



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS  
**DELTA KAPPA GAMMA**

## **GREAT BRITAIN NEWS**



**Summer 2017**

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**Many of us are looking forward to attending the DKG European Regional Conference, from 26—29 July 2017, in Tallinn, Estonia.**

**Tours information is on page 15.**

**If you have not yet signed up, do think of joining us! We can look forward to a great welcome from our Estonian sisters, and it's a beautiful country with a fascinating history. Do come along!**

This edition includes reports from our Conference held in Greenwich in April. What a great success it was! There are also reports about the activities of our Chapters, both talks and outings, and the promise of things to come in the summer.

Many of us will be attending the DKG European Regional Conference in Tallinn, Estonia, in July, where we can look forward to a range of interesting talks, social events and tours. Our Autumn edition of GB News will hopefully contain a number of reports on what we have seen and done there, so that those who could not attend can still get a flavour of events. I shall, as usual, be asking people later on to prepare reports on this and on summer Chapter events.

The deadline for contributions is the end of September; in Word please, with reports and any photos (always welcome!) attached to an email.

My apologies to those who contributed this time and found their report has been edited down, there was a lot to fit in!

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Front cover photograph of Greenwich taken by Brigitte Wichmann.

## Kathy Hodgson

### STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT 2015—2017



Gardening is great balm for the soul – and the nerves! Either side of our State Conference in Greenwich (about which you will read later), I was blighted by the failure of those twin evils – the printer and the email! Fortunately, my sense of equilibrium was restored by some extremely clement weather (they say the sun shines on the righteous) and three days of continuous gardening. During this time, I was able to reflect upon the work of our marvellous speakers from the conference, who work with people who, for a variety of reasons, have had to leave their home countries. Once again, the audience was enthralled and moved by the stories they heard. My printer and email difficulties faded into insignificance in comparison.

Looking back over the past two years, I wonder how it has been possible to fit in so much in such a short time. The challenges have been great, but the rewards even greater. Those of you who know me well will be aware of the many and varied opportunities DKG has given me through my joint roles as Chapter Member, State President, Chair of the European Forum, my third year as a member of the International Finance Committee and, of course, my two weeks at the University of Texas for the LMS (Golden Gift Seminar). This has necessitated a great deal of travel – Austin, Texas (many times); Nashville, Tennessee; Borås, Sweden; and Oslo. Who would have thought that a reluctant flyer would be clambering aboard planes on their own, without a murmur (no-one to complain to, you see!)

One major sad event this year has been the demise of Beta Chapter; Jess Curtis and Gail Gladwin worked hard to try to keep the chapter going, taking on responsibility for all things administrative, pertaining to running a chapter. In the end, following a meeting that I attended last September in Plymouth, it was decided that the chapter should be dissolved. Two members – Jess and Zoe Newman – decided to remain as Reserve members, and we welcome them to Gamma Chapter. I would like, formally, to extend my thanks to Jess and Gail for their hard work and commitment for so many years.

I had thought that this would be my final report as State President but, unfortunately, the reluctance of people to take on positions of responsibility at both chapter and state level continues. As a result, both Evelyn Goodsell and I

agreed to be nominated to stand as Vice-President and President for another biennium. This is not an action that we will repeat, so please think carefully about taking on these roles. Both Evelyn and I are happy to involve potential replacements in our activities, shadowing what we do, so that they have an idea of the requirements of the roles.

This July, I will be attending State Presidents' training in Tallinn, Estonia, and am very much looking forward to visiting a city I have never seen before, and which I probably would never have travelled to, had it not been for DKG. You see, DKG can offer so much.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you for your support over the past two years – it really has been greatly appreciated.

***Kathrin Hodgson***

## CONFERENCE VENUE AND DINNER

What a wonderful choice of venue for our conference! A warm and helpful welcome from the staff at the Devonport Hotel in Greenwich, and an excellent room for our conference. There was plenty of space for the committee to prepare their display, and for members to introduce and thank our excellent speakers. A very good lunch was provided, plenty of choice and staff pleasant and willing to help.

