



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

## **GREAT BRITAIN NEWS**



**SPRING 2015**

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This edition exemplifies the range of activities and contacts which come about through DKG, and emphasises the benefits of membership.

Sheila Roberts' piece on Membership on page 11 sets out the case for all of us trying to find other people to join us. Please do your best!

This edition sets out information on our own GB State Conference in March in London, and the European Conference in Sweden, as well as reminding members on page 19 about the Conferences held by other European DKG States. Those of us who have been to some of them can assure you that it is well worth getting your act together to attend: look up the details on the various State websites, where you will usually find a registration form as well as full details.

I hope you enjoy this edition, and that it will encourage you to think about contributions you might be able to make to the next edition. This will include full reports on our GB State Conference activities. Please let me have any contributions by 23 April, in Word as usual, with any photos (always welcome) attached to an email. Many thanks.

***Diane Billam*** (State Editor)

[dbillam@hotmail.com](mailto:dbillam@hotmail.com)

Front cover photographs: Tower of London poppies display by Joan Carroll, Columbia Hotel by Barbara Kern, both of Alpha Chapter.

## Diana Bell

### STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT: 2013-2015



Looking back over the year, I would like to thank every contributor to GB News. It is fascinating to read the wide range of topics and hear about the meetings and visits to places of interest that are covered by our members. I would also like to say thank you again to Di Billam who has edited GB News so well.

Reviewing the chapter programmes I can see how much work has gone into organising interesting and varied speakers, visits, events and generally keeping everything together. A big thank you therefore to our chapter officers for all their hard work during the year.

The Conference Committee (Barbara, Joan, Liz Malik, Sandra and Kathy) has been hard at work preparing for the State Conference. I had heard that the Columbia Hotel, Bayswater, was a good conference hotel, (it is close to the Soroptmist's which is at 'Number 63'). Joan and Barbara checked it out and then I joined them for a further visit when we booked a large pleasant conference room – The Viceroy Suite, for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> March.

This year we are having a one-day conference because we realise that a number of members will be going to the European Regional Conference in Borås, Sweden, from 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> August and will wish to save their pennies for that. The Columbia Hotel room rates are very good for those wanting to stay in central London. It is possible to share a room for four, paying less than £40 each with an English Breakfast included!

The conference theme **Flourishing Education: Wider World**, reminds us that education takes place all around us. Dr Tim Wreghitt OBE, who we heard some year's ago in Cambridge when he spoke about viruses, is also a keen gardener. He has agreed to share with us his medal-winning Chelsea Flower show experiences on behalf of the Royal College of Pathologists, an event in which he is deeply involved. Sonia Birch-Woodcock, headteacher of Flora Gardens Primary School, will explain the implications of the three OFSTED frameworks she has worked with since becoming headteacher in 2006, and Pat Walker, retired headteacher and Alpha Chapter Member, will update us on her Southside Project, inspiring young black boys to be future leaders.

We are also delighted to welcome Marianne Skardéus, our European Regional Director, who will give us all the latest information from headquarters in Austin and tell us more about plans for the conference in Borås.

Please display the flier, (copies available from me on [dkg.info@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dkg.info@yahoo.co.uk)) invite friends to come and return your forms on time. Our State Treasurer Kathy Hodgson has given a return-by-date of **Friday 20<sup>th</sup> February**. Please make

sure you register before then. It makes life quite difficult if members have not sent in their forms on time. The hotel needs numbers! Our excellent group of presenters deserve an enthusiastic audience.

We have a wide educational remit for membership, meetings and visits. We all know someone who would make an excellent member, why not invite them to come along?

As this is an 'odd' year we will be electing our new State President and Vice-President. A form is enclosed with GB News. Do consider putting yourself forward for these state positions. If you put others forward then please don't forget that before nominating them you need to gain their permission.

Unfortunately, due to Brian's illness, I could not go to the International Convention in Indianapolis nor the European Forum Meeting in the Netherlands this year. Thankfully Di Billam represented me in Indianapolis and Barbara Kern in the Netherlands. It is really good and reassuring to know that we have members who can - and do - step into the breach and take over at short notice. Many thanks to both of them for their kind and professional support. Hopefully I will be joining you in Borås.

