them empowerment. Riitta explained that it was more an approach than a theory to create a model and if others use it, it will become a theory.

The scheme had 40 credit programmes and took place in two schools around Abu Dhabi over three terms with the syllabus arranged in four-week periods.

Teachers from the Emirate with 2 - 20 years experience taught the 40 students who were divided into two groups. Riitta found the students understanding of English was a challenge.

The work-based programme developed all the time according to the students needs. There were two study visits to Finland included for them.

Thirty-five students acquired Diplomas, 6 acquired an M.A. degree and 5 were given a Certificate of Participation.

Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)



Abu Dhabi. Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque. Photo courtesy of Tim Wreghitt.



Specialist Provision in Education



**Great Britain
State Conference**

**Antoinette Hotel Kingston
Beaufort Road
Kingston
London, KT1 2TQ**

Award
winning

Friday 13th – Sunday 15th April 2018

Hotel
Garden



Ed Griffin

Creating opportunity and equality in the workplace

For several years Ed worked for the British Council, travelling extensively round the world, specialising in international, cultural and educational opportunities. He is now an International HR Director and organisational development consultant.

He will talk on creating opportunity and equality in the workplace, the importance of education in addressing imbalances and the need for men also to be better educated to shift prejudices in the role of Government and employers.

Melanie Elsey

The Role of Primary Pupil Referral Units

Throughout her career as a primary school teacher, Melanie has always taken a special interest in the needs of the problem pupil, the child in crisis.

Having served as a Governor for a Pupil Referral Unit, she has now taken on the headship of the only Primary Pupil Referral Unit in the London Borough of Sutton. She will explain the work of the unit and why there is an increased need for this specialist provision.



Eirinn Carroll

Performance Arts

Eirinn is in her final year as a student of The Brit School - a school founded and supported by the entertainment industry.

As a singer, Eirinn studies in the Music strand of the school and will talk about her life as a student there, with some musical interludes to describe her experience and entertain us.



Phyllis Hickey

Specialist Provision in Education in the U.S.

Our International speaker and The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International Operation Services Administrator since August 15th, 2007.

Phyllis has been a DKG member since 1986 in Connecticut and now Alpha Chapter in Austin.

Phyllis will speak about Specialist Provision in Education in the U.S. She will give an overview of music, art, physical education and school sports programmes.

Other conference features include:

- ⇒ Annual General Meeting
- ⇒ Training for new chapter officers
- ⇒ Music and movement
- ⇒ Members' own art and craft display
- ⇒ Raffle
- ⇒ Dinner at Brown's Restaurant on Saturday evening
- ⇒ Visit to Hampton Court Palace on Sunday



Browns Restaurant

The town of Kingston was first mentioned in the year 838 and its royal connections date back to Saxon times. Browns Bar & Brasserie sits right on one of the most prominent quays in the town and has uninterrupted views over the River Thames. Menus range from memorable classics or lighter selections, to traditional brasserie dishes. We currently have tables booked on Saturday evening at 7:30 pm. Please visit their website for more information:



www.browns-restaurants.co.uk/restaurants/southeast/kingston

Hampton Court Palace

The original Tudor palace was begun by Cardinal Wolsey in the early 16th century, but it soon attracted the attention of Henry VIII, who brought all his six wives here. Surrounded by gorgeous gardens and famous features such as the Maze and the Great Vine, the palace has been the setting for many nationally important events. We plan to visit both the palace and the beautiful gardens, and you can spend as much of the day there as you wish.

MENTAL HEALTH — AN INSIGHT INTO THE ROLE OF PSYCHIATRIC HEALTH WORKERS

Anne Ross is a Mental Health worker with many years experience in this field. She began her talk with a Mental Health Quiz “icebreaker” for members present, to ascertain how much they actually knew about the statistics and other facts surrounding the issue of mental health. These were some of what we learnt e.g.: 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem at some time, 45% of sufferers see themselves as victims, 90% suffer stigma, 17% feel suicidal, many wait more than a year to tell close friends or family, 26% of young people report that the stigma made them want to give up on lifestyles, 60% of ethnic groups are affected by mental health problems.