Many of us then went on for dinner at the `Plume of Feathers` - interesting to find out that King William the Third had been on the throne when the pub was opened! It was a beautiful evening as we walked across the park to the pub, with the wonderful array of buildings in Greenwich looking their best in the sunshine. The pub is obviously very popular, and it had an excellent menu from which to choose. I was not particularly hungry after a very large lunch, but enjoyed my soup, cool white wine, and listening to the conversations about the day and the venue.

***Mary Wardrop (Gamma Chapter)***

## THE GREAT BRITAIN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD 2017

The Great Britain Achievement Award is our way of honouring a member for something special. The Award comprises a rose brooch in silver and amber, and is given biennially. There had been seven recipients who received the Award at our Annual General Meeting, Joan Carroll, of Alpha Chapter, being the recipient two years ago. Nominations are sent in to the Chair, who then duly tallies the votes cast.



*Evelyn Goodsell  
receives her award  
from Kathy Hodgson,  
our State President*

The citation this time spoke of 'a very active member, who takes on responsibilities at every level, with willingness and initiative.'

She has raised the profile of Great Britain in numerous ways. She is calm without fuss, going about DKG business willingly and whole heartedly, without ever expecting special praise or reward.

Our member has presented workshops at International and Regional Conferences. She has worked on an International Committee, and been an International Speaker twice. She has recently published an article in DKG's eminent publication, 'Collegial Exchange', setting out Gamma Chapter's work with the Pestalozzi International Village as a collaborative learning experience.'

By this time we knew that the recipient of the GB Achievement Award for 2017 was Evelyn Goodsell. There was great applause as Evelyn came forward to be presented with her award by our State President.

***Mary Wardrop*** (Chair, Scholarships and Awards Committee)

## THE EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG ASYLUM SEEKERS AND THE IMPACT OF THESE ON THEIR ABILITY TO ACCESS EDUCATION

There is hardly a day goes by without an article in the popular press about migration and asylum seekers. We only hear of the sensational cases where people have been found illegally entering Britain in the back of lorries, the 'army' waiting to invade from the other side of the channel, or that a child refugee is actually an adult, causing all kinds of problems for his adoptive family. We hear of the cost to the health service and social services. All are cases of anonymous beings that are hard to relate to. Nothing is ever reported of the challenges that displaced people have faced, or have to face, and how their traumatic lives have impacted upon their ability to assimilate into our world.

We also never hear of the work that people such as Louise Fahey are doing to help the young people so that they can fit into our education system. Louise changed all of that for me, last year, when she spoke of the experiences of traumatized young asylum seekers she had worked with for a comic relief project. The project involved looking at the mental health of young asylum seekers and the effect this had upon their ability to access education. Her presentation dealt chiefly with the theory relating to the provision of the support she was providing.

As a follow on, this year we were given a 'hands on' experience. The materials that Louise used in her work could be used not just for asylum seekers, but also for all people from traumatized backgrounds, which affects their ability to assimilate knowledge and help them learn. We began with the 'Blob Tree' an activity Louise uses with both young people and adults of all ages, all cultures, and all genders regardless of their background. She considers this a brilliant conversation opener. A 'Blob Tree'- a tree with blob people placed on the branches, looking happy, sad, frightened etc. We were asked to look at the tree and decide which blob we felt represented us right now, which blob we would like to be and which blob person was in a place we would avoid. No explanations were required as to our choices. Totally engaged I realized that this was an excellent way to explore issues without any particular agenda. This was exactly what Louise wanted us to see.

Traumatized youngsters often find it difficult to open up and talk about feelings and Louise finds this activity takes the young person's focus away from their own feelings. Together they talk about the blobs avoiding all direct questions to

open up a dialogue that is not restrictive. Asking general questions about how the blobs feel provides a safe way to explore emotions providing the young people with an opportunity to open up about their own feelings when they are ready to. Always used with a big pot of colours, which opens up other avenues to talk about. Louise also has a box of blob people. These are used in a similar way.

Two other important aids that Louise has are:

A box of blocks to make pictures and patterns. Many of the young people she meets have not received the whole of the primary school experience and they have missed out on some basic problem solving experiences vital for their integration into secondary school. Making pictures and patterns with the blocks provides this experience.

A globe. Most of the young people don't actually know where they have come from or how they have got to Britain. They remember only bits of the journey and that they have travelled through countries. The globe helps them to understand their journey, it give them a focus to keep things together.