### ***'Blood-Swept Lands And Seas Of Red'***



After Alpha Chapter's visit to the newly re-furbished Imperial War Museum's interesting Exhibition on the First World War, some of us decided to visit the Tower of London to see this installation by Derbyshire based ceramic artist Paul Cummins.

They were still planting the 888,246 ceramic poppies in remembrance of a British or Commonwealth death during WW1.

It was crowded with people viewing these beautiful poppies which were planted at different heights.

An emotional and wonderful sight.

***Diana Bell***, with photograph by ***Joan Carroll***, (Alpha Chapter).

## HAITI

February 2013 I was invited by a small charity to work with staff in schools in Haiti. I welcomed this with open arms. This was an opportunity for me to use my experience to help others.

As we drove from the airport to my home for the next 5 weeks, we passed acres and acres of land covered in tents. This was called 'Tent City'. You could see that the residents had set up a community, shops selling groceries, electrical goods etc. These tents were the result of a massive earthquake that silenced 250,000 inhabitants and injured thousands more on the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2010. 3 million people were affected by the quake.



Orphanage



Children educated at the first school

Haiti is the poorest country in the western world and the third poorest in the world.

My first opportunity to meet children and staff was at an orphanage. Most of these children's parents had died in the earthquake. The staff worked very hard but resources were very poor. Some of these children had profound and multiple special needs. They had makeshift wheelchairs – a garden chair set on four wheels.

I based myself at one school for the first two weeks. This school educated 84 children aged between two and five – all in the one classroom: Six tables with 14 children to a table. The children arrived at 11 O'clock and went to their assigned seats. There they stayed until 3 O'clock when school finished, apart from going to the toilet - table by table - at 12 O'clock. There was no outside area for these children to play. Resources were extremely poor, a small basket of Lego was provided for each table. They spent most of the time 'colouring in' and hand-writing. The five year olds did two sessions of maths and two sessions of French Creole a week. The rest of the time was again spent 'colouring in' and hand-writing. The younger children play Lego and colour in.

A midday meal is provided for the children, and this is the only food that these children get on a daily basis. I noticed that the children were exceptionally hungry on Mondays. I wondered how these children survived without food during the holidays (I was told later that the charity ran out of money for food in April 2013,

so attendance at the school dropped drastically). This school is run by the charity and education provided free by retired Head teachers.

My next assignment was to a privately-run school, four hours' drive from Port-au-Prince. Children aged 2 – 21 attended this school. The ninety children in the nursery were housed in one small classroom of approximately 24 square metres. Once again children remained in their seats throughout the session, apart from when they went out to play. The other classes had a minimum of 42 students in each class. This was a well-run long-standing school. All children had to reach a certain standard before they could 'move up' to the next level.

Children educated in the private school



This school was also open to educating 'Restavac' children aged 6 – 25 years. A 'Restavac' child is a child sold into slavery. The children's employers allow them to attend school. These children attended in the afternoon, and the same staff that had worked in the morning gave up their time to educate these children for free.

Restavac children in dark blue uniforms, left, privately run Senior School below

All staff members in all of the schools were keen to take on new ideas and they worked hard to implement my strategies. They were happy to show me the progress of the children over a short period of time.



A great number of Haitian teachers are poorly educated themselves, so as a result their students failed to reach a high standard.

Anyone can set up a school in Haiti. They don't have to be able to read or write. The whole infrastructure of the teaching profession is poorly managed.



All 3 pictures: Working with Restavac children implementing teaching strategies

The charity is also involved with a juvenile prison and one adult prison. The juvenile prison accommodates 9 – 18 year olds: Some in for petty theft – for example stealing a pig or a chicken - others for murder, kidnapping, violence, etc. These children had an opportunity to attend English lessons twice a week. The teachers from the charity provide this education free.



The adult prison housed both male and female prisoners. 45 prisoners to a cell – approximately 24 square metres, with 3 bunk beds. All prisoners were supplied with a mat to sleep on but not enough floor space to lie on, so they had to sleep in shifts. The first shift was from 6pm – 1am, and the second shift was from 1am – 8am.