Anne became involved at the age of 17 when having completed her A Levels she decided to shadow her dad who was working in a long stay institution. She became a nursing assistant for two years working with the Mentally Handicapped (then known as Mentally Subnormal). When she qualified in 1989 she worked in a variety of different wards where those with mental health were being treated. In 2005 having witnessed situations of physical abuse within the system she became a “Whistleblower” reporting what she had seen. Eventually the *Care Quality Commission* was set up.



Anne Ross

Anne now works in a supported trust where patients' stay varies between six months to a year. There are approximately 13/14 patients in the Unit. Her work has involved covering short term alongside a Community Team when urgent repairs were needed to prevent closure. Anne's experience has led her to understanding of other aspects of mental health especially working with people who are deaf. She did this for two and a half years and learned British Sign Language. She has also worked with patients experiencing OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder) and BDD (Body Dysmorphic Disorder). She agreed when asked, that there was a link between BDD and Eating Disorders.

A number of important changes were put in place as an outcome of the Winterbourne Inquiry in October 2010 which meant that all aspects had to be regularly reviewed. These included revision of the Mental Health Act, the Community Mental Health Teams, and CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health

Services) which operates in schools.

As a result of all these changes there is more multi-agency work now. Mental Health nurses now collaboratively work with the police e.g. in A&E. Social Media has raised awareness of Mental Health promotions. Anne's role now is shift organising with the Multi Disciplinary Teams. Unfortunately cutting of bursaries, low starting salaries, no CPD (Continuous Professional Development) or other opportunities for career development has led to a reduction of provision. There is a lack of access to mental health provision for GPs and a lack of time for them to get to know their patient.

This fascinating talk led to a lot of discussion with Anne regarding how the police are more and more called in to deal with incidents involving those with mental health problems. Hospitals have a Section 136 Suite for police to bring a patient to be assessed. Meriel talked about her work in schools as an Art Therapist and this led on to a general discussion about a variety of aspects including the need for parents to act as parents and support children who have mental health needs. This was a very topical issue which could have been discussed and debated for longer had time been available.

***Penny Kinnear** (Alpha Chapter)*

DKG INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION 2018

Riitta-Liissa Arpiaipen is the Chair, and our Regional Representative, of the International Scholarship Committee. Do take a look at the Scholarship Committee page on the DKG International Website, www.dkg.org. 30 Scholarships are awarded annually, and the deadline for applications is **1 February**. \$6000 is awarded for a Masters degree, \$10,000 for a Doctoral degree.

Criteria information and scholarship applications are available in the Apply/Submit link on the top of the homepage of the Society website, www.dkg.org. On the website, click on Apply/Submit, and then click on Applications. Riitta-Liissa will be happy to help with any information on this process.

***Kathrin Hodgson** (State President)*

ALPHA`S CHRISTMAS VISIT TO CHARTERHOUSE

Alpha's Christmas visit and lunch on 9th December took place on a bitterly cold but bright day. We began by meeting in Charterhouse Square for coffee at an elegant 18th century townhouse, formerly belonging to the author William Makepeace Thackeray but now owned by the Charterhouse foundation, before beginning our tour of Charterhouse itself.



The group listening to their guide in the main almshouse square.

Originally the land on which the Charterhouse was built was London's largest cemetery for victims of the 1348-49 outbreak of the Black Death. The Carthusian monastic order founded a monastery on the site in 1371 which grew in importance throughout the mediaeval period but its downfall came with the dissolution of the monasteries by Henry VIII. It then passed into the ownership of a succession of wealthy aristocrats including the powerful Howard family who enlarged and developed it throughout the Tudor period into a grand and important manor house. It was to Charterhouse that Elizabeth I was brought to await her Coronation and James I used its great hall for a ceremony to create 130 new barons.

In 1611 the Charterhouse was bought by a rich, successful merchant and

business man Thomas Sutton who founded Sutton's hospital in Charterhouse to provide a school for poor scholars and an almshouse for respectable elderly men who had fallen on hard times. These men were known as Brothers, a title they retain to this day.