Next we were given some case studies to identify the traumas and losses experienced and the type of asylum seeker. People are categorized under the headings of asylum seeker, failed asylum seeker, forced migrant, economic migrant, refugee, and child who has been trafficked.

As the young asylum seekers' traumas cannot be overcome quickly we were also asked to identify the resilience factor in each case, this is an important item to enable teachers to work on their strengths. Thinking about all the things that make them feel positive helps but there is a difficult balance of letting go of trauma, whilst not forgetting the positive things in the past.



Dorcas Rogers thanks Louisa Fahey with a gift

Many young refugees and migrants suffer triple traumatisation, the lists are long in all the categories: pre migration, peri migration and post migration. It could begin with war, with the death of family and friends to sexual abuse, followed by complete life changes and the dangers of the journey to the traumas of confusion with the different culture of Europe, anxiety about the future, coping with a new language and racism. The losses are numerous, obvious ones such as friends, family, language and culture, less obvious such as control over life choices and dignity. Peri migration trauma can be as significant as pre migration trauma, with agents facilitating rape of both boys and girls saying that their parents did not pay enough for their passage. Post migration trauma is when they don't have a sense of safety as their case could be rejected. This is further complicated by rigid parenting styles, worries of parents that the child does not respect its own culture and reluctance in allowing girls to integrate.

The case studies were troubling to read:

A refugee from Syria aged 17. Picked up walking along the side of a motorway after making his way overland through Turkey and Greece, working to pay agents for his passage. In seeking asylum as a refugee, the refugee must prove that he is personally persecuted; it's not enough that there is a war in your country, you must personally be at risk and this is very difficult to prove.

A Kurdish/Iranian boy whose brother was hanged and his father imprisoned for speaking out against the government. Having left Iran he was made stateless as the Iranian government said they would not allow him to enter the country if he was forcibly sent back. Turned out of his house at the behest of the Home Office he lives on the streets. I was surprised to learn that there are 8,000 stateless persons currently living in the UK.

Another highlighted the plight of a 13 year old girl brought to the UK at the age of nine, after being separated from her mother four years earlier. She spoke of moving many times, of beatings and being locked in a room alone. Because of violent outbursts she risks being excluded from the school she attends.

Children under the age of 12 are given an automatic place in school; however, there is nothing in school records that identifies them as asylum seekers. Schools will only find out when behaviour problems show up. The work Louise does with the older children is completely financed through charity.

Most of the case studies dealt with boys as girls seldom get to leave as they are kept indoors in the places of origin like Afghanistan because of the Taliban. Girls

cannot travel alone in these cultures and there is much exploitation on the journey. When they do arrive you find specific additional traumas they have suffered: FMG, forced marriage, child marriage, sexual abuse, rape and greater risk of trafficking.

Louise's understanding of and dedication to the work was plain for all to see. I was conscious of the huge problems to be surmounted and how everything had to be done slowly and with care and that some problems were so great they could never be dealt with fully. She completed her presentation by highlighting the importance of self-care. As workers they are dealing with loss and unspeakable trauma on a daily basis and they need to take time to talk to others about the impact of the work upon themselves and hold on to the positives of what they are doing.

Thank you Louise for sharing this project with us. You have given us a lot to think about.

***Lavinia Soul (Alpha Chapter)***



Louise gets members working on case studies!  
We could see how she enthuses her classes.

## SUPPORTING YOUNG ASYLUM SEEKERS IN CANTERBURY

Like Jessica, whose session is reported on page 13, Anne Hardy is working in Canterbury with Kent Refugee Action Network whose vision is to help young people who have sought refuge in UK to have a sense of belonging and give hope for a better future. Anne was introduced, along with Jessica, by Sandra.

Anne entitled her talk 'A Canterbury Tale: Teaching Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children' and invited any of us to come to Canterbury and help with the teaching or mentoring. Her daughter, Rosie, who had come with her, was first a mentor at KRAN then got a job there. Anne had taught at a private school but decided that she could do this job at KRAN after retiring. During her teaching career she had taken a Masters in EOSL (English to speakers of other languages) so was well suited to teach these children.