The males are allowed to exercise in the yard for 36 minutes a week, one cell at a time. The females are not allowed any exercise time. The authorities are aware that some of these prisoners are innocent, but as they haven't got the finance to engage a solicitor they have to remain in prison. These prisoners have no opportunity for education.



Adult Prison

I set up a scholarship in memory of my husband David Evans, so I am now supporting two teacher-training students through university.

I am due to return in the near future and I am looking forward to it.



**Anna Evans** (Alpha Chapter)

## THE TEXAN CHALLENGE

Some years ago I wrote a couple of articles for G B News about my experiences as a school governor in a challenging primary school. In 2013 I decided it was time to step down from this role, having spent 12 years as a governor, 7 of them as Chair. During those years the school has grown, changed and improved immensely. It is continuing to grow and I felt it was time now for other governors to take on greater responsibilities and for new governors to join us, so I spent a great deal of time during my last year succession planning, successfully I am pleased to say.



However, I felt I could not leave without giving everyone at Amy Johnson one last challenge and an opportunity occurred in May when Diana circulated an email to Alpha chapter members asking if anyone could help some DKG sisters from Texas who were bringing a group of student teachers to London in June. As part of their trip they had arranged a visit to a school to spend time observing teaching methods and participating in the classroom, but at the last minute the school had cancelled. Did anyone know a school that would be willing to host such a visit? Just the thing for Amy J! Children and staff alike all love to show off their school and what they are doing to visitors. “Yes. Why not?” was Head Teacher Mel’s response to my request. We agreed convenient possible dates for the week of the visit and I emailed our offer, together with details of the school’s website, to Texas.

The reply from Sam Houston State University came very swiftly. They had looked at the website, were very excited at the offer of a visit and would love to accept. Fine. The next question however, worried me. “What is the best public transport route to the school from our hotel near Wembley Arena?” The idea of escorting 35 students unfamiliar with our capital, from the north-west to the southern edge of greater London during the commuter nightmare of the morning rush hour on any form of public transport with all the changes involved, was appalling. A teacher’s worst kind of school trip. I emailed back explaining this and sending quotes from coach companies in case their tour operator could not help. I heard nothing more and had begun to think that they had decided they could not fit the visit into their schedule when, at the end of the first week in June, a puzzled Administrative Officer from Amy J. phoned to say an Irish travel agent had phoned about a party he was bringing to the school the following week and wanting to know the nearest train station. Did I know anything about it? Hurried phone calls from me to the agent in Dublin followed, repeating the advice about not using Transport for London; that hiring a coach would be quicker, safer and far more comfortable, if more expensive, and what date had they in mind?

The Texans were coming! And, true to form Amy J. rose to the occasion on 17<sup>th</sup> June with a varied and interesting programme for them. Some of year 5 prepared short drama presentations about everyday life and learning in the school while the rest acted as guides to take groups on tours of the site. Governors came in to take part with the Head in a Q and A session with the students and their professors. The students spent time informally with the children during their morning break and then in small groups joined in lessons. Finally the School Council led a plenary session with the Head and me, answering students' and staff questions about teaching and learning from their visit.

At the end everyone agreed it had been a thoroughly enjoyable and enlightening occasion. Certainly the children learned that, contrary to the impression given by films and TV, not all Americans, even Texans, carry guns! Apparently they had asked about this possibility in advance and, in spite of being assured none of our American visitors would have a gun and that they were not to ask about guns, some of the children were not convinced. One or two of the students' questions surprised us also. "Do you have corporal punishment?" "Was Amy Johnson a private school?" Apparently there is not a nationwide ban on corporal punishment in the U.S. and it is still used as a sanction in some areas. The reason for the private school question was because the children all wore uniform and their behaviour and relationship with staff was courteous and confident! They were surprised to learn that the school is located in the most economically deprived area in the borough and more than 50% of the pupils receive free school meals. Believe me none of our known rascals had been sent home for the day of the visit. Indeed I saw some of them acting as the most polished and fluent tourist guides!