James I became the foundation's first royal governor, the current governor is the Duke of Edinburgh whose recent retirement may mean a new royal governor will be taking over in the near future. During its history Cromwell, Wellington and Gladstone have all been governors while John Wesley, Thackeray and Robert Baden Powell were pupils at the school. The Charterhouse has appeared in books by Defoe and Dickens as well as Thackeray, while in the 21st century it has been used for locations for TV series Downton Abbey and Taboo. With growing numbers the school moved to its present location in Godalming, Surrey while the almshouse still remains, providing a home for elderly men in need but now with changing times it has just admitted its first female "Brother".

The Charterhouse is a tranquil historical gem in the middle of one of the busiest areas of London. Each century has left its mark on the house and surroundings. Standing in its courtyards one can see 800 years of history and architecture and this century continues this pattern of development with the foundation of learning resources and educational programmes, an excellent interactive museum and the opening of the house, chapel and gardens to the general public for tours and functions.

Having spent a fascinating morning here we followed our guided tour with an excellent, leisurely lunch in a cosy nearby city pub. Our thanks to organisers Barbara and Penny for a splendid start to Christmas.

Joan Carroll (*Alpha Chapter*)

Charterhouse. Right - inside the main gateway.
Below shows the opposite side of the square
where the group listened to the guide.



ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT

Alpha Chapter has had a further interesting series of meetings, in a variety of venues.

In September we met at Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, and members who had attended the European Regional in Tallinn in Estonia spoke to us about their experiences there. They had an extremely enjoyable time and found the Estonians very hospitable – see the reports in GB News Autumn 2017.

Our October meeting was intended to be a joint one with Gamma Chapter – to be held at Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, where Claire, the Head, was going to show us the latest refurbishments, and speak to us about the combined schools. Unfortunately, due to family circumstances and illness, Claire had to cancel. As we had no venue, we lunched at a local restaurant, and then, taking advantage of the reasonable weather, held our business meeting outdoors in the pleasant grounds of the Dulwich Picture Gallery.

November also saw a change of speaker at short notice. Lindsey McHale was called away for work purposes, so could not speak to us about her wide-roving Music therapy work. Instead Joan Carroll, at short notice, asked a church friend if she would speak to us. Anne Ross bravely stepped into the breach, and spoke about her varied work and experiences in work in Mental Health, see page 14.

In December we had our usual festive outing and lunch. This year we visited The Charterhouse, an Almhouse, and which had been the site of the original Charterhouse School in the Smithfield area of London.

Lunch afterwards was at The Fox and Anchor Pub, nearby – a festive occasion pictured right.



Forthcoming meetings 2018:

13th January: 12.30 lunch. 2.00pm Speaker: Harriet Goodman - "Philosophy For Children" + Business Meeting. Venue: Holy Trinity Hall, Bryan Road, Rotherhithe. Bring your own sandwich lunch. Raffle. Parking space in the Church car park.

24th February: Proposed visit to the Museum of Brands, 111 Lancaster Gate, Notting Hill W11 1QT.(tbc).

10th March: 12:30pm "Bring & Share" lunch. 2.00 pm Speaker Lindsay McHale - 'Music Therapy in Africa' Venue: Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, London SE21.

13th-15th April: Annual Conference, Antoinette Hotel. Kingston-on-Thames.

19th May: Speaker (tbc) + Business Meeting. Venue: DHJS/Soroptimist's (tbc).

23rd June: Proposed visit to Camley Street Nature Reserve at King's Cross. Also visit to The Kings Place - a music, art and restaurant venue, near King's Cross Station and the Grand Union Canal (tbc).

1st week July: The Royal Society, visit to their annual Summer Science Exhibition.

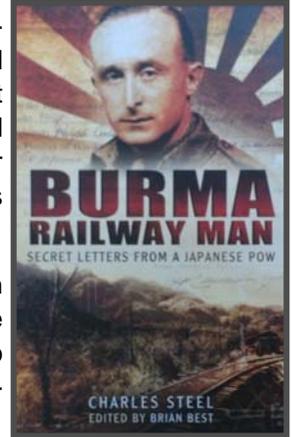
21st July: Summer Outing – Proposed Boat Trip from Westminster to Greenwich (tbc).

Barbara Kern (Alpha Chapter President)

BURMA RAILWAY MAN

Margaret Sargent spoke to us about the amazing experience and remarkable life of her father, Charles Wilfred Steel, born in 1916. His school life and encouragement from his father for outdoor exercise, physical fitness and particularly cycling long distances prepared Charles for difficult times ahead. He married Louise before war was declared.