Anne set herself to provide for us the context in which she works and to describe some of the young people. She also wanted to describe the curriculum that has evolved and to introduce some challenges and successes. She compared typical British teenagers with the asylum seekers, pointing out that British teenagers mainly live with family, having meals cooked and washing done; they often have their own bedroom and usually get pocket money. They have access to TV, PCs and other electronic gadgets. Most important, British teenagers have had the benefit of twelve years of full time education and have developed ways of working in school.

Asylum seekers or refugees are all different. In Anne's classes there are children from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, Albania and Vietnam; they are nearly all boys. They tend to mix with those from their own culture. Educational background varies from normal high school to basic primary without foreign languages. Or they may have only been to a Madrasa school which is based on the Koran. They may have had no schooling at all – these mainly come from Afghanistan where there is about 70% illiteracy. They may have no idea of how to do schoolwork and this might even be their first experience of writing!

For asylum seekers or refugees 'family life' may be with a foster carer or may be independent living with social services acting as 'corporate parent'. Most only see their social worker at six weekly intervals. A red letter day could be when given a bus pass! Emotionally the children can be lonely, angry, anxious, depressed, negative, positive, sad or happy. Anne tries to build up a rapport and

relax with the children. The children may have trouble with sleeping or stay up very late then have no time for breakfast. If they have experienced starvation they may still eat poorly and Anne brings bananas and food to school to start off the day. They don't know many young people to make friends with - but as they learn English may make British friends outside school. They generally retain their religion which can be a comfort; Canterbury has facilities such as a mosque, and a Christian Orthodox church. Thus they can join with others of the same faith and this helps to maintain their culture.

At KRAN the school day starts at 9am. Teaching begins at 9.30, with two 45 minute periods, a 20-minute break, and two further periods, finishing at 1pm. There are two full time teachers. Lessons include normal subjects like English, maths, art, etc. plus life skills like simple cooking, laundry, budgeting, paying bills. British values like tolerance, freedom of speech, democracy, rule of law, and equal opportunities are mentioned. Getting the level right is difficult as basic literacy is so variable; small group work, e.g. with volunteers is very valuable. Working together in teams is another strategy. Afternoon can involve individual work, or activities. Sometimes appropriate films like 'Bend it like Beckham' or 'Fawlty Towers' are shown; these are popular and provoke relevant discussion. A visit from a community police liaison officer is good as the students can have a negative attitude to the police also this gives a taste of 'their community'.



*Anne Hardy addresses the group*

During the first term they learn about classroom rules, form filling, jobs and careers, CVs and interviews, IT literacy, safety in the work place, on the road and at home, health - including visits to doctors, nurses and dentists and looking after oneself. School premises involve part of a Victorian church hall. This has flaws but space can be extended by sometimes using a small adjacent room or by teaching in a corridor. The students are motivated by their aspirations towards the future; opportunities exist such as a college course, apprenticeship or employment (depending on status). Anne spoke with great enthusiasm and was thanked by Dorcas Rogers.

**Pat Johnson** (Gamma Chapter)



Anne Hardy, left, and Jessica Maddocks, ask us a question: What is the future for asylum seekers in this country?

They have given us so much to think about!

Penny Kinnear, centre left, presented the gifts to thank them.

Members relax in the comfortable lounge before the conference. What an excellent venue!



## **Anna Evans: Canterbury Award Recipient 2017**

Anna Evans was the recipient of this year's Canterbury Award. The Award is to go towards a needy and aspirational student from Haiti who is studying for his M.Ed. Anna has sponsored his education for some time and has been very impressed by his dedication.

**Mary Wardrop** (Chair *Scholarships and Awards Committee*).



## KENT REFUGEE ACTIVITIES NETWORK

Jessica Maddocks told us how fortunate she had been to live with refugees in Palestine and gained a sense of their issues and needs.

She then proceeded to give us an overview of her present work with KRAN (Kent Refugee Activities Network). This is a Charity based in Canterbury and she is the 'Communication & Development Manager'. The aim is to help unaccompanied refugees, aged 16-18, gain access to essential services. They come from a wide range of countries and are escaping from religious and racial persecution.