The young would-be teachers took lots of notes and I hope what they experienced during their visit gave them ideas and encouragement for their future careers. They all, students and staff, said they enjoyed the liveliness and practical application of theoretical knowledge they observed in the lessons and the professors spoke of the high standard of the work the children were producing. Very gratifying comments for everyone at Amy J. to hear from educators from another education system when in the U.K. teachers are so often criticised as underachieving compared with other countries. I was certainly very proud of everyone at Amy Johnson and what they demonstrated educationally on that day.

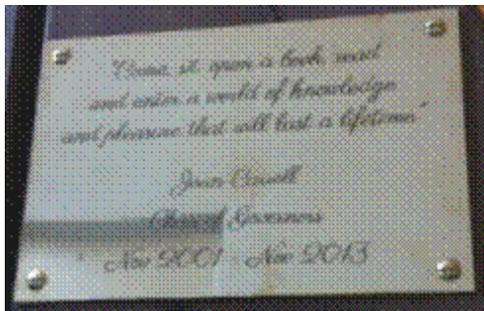
As a finale to my term as an Amy J governor I was invited on 18<sup>th</sup> July to the end of year Farewell and Awards Assembly. This has been a good year for the school with many of the year 6 pupils achieving levels 5 and 6 in the SATS tests and some gaining grammar school places (ours is one of the few London boroughs that have them). The school has also done well in borough sports and the garden club, the 'Courtyard Carers', won the schools section award for the

borough's *Sutton in Bloom* competition. So it was a very happy and celebratory occasion. I was there to unveil what the school are installing as my 'legacy' to Amy Johnson. I was always the literacy governor and worked to develop the library and encourage reading clubs and adult support for readers needing help, so to mark this work a splendid and ornate 'reader's chair', complete with a short statement about reading by me on a brass plaque, is being put in the school's outdoor classroom.



I will miss being a governor at Amy J. although I know I shall not lose touch with the friends I have made there. However, I was confirmed in my decision that it was time for me to retire and hand over my responsibilities when I looked at the list of new staff joining the school in September and realised that one new class teacher was the wife of a man I used to babysit when his mother and I were members of the same babysitting circle many moons ago – tempus does fugit!

#### **Joan Carroll (Alpha Chapter)**



P.S. The inscription reads:

*Come, sit, open a book, read and enter a world of knowledge and pleasure that will last a lifetime.*

I hope many readers and storytellers will do just that.

## MEMBERSHIP

As we look forward to our state conference in London in March, it seems a good time to think about membership of DKG in Britain. Our annual conference is always a good time to introduce potential new members to this amazing organisation of ours. Why not invite a friend to come along to the conference to see what it is all about? We should reflect on what exactly attracted each one of us to DKG and perhaps share that with our friends. Each of us will have reasons for being a member but I would hazard a guess that most reasons are similar. For me it was the fact that the organisation is rooted in, and focused on, education. This is crowned by the very important aspect of the opportunity of meeting like-minded people from so many other countries .

I remember in 2001 listening to Anne Cattoor at a Kent Retired Heads' meeting talking about her recent DKG conference in Malmo, Sweden. It all sounded fascinating. I really wanted to hear more and then a year later I met Sybil and Shirley from Alpha Chapter at a lunch and when I expressed an interest, Sybil lost no time in alerting Di Billam, then Gamma Chapter President, about my interest. Immediately contacted by Di and invited to a Gamma meeting, and experiencing such a warm welcome there, I was hooked. I attended the State Conference organised by Gloria in Maidstone and was so delighted to meet so many of our European colleagues, which paved the way wonderfully for the Regional Conference in Iceland. So many opportunities and so many new friends have certainly enriched my life and they are all part of my biggest love –education.

We should share the good news of DKG: the huge variety of opportunities on offer from travel, study, training and scholarships, chapter meetings with high quality and gifted speakers, friendships, fun and peer support locally and nationally, joining in both European and International Conferences.

Can we make a major effort to invite at least one friend/prospective member to our State Conference, as well as to chapter meetings and thus ensure healthy membership for the years ahead? Especially welcome would be any teachers starting out on their careers. Between us we have a wealth of experience and can willingly offer support to those in the early stages of their careers. We all know how stressful teaching can be, and never more so than today when teachers are bombarded from every quarter.