Charles sailed to join the British Expeditionary Force in France, having barely had time to say goodbye to Louise and was one of the unlucky few who participated in two of the greatest disasters to befall the British Army. Dunkirk and the fall of Singapore in 1942.



The British had capitulated a mere seventy days after the Japanese had invaded Malaya and 130,000 men had been captured. Even when Charles was at his lowest ebb, a sick starved slave on the Burma-Siam railway, he kept writing to his beloved Louise. He wrote and concealed 183 letters during his captivity as a prisoner of war by the Japanese and thirty two more after the Japanese surrender. For four long years he and his fellow prisoners endured cruelty and hardship. He felt guilty because others had not survived.

Between October 1943—1944 60,000 Allied prisoners of war and 300,000 Asian labourers slaved to complete the Railway and in particular the famous 'Bridge over the River Kwai'. The sun was their worst enemy and frequent landslides along the railway bed along the route. Charles' healthy upbringing served him well and he also read as much as he could by swapping books.



Margaret Sargent & Marian Bowles

Signs of being transported in 1945 and the encouragement of the Thais at every station gave the men all hope for home. Finally they sailed up the River Mersey where they were greeted with sounds of sirens and horns from the ships that lined the docks. Finally demobbed in early 1946 Charles treasured the reference Colonel P Toosey gave him. Louise gave birth to a daughter, Margaret, and the family moved out to Tenterden when Charles retired.

In 1979 Charles returned to Singapore and was deeply moved when he walked across the bridge and visited the Changi Prison where he had lived in those difficult times. He died In 1999 having only shared his many papers and letters to Louise. Now we have shared that privilege.

Mary Wardrop (*Gamma Chapter*)

RUSTHALL ARTS FESTIVAL

Our President, Liz Malik, welcomed Suzy Phillips, who is one of the coordinators of the Rusthall Arts Festival which took place recently. She had kindly stepped in to replace Lisa Beaumont. Suzy gave a brief description of her training at Bishop Otter College, and working life as a teacher and artist. She has been a management consultant and trainer in the NHS, and undertaken substantial one to one coaching.

Suzy has just retired, and is able to give more time to voluntary pursuits. She has tried to make the Festival more inclusive and varied, with music, dance, theatre, art, nature, oral and local history, and wellbeing. There was also a comedy session, with improvisation from the audience, and the `Inside Out` Disney film. There were some outdoor events: a quarry, a trail, archaeologists talking about finds, including some from Southborough. They had a Sunday barn dance, with a ceilidh band and a caller, which 40-50 people attended and appealed to all ages – everything was free. There were young families and children as well as older people.

Next time they plan to do something in care homes, or try to get some residents out to events. The funding comes from the Parish Council, local donations, shops, cafes, and Tunbridge Wells Council. They needed to pay for the barn dance, hall hire, and cost of printing leaflets, but everyone gives their time free. Some groups continue throughout the year: films, salsa, art, crochet, knitting, written word group. A local pub hosts music and quizzes.

Diane Billam (*Gamma Chapter*)



Suzy Phillips with Carole Stirling

WOMEN AVIATORS MAKING HISTORY IN AIR AND SPACE

We always enjoy Anna Astin's interesting talks, and this was no exception, particularly in view of the fascinating pictures she shows us. The first recorded ascent by a woman was Elizabeth Thible in Paris in 1784, who went up dressed as Minerva in an untethered hot air balloon. Sophie Blanchard helped Napoleon with his invasion plans, ascending 60 times to give an oversight of defences. She died in 1819 in a ball of flame after lighting fireworks in a hot air balloon! Contesse Raymond de Laroche achieved a nonstop 4 hour powered flight as early as 1909. She was killed in 1919 and is still celebrated by women aviators.