They are given twenty hours of classroom based activities per week. The project is to provide a comprehensive skills programme: literacy, numeracy, social and cultural. Priority is given to those without a college place. Those awaiting foster care are welcome if space allows. They must also live within daily travelling distance of Canterbury City centre. Classes are held in the local Baptist Church, Monday-Thursday, 9.30am-1.30pm. The students are expected to attend regularly and for full sessions, fifty weeks of the year. They are taught English Language (at all levels), everyday maths, food hygiene & cooking, personal health & safety, art, music, gardening, sports, and IT. Emphasis is placed on helping them to cope with independent living and the British way of life. At times, outside organisations offer the opportunity of trips to outside places of interest.



The Charity is supported by Comic Relief, Children in Need and Lloyds Bank. Jessica was very enthusiastic about her work helping to solve refugees' issues and encouraged others to come forward to help with this worthwhile task.

***Evelyn Goodsell (Gamma Chapter)***

*Photos of Jessica Maddocks and Anne Hardy are by Bettina Kulsdom*

## MUSIC FROM HAYMANOT TESFA

We were very privileged to have the beautiful and talented Haymanot Tesfa sing and play several songs from her homeland of Ethiopia for us. Haymanot is a painter and singer who fled Ethiopia in 2003 and sought asylum in England.

After a difficult journey, helped by the charity 'Freedom from Torture', she now has permanent leave to remain in the UK. Although we were unable to understand the actual words of her three songs, as she sang in her native 'Amharic' tongue, we were left in no doubt about the sentiments and emotions of the songs. Sometimes they were pensive, sad or nostalgic and sung almost at a whisper. At other times the mood changed to playful, joyful and triumphant. Whatever the emotion, she seemed to pour her whole being into her singing. I certainly experienced goose bumps listening to the sadness of some of her singing.

She played her 'Krar' to accompany her first two songs. The 'krar' is very different from our western instruments and bore a very slight resemblance to a small primitive harp with a drum at its base. It consisted of 6 strings which she plucked, sometimes strongly and at others so gently and slowly. The 'drum' was a round based metal bowl, covered in a goat's skin. Haymanot explained that her first song, 'Ambasa' was about life in an Ethiopian village of that name, with the lyrics written by a friend; the second was her own composition and the third was a country song, which she sang without accompaniment. Last October, during National Refugee Week, she sang solo at a big rally in Parliament Square.

After this memorable performance, Liz Malik presented her with flower seeds for her balcony and a wonderful cushion which she had knitted using jewel coloured silk strips from old Indian saris. The brilliant colours seemed such a perfect match for an amazing lady.

**Sheila Roberts** (*Gamma Chapter*)

*(Photos on page 15 by Bettina Kulsdom: Haymanot playing her Krar, Haymanot with her presents from Liz Malik — see fourth paragraph above – and Evelyn admires Haymanot's beautiful musical instrument).*



## **DKG European Region Conference in Tallinn, Estonia: Tours**

Full descriptions via this link: <http://erc2017.weebly.com/tours.html>

July 25th: Lahemaa National Park with Palmse Maor.

July 26th: Tallinn Old Town walking tour.

July 29th: Tallin Old Town walking tour plus Kadriorg Park.

July 30th: Full day trip to Muhu and Saaremaa islands.

## MUSIC THERAPY, ITS VALUE AND ITS TECHNIQUES

The Beginning:

*“In 1959 American composer and pianist Paul Nordoff and special education teacher Clive Robbins developed a new form of collaborative music-making to engage vulnerable and isolated children, which they termed ‘therapy in music’. (Nordoff Robbins web site).*

After an excellent “Bring and Share” lunch at Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Lindsay McHale treated us to an engaging and informative presentation explaining Music Therapy, its uses, benefits, techniques and successes. After working in marketing for the music industry for ten years, Lindsay, an Oxford music graduate, quit her job after attending an inspiring conference on music therapy at Nordoff Robbins and began their training. Two years later, after gaining a masters degree in Music Therapy, she began work with Nordoff Robbins, becoming the head of Music Services for Inner London and the South East. After eight years of service and needing a new challenge Lindsay has recently left this post to work as the U.K. and International Programme Manager for “Music as Therapy International.”