***Sheila Roberts*** (Chair) on behalf of Membership Committee

# Great Britain State Conference

## Flourishing Education:Wider World



Saturday 28th March 2015

The Columbia Hotel  
95-99 Lancaster Gate  
London W2 3NS  
10.00am—5.30pm



### Speakers



**Pat Walker**

**Southside: Inspiring young black boys to be leaders of tomorrow**

We will hear why Pat founded this academy in 2007, how it was set up and managed and the progress made. She will talk about how they support and unlock the leadership potential of the boys they work with.

**Sonia Birch-Woodcock**

**OFSTED: Moving the goalposts**

Since 2006 when Sonia became Headteacher at Flora Gardens Primary School, there have been THREE OFSTED Frameworks.

What are the implications for Leadership and for Teaching and Learning?



## Dr Tim Wreghitt OBE

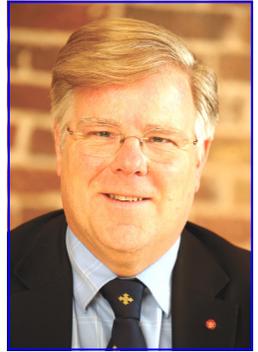
### Making a Stand for Chelsea

Dr Wreghitt has been exhibiting at the Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show on behalf of the Royal College of Pathologists since 2003.

The exhibits aimed to educate people about the role and value of pathologists, using plants as a theme, for example plants causing human disease, plants used to make human medicines and plants causing allergic reactions in humans.

Dr Wreghitt, who has won two Gold Medals, will discuss the contents of these displays and give us an insight into the trials and tribulations of putting together and displaying these exhibits.

This year they are putting on an exhibit entitled 'Tobacco – Friend or Foe', where they reveal new antiviral treatments grown in tobacco plants for treating Ebola and HIV, and provide information on the pathological effects of tobacco on our lungs and cardiovascular system.



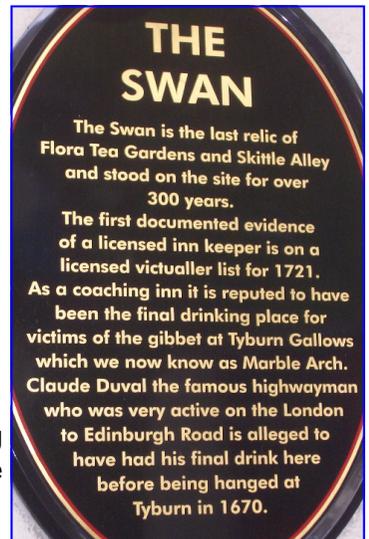
## Marianne Skardéus

### Our European Regional Director

Will bring us up-to-date on initiatives and developments from headquarters in Austin as well as the latest information regarding the Regional Conference in Borås, Sweden.

### Other conference features:

- \* Annual General Meeting
- \* Registration & coffee from 9.30am
- \* Tai Chi exercise with Barbara
- \* Announcement of new state officers for 2015-17
- \* Canterbury & GB Achievement Award recipients
- \* Raffle
- \* Supper at The Swan, 66 Bayswater Road
- \* Reasonable DKG hotel room rates (including English Breakfast): Single £77, twin/double £100, room for 4 people £150.



## My European Forum Trip

As Diana, our EF representative, was unable to attend the committee meeting in November, to be held in the Netherlands, I volunteered to attend in her place, having, amazingly, a free weekend! This meant that there would be a GB representative there, making up the full complement of the Europe Region. However, the meeting was not to be easily accessible in Amsterdam, but in the north, at Paterswolde, the home of our Committee Chair, Riet Smits-Hoenderken.

Journey - overground, underground (sounds like the Wombles), flight to Amsterdam and then train to Groningen. This was capped by a 20 minute taxi ride into the dark... and to Riet's welcoming home. We enjoyed a sustaining soup before starting the first working session.

The timetable for the agenda was well planned, but very intensive. The meeting was ably chaired by Riet and, although we were overrunning at one point, we caught up and finished on time! Fortified by coffee and cake we soldiered on through the day, but had a breather, an enjoyable trip to a music museum in the woods of the Vosbergen Estate.