The first woman to gain a pilot's licence ran a Flying School at Brooklands, and also an aviation factory which built 800 planes before WW1. The first black American woman pilot, Bessie Coleman, had worked in the cotton fields as a child, and had to go to France to gain a pilot's licence as it was impossible in the US at the time. The first really famous woman aviator was Amy Johnson, who gained her licence in 1929, and also had an engineer's licence, which was unusual for a woman, She flew to Australia in 1930, crash-landed in Darwin, and undertook flights to Japan and Moscow. She married the air ace, Jim Mollison, and joined the Air Transport Auxiliary during WW2. Amelia Earhart was another inspiration to girls, who saved up for flying lessons, took a bus then a 4 km walk to her lessons – her teacher was a woman! She became a member of 'The 99', a group of women flyers, and flew transatlantic, landing in Derry, NI. She lectured extensively on aeronautics, went round the world in 1937, and crashed on a desert island.

In the Air Transport Auxiliary in WW2 women flew every type of plane from Lancaster bombers to Spitfires, but did not take part in combat operations. They would fly from the factory or repair to the airfield. Jackie Coleman flew the first jet plane. Joy Lofthouse of the ATA died only recently. She had flown 20 different kinds of plane, and was paid the same as the men, very unusual for the time. Pauline Gower flew at 21, and set up a flying school, and a taxi service, as well as being an engineer. America had over 1000 women pilots delivering planes, and in Russia Marina Raskova joined the Russian equivalent in 1933. The Russians had 3 combat regiments of women flyers. Hannah Reich was a German test pilot in helicopters, and gained the Iron Cross.

In civilian planes women air hostesses took the place of men after WW1. They needed nursing qualifications, and there were many restrictions, but the jobs were highly sought after, with the possibility of marrying a pilot! Valentina Tereshkova was the first woman astronaut in space in 1963. The Russians beat

the Americans to it, achieving 48 orbits this time, although their bad landing was kept quiet, and was re-enacted the next day as though it was the real thing. There were 2 women in the crew of Challenger, which exploded killing all 7 crew during the launch. There have been 60 women in space so far, and there are 70 women out of 1790 pilots in the RAF now, as well as many ground crew. Easyjet has lead the way in using women pilots on their flights, in fact I had a women pilot on one of my 6 flights out of Gatwick this year! It is known as the Amy Johnson initiative, and they offer 12 scholarships a year for women to train with them. On one recent occasion the Royal Brunei Airline flew with an all-women crew to Saudi Arabia – where of course women are not yet even allowed to drive a car! I wonder if there was a message there somewhere?

Diane Billam (*Gamma Chapter*)

GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT

The Autumn issue of GB news was especially interesting for me and I have enjoyed reading it several times. Not being fit enough to travel to Tallinn was extremely disappointing after all the preparation and expectation of experiencing such a wonderful country as well as another opportunity to attend another regional conference. I heard many stories of the adventures of Gamma members but was also able to gain a real flavour of everyone's enthusiasm and enjoyment through their descriptive articles. I should love to have heard the music and singing and seen the dancing for myself but am pleased that everyone enjoyed the experience so much.

Our most recent speaker, Margaret Sargent, was pleased to take a copy of GB News to pass on to friends who might be interested in seeing it. When I see past speakers or visitors they usually ask what's going on with us and remark on the friendliness and comradely welcome they experienced. Most of the connections I make at U3A and other places are retired, very busy with lots of activities and involved with the upbringing of grandchildren. However we keep positive about the future and continue to keep this wonderful organisation alive.

Liz Malik (*Gamma Chapter President*)

Our next meeting is on **January 20th** at Beechwood School when Alan Archer will speak about the work of the *Quicken Trust* in Uganda. Other meeting dates are **February 24th**, **March 17th** and **April 21st** at Beechwood School.



STATE PRESIDENT 2017-2019

Kathy Hodgson
18 Alliance Way
Paddock Wood
Tonbridge TN12 6TY
kathrintn12@gmail.com

ALPHA CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2016-2018

Barbara Kern
22 Queensthorpe Road
Sydenham London SE26 4PH
kernb_j@yahoo.co.uk

GAMMA CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2016-2018

Liz Malik
Chilston House Flat B
Pembury Road
Tunbridge Wells TN2 3QN
elizabethandfarid@btinternet.com

EDITORIAL TEAM

Diane Billam, Diana Bell

DISTRIBUTION

Kathy Hodgson

PRINTER

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

DKG WEBSITES

www.dkggb.org.uk
www.dkg.org
www.dkgeurope.org

Mission Statement

The Delta Kappa Gamma Society International promotes professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.