*Claire Purcell thanks Lindsay McHale, right.*

Lindsay began her presentation by showing us a video of Nordoff and Robbins in action; Paul Nordoff was playing the piano in accompaniment to a child on the drums. He moulded his use of rhythm to the rhythm the child was producing, turning what sounded like discordant bangs into an interesting piece of music. Using music, Nordoff and Robbins developed a way of working with children with special needs. Initially they visited children in their homes. The benefits were soon obvious: better self-control, increased concentration and social awareness. They looked at the person as a whole and used the music to develop his abilities, using what a child could do, not what it couldn't do.

There are three main definitions of Music therapy, united by the belief in the power of music to affect us on a deep level regardless of illness or disability. Practically, it is the specialist use of music to help people with a wide range of needs from a child with autism to the adult with mental health issues. To help us understand how Nordoff Robbins music therapists work Lindsay showed us four

videos. Each dealt with a different age group and problem, seeing the therapists at work, revealing their techniques and expertise and the amazing outcomes for the patients.

I was particularly impressed how the use of song helped to unlock the memories of a dementia sufferer enabling a daughter to continue to have a relationship with her mother, and how the quality of life for a family with two autistic boys improved immensely after therapy. You can view these videos along with many more on the Nordoff Robbins web site. You can see that therapy builds relationships through music. The therapist encourages active participation through improvisation, using instruments or song, whatever works for the person involved. Anyone can make a referral if they think music therapy would benefit the recipient and that music therapy is free of charge at all Nordoff Robbins centres.

After the video presentation, Lindsey explained the work of Music Therapy International, the company she has just joined. This work began in Romania 20 years ago treating troubled orphans, an international organisation using music therapy to help people worldwide in places such as Ethiopia, India and Palestine. The organisation is based upon skill sharing where the therapists work to improve the skills of the resident staff in these areas to enhance their care programmes. They provide distance learning programmes besides sending therapists to locations where they are needed. They have also set up a project teaching UK teachers how to use interactive music making. Having only worked for the company for four weeks, Lindsey has already travelled to and been involved in a distance learning project in Romania and a skill sharing project in a Dementia care home. She has also travelled to Fort William to witness the skill sharing projects in a centre for adults with physical and learning difficulties.

Lindsay's passion for the benefits of music therapy was evident throughout her presentation and we were all enthused to take part in the closing, discussion/question and answer session, which left us wanting to know more. Thank you Lindsay for the time you gave us.

Both Nordoff Robbins and Music Therapy International are registered charities. They receive no government funding and rely on donations to continue their life changing work.

**Lavinia Soul** (*Alpha Chapter*)

**(Editor's note:** *Lavinia's report has had to be shortened because of space: if you would like a copy of the original longer version, please ask me).*

## SUSSEX MODERNISM

The Alpha visit to 2 Temple Place to see the Sussex Modernism exhibition was only expected to be attended by a small group as Saturdays in March were very busy for most members. It developed into a comedy of errors however, with misunderstandings about meeting time and missed phone calls. The result was 2 members visited the exhibition in the morning and a further 2 in the afternoon.

Quite apart from any exhibition, 2 Temple Place, close to the Inns of Court, is well worth a visit, for its architectural eccentricity and its neo-Gothic interior. The house was built and owned by William Waldorf Astor but now belongs to The Bulldog Trust and is only open to the public at limited times during the year, but its annual winter exhibition from January to April offers a good opportunity to visit.

This year's exhibition contained works of art, craft, sculpture, literature and memorabilia from museums and galleries around Sussex where so many artists, writers, poets and craftsmen gravitated to live and work throughout the twentieth century. What was surprising to me was just how many of the greats of twentieth century cultural life spent time and worked in Sussex, from W.B. Yeats, Henry Moore and Picasso to Ezra Pound, Paul Nash, Dali, Ravilious and many more. The work that particularly caught our attention was that of Hans Feibusch, who came to this country as a refugee before the Second World War. Alpha members have seen his murals at Holy Trinity Church Rotherhithe where we frequently hold chapter meetings in the Church Hall.



Coincidentally, while we were at the exhibition looking at letters from P.L.Travers, another writer drawn to Sussex, a film unit was outside shooting the New Mary Poppins Film. Sussex obviously has an inspiring atmosphere to have drawn so many creative people to live and work there, as this exhibition demonstrates.