This museum contains a fascinating internationally-known collection of over 800 musical instruments. Dick Verel gave us a very interesting description of how he had built up the collection and demonstrated several of the instruments. We enjoyed a drink and cake as part of the visit.

We had dinner at Yvonne's, (she is a member of the same chapter as Riet) and we met two other chapter members. Yvonne's husband had cooked a lovely buffet meal with typical Dutch dishes.

The return journey took me all day. I accompanied the members from Iceland and Finland who were travelling back to Schiphol airport, although my flight was several hours later. I found that GB is not the only country to have disrupted rail services - works on the line on Sundays - it took three trains, not the usual one through one!

I took advantage of the extra time at the airport to do a little Christmas shopping, (resisting buying any diamonds!) and had a nice meal at the Happy Fish Cafe. On the flight I had some excellent aerial views of the City of London and the River Thames and I got home at 6.30pm GMT. I will give a meeting report to the Executive Committee members in January, and the minutes of the meeting will be placed on the website [www.dkgeurope.org](http://www.dkgeurope.org) in due course.

Many thanks to Riet for her generous hospitality and the pleasure of meeting, and working, with the members of DKG Europe.

**Barbara Kern** (Alpha Chapter)



The European Forum Committee at work. Photos by Dagmar Ullmann, Germany



## SCIENCE IN A KENT GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOR BOYS

I am a long-term governor for Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys – something of a misnomer as there are girls in the sixth form. The science projects undertaken there are world-class, in comparison with other secondary schools anywhere, under the inspirational leadership of Dr Becky Parker, along with a team of outstanding staff.

One of the outstanding ongoing projects concerns LUCID – The Langton Ultimate Cosmic Ray Intensity Detector. After years of development and negotiation, with strenuous efforts required for the requisite funding, it was launched into space from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan in July 2014. From that point the countdown began until the first data came streaming back to Earth, which it is now doing. LUCID was designed by students at the school as part of the Cern@school programme. The school is the first to be recognised as a full collaboration member at CERN, and undertakes regular research visits there.

We are particularly proud that so many girls have been inspired by science at the school and take a full part in all the research projects. Many of the brightest girls in the area choose to join our Sixth Form (which now numbers 502 students) precisely because of the exciting research in science we undertake. Our pioneering work has led to the formation of a group of schools and universities involved in the project, known as Cern@school. One of our girls spoke at their recent Symposium.

So what is LUCID and what does it detect? It is a new style cosmic ray detector, developed by our students, which uses detector technology from the Medipix Collaboration and the Large Hadron Collider at CERN to analyse the radiation environment in space. The detector, which can discriminate between different particles found in cosmic radiation, has been developed over several years, with the support of Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd and scientists based at CERN. LUCID was launched in July this year on the TechDemoSat-1 satellite and is now in Low Earth Orbit providing data on space weather.

Students are able to analyse data to calculate the precise energy of particles hitting the detector as well as their direction of travel. The raw data will be made accessible to all school students to allow them to build a map of the radiation field as LUCID orbits the earth. The data is of use to NASA, the Met Office and space weather researchers particularly because of the ability of the detector to analyse individual particles in space.

We have so far decided not to go for Academy status, and Kent County Council has done its best to support us in times of considerable financial constraint. However, there was no capital funding available for us to build *The Langton Star Centre*, where much of our science work is undertaken. So we had to borrow it! Some years ago schools could opt to become specialists, eg in Science, Humanities, Sport, and there was some special funding available. This was abruptly cancelled, and there is now none available. This has required us to gain new skills in seeking funds from appropriate agencies and organisations.

We are expanding the range of our research, in collaboration where possible with other educational establishments, into other areas such as biology, astronomy, and MoEDAL, which searches directly for the magnetic monopole, a hypothetical particle charge (with CERN again). The latter is part of a regime of CERN experiments searching for new physics beyond the Standard Model. We have been appointed a full member of the MoEDAL collaboration. This involvement allows the CERN@school programme to provide data to all schools across the UK from space, the earth, and (with MoEDAL) directly from CERN. How inspiring is that?