*Joan Carroll (Alpha Chapter)*

View of 2 Temple Place.  
Photo by Diana Bell

## OVERSEAS STUDENTS VISIT GAMMA CHAPTER

Chapter President Liz introduced our Speakers, Nick Yan, Tim Chong, (students from Hong Kong) Solomiia Zakharkov, (from the Ukraine) and Santiago (from Mexico). The students were spending time at Beechwood School, mostly to improve their language skills but also to experience the life and culture of our country. As each student was introduced they gave a short history of their lives and why they were over here. They were then prepared to answer questions from the members. We learned that they were extremely talented in languages - Solomiia was fluent in five languages! All the students spoke with great confidence and were completely focussed on what they wanted/expected to achieve. We discovered that they were all intending to follow the Arts in further education.

We were also lucky enough to have students from Pestalozzi, Shaylynne V McKop and Blessing Kando (students from Zimbabwe), and Tenzin Choden from Tibet. They had the opportunity to tell us something of themselves and how they came to be in England. We discovered that these students were all hoping to go down the path of Maths and Sciences, which would prove to be very beneficial when they returned to their countries. All too soon time ran out. There were so many questions still to be asked and it was so interesting to listen to such articulate, confident young people.

Ros Price gave the vote of thanks and presented the students with chocolates and biscuits.

**Evelyn Goodsell** (Gamma Chapter)



*The photo above shows Nick and Tim from Hong Kong, Santiago from Mexico, and Solomiia from Ukraine, all studying at Beechwood School*

*The photo below shows Shaylynne and Blessing from Zimbabwe, and Tenzin from Tibet, all studying at Pestalozzi*



## EDUCATION OTHERWISE

At the February meeting of Gamma Chapter, Sandra explained that she had some years ago carried out research into Home Schooling. She was therefore particularly pleased to introduce Jane, who had come to talk to us about schooling her son at home. Her son is 14 years old, and had spent an unhappy 2 years at a local secondary school. He has been diagnosed as having the Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), which led to a number of problems in coping in primary school, and has worsened since he moved on to secondary school. He is in the process of being officially assessed, but it all takes a very long time. He shows the usual OCD symptom of rituals, and also has difficulty communicating. He did have counselling for a year, but as this is confidential there was no feed-back to the parents.

*Jane with Gamma Member Marian Bowles discussing the issues involved in home schooling a child*



He has always been sensitive, and would come home from school crying, having been swearing and hitting out. He had previously said he hated the pupils, but it seemed to worsen when he said he hated the teachers at the school.

At home they cover 7 subjects. He has tutors for 3 subjects, in Maths, Science and ICT, and is taking an online English course, hopefully leading to GCSE this summer. Additional problems are dyspraxia and poor co-ordination. There is a very good Kent HomeEd network with 1500 members, and a Facebook group. They have not deregistered him from school, as they fear a visit from the local authority if they do so. Her son is fairly active socially, and plays football with HomeEd each week. He also does trampolining and badminton, and they get a discount on a number of activities such as swimming at Tonbridge School. There is something on every day in Kent, but he does not like to try new groups. He does, however, have a group of 5 friends locally, neighbours, from church and school, and he seems to be the one who organises activities.

He is up and dressed every morning by 7.30. They use BBC Bite-Size for Geography and History. He loves his Science lessons, and has caught up in Maths. He spends rather too much time on his Xbox, in particular playing FIFA Manager with friends. Jane said that concerns about their son had placed a good deal of stress on her husband and herself. Luckily they both have jobs which they enjoy, although Jane can only do two days a week. Jane gave us a very honest view of the pressures of dealing with her son, and trying to find ways through the maze of provision. They now hope to get him a place in a special school next September. Carole presented Jane with a beautiful plant and expressed our thanks for what she had told us.

***Diane Billam*** (*Gamma Chapter*)

**Note from Liz Malik** (Gamma Chapter President):

Our members were interested to hear such a moving story of the effect on children who don't fit the mould of modern education. Home schooling was not an easy undertaking for the parents and wider family.

From a mutual friend I have heard that Jane was extremely touched by the engagement and valuable contribution of our group and found the morning very helpful. She was impressed with our knowledge and expertise. Marian spent some time with Jane afterwards (see photo) and has given her contact number for further information and support. I feel it was a valuable morning all round with very positive feedback. Thank you, Sandra!

## ALPHA CHAPTER SUMMER MEETINGS

**10 June 2017:** Visit the Woodberry Wetlands, a newly developed wetlands area in Hackney, amidst the heavily built up areas of Manor House and Stoke Newington. It was the Stoke Newington East and West Reservoirs 1833. Ten minutes walk from Manor House tube (Piccadilly Line), the wetlands were opened in 2016.

**First week in July:** Annual visit to the Royal Society's Science Exhibition (date to be confirmed).

**15 July 2017:** Summer outing: visit to Cambridge to include the Fitzwilliam Museum.

***Barbara Kern*** (*Chapter President*)

## DAME HELENA SHOVELTON

Dame Helena was introduced by Liz Malik, Gamma Chapter President. Liz had been given helpful advice when she first began her experience at the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Tunbridge Wells. A nervous start for Liz, but an excellent training for many years, with our speaker supporting and encouraging Liz from the beginning. Dame Helena described her own early years with 3 sisters and herself the fourth and youngest at a well known Girls' School in North London, At 8 years old Helena suffered from rheumatic fever. She explained how her very able father with four daughters and no sons made her own life rather difficult. Helena was especially interested in current affairs, then changed to commerce and business studies which she also found absorbing. Working in accountancy in Carnaby Street and in a management job pleased Helena, but not her father.

The death of Kennedy in America and other events in the world changed in subsequent years. Helena married Patrick, and he was instrumental in encouraging her while she developed her skills with the new computer system. During a number of difficulties, Helena disagreed with the dishonourable management where she was working, so she looked for another role more suitable for her. However, in 2009 there was a most important change in her life. Helena was soon able to use her skill and experience in industrial tribunals, and worked in that capacity for a very long time, so much so that Helena's reputation for integrity is so well known nationally that it is no wonder that she has received eminent honours for so many years. Her advice to her audience as she concluded was very wise: **'Keep going back to what you know is true'**. Dame Helena was an outstanding visitor and speaker.



*The photo (by the Editor) shows Liz Malik and Carole Stirling thanking Dame Helena*

*Mary Wardrop (Gamma Chapter)*

## GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT

Drawing on different groups and ages of people for our talks has created a lively and fascinating insight into education past and present. Students from around the world studying at Pestalozzi and Beechwood School gave us a true picture

through their eyes of the countries they come from and the experience of studying here. The thirteen year old boy from Mexico was entertaining and, I felt, particularly perceptive, as was the eighteen year old student from the Ukraine who spoke five languages. They have all observed the English very carefully and are all enjoying the opportunity to be in this country.

The struggles of Jane, who had in desperation taken her very unhappy and disturbed thirteen year old son out of school, were particularly moving. With financial as well as physical constraints I was very impressed by her commitment and strength to make a good job of home schooling. With the support of family and private tutors there was improvement in the emotional state of her son. Jane felt safe in our group to explore her own feelings around this issue and Marian offered further help and support.

Dame Helena Shovelton, who was the Manager of Tunbridge Wells Citizens Advice Bureau when I started volunteering there, came to talk to us about her career. I found her a very forceful, strong personality to work for but when she began to describe her childhood and early adult years her determination was obviously born out of the difficult times she experienced. Helena was the third of four girls born to a father who it seems would have liked four boys! The encouragement and recognition of her ability from her husband Patrick gave Helena the confidence to achieve so much in the many roles of her career. Further details of all three talks are on the previous pages.

Our State Conference, ably organised by Kathy in Greenwich was a memorable occasion and a great success. It was heart warming to hear from the young women working with such dedication to teach and help asylum and refugees arriving from troubled parts of the world. I was pleased that my friend Haymanot Tesfa was willing to come to play and sing for us. She presented us with a flavour of Ethiopia and showed an aspect of herself to us as well.

### **Summer Outings:**

**15 June: Normans Bay**, hosted by Bettina Kulsdom.

**13 July: Jerwood Gallery, Hastings**, exhibition of Quentin Blake, 'The only way to travel' and others. Followed by fish and chips.

**24 August: Ditchling Museum, Hassocks, BN6 8SP.** Eric Gill, 'The Body'.

**We usually meet at 11 am.**

*Liz Malik (Chapter President)*

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**Mission Statement**

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