The school was featured on Page 11 of The Times on 22 December as part of the Christmas Science Experiments feature. Two girls were shown pulling Christmas crackers—the experiment was to find out how to pull the cracker to get the best chance of winning the prize! A good way to get some fun into the serious science involved in a planned experiment.

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

## THE CANTERBURY AWARD

This award is to help fund an educational project or carry you abroad to Delta Kappa Gamma Conventions.

**Educational Project:** Do you have an educational project you would like to pursue? DKG could offer assistance of up to £300 as a subsidy for a year.

**Travel Award:** During years when the Award is not granted to support a project the Canterbury Award becomes available to members of DKG who would appreciate the opportunity to attend a state, regional or international convention for the first time, but who would otherwise find it financially difficult.

For more details and further information please contact Sandra Blacker, Chair of the Awards Committee, [sandra.blacker@outlook.com](mailto:sandra.blacker@outlook.com).

## GREAT BRITAIN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

This award, consisting of a rose brooch in silver and amber, is given biennially and is Great Britain's way of honouring a member for something special.

Nominations are now invited for the recipient of this special award for 2015.

The criteria are:

- must have been an active GB member for at least five years.
- must have shown one or more of the following:
  - professional achievement that has:
    - raised the profile of the society in Great Britain
    - raised the profile of Great Britain within the European Region and/or the International Society through service or achievement within the Society
    - shown distinguished personal development or courage in adversity such that it provides motivation to others
    - provided a special service for Great Britain State

Please submit any nominations, with a short citation (50 words), before 28th February to the Chair of the GB Achievement Award Committee, Sandra Blacker, [sandra.blacker@outlook.com](mailto:sandra.blacker@outlook.com), so that if necessary a postal ballot can be held before the State Conference. An acknowledgement of your nomination will be sent.

The award will be announced at the GB Annual General Meeting.

Previous recipients: Lillian Lynch (Gamma), Phyllis Kern (Alpha), Loetitia Stone (Beta), Pam Irons (Gamma) and Mary Wardrop (Gamma).

NB This award is funded by donations from members which may be sent to State Treasurer, Kathy Hodgson, at any time. A collection towards the fund will be taken at the State Conference.

## **ELECTION OF OUR NEXT STATE PRESIDENT AND VICE STATE PRESIDENT**

Our current State President, Diana Bell, will complete her biennium in office on 1 July 2015. Nominations for her successor, and for a new Vice State President, are invited and a form is enclosed for this purpose. Please give careful thought to members who you would like to see considered for these important posts and do try very hard to persuade them to stand for office. This may be difficult as some members live far away from the main group so travel costs may be a problem, others may claim to be too busy with work or family ties and say that they have done it before and it is time for others to have the opportunity. Persuade them by mentioning the positive things of holding the office. Personal development in leadership and management, special friendships made with those who have done the work before and offer to help, a permanent seat available at Executive meetings, opportunities for yet higher office in the Society, friendships made with other Chapter members and those from abroad – travel opportunities. Good luck! The Society will not run without members holding these important positions.

*Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)*

**Why not attend a State Conference in another of our European member States? The Netherlands State Conference takes place on 30 May 2015. The HQ speaker is Jeanette Zuniga. The DKG Netherlands State President is Cor Wolff-Heins.**

**The Norway State Conference takes place on 18/19 April 2015 near Oslo. Ingrid Christiansen is the State President. There is an opportunity to see ‘Carmen’ at the wonderful Opera House.**

**Details can be found on the various European websites and at [www.dkgeurope.org](http://www.dkgeurope.org)**

## Alpha Chapter Report for December 2014

At our September meeting, we heard some impressions of the International Convention at Indianapolis from those who went, and discussed our future programme.

Pictures: Museum outside, by Ray Rogers: inside, Diana Bell



In October some of the chapter visited the First World War exhibition at the Imperial War Museum - very moving, and thought-provoking. Different aspects of this conflict were shown, not just from the British angle.

Visitors to this exhibition were of all ages, and many different nationalities. Some of the displays were interactive, so appealed to both adults and children.

Some of the group then went on to the Poppies installation at the Tower of London, one ceramic poppy for each of the fallen from this country, filling the moat.

I've just noticed in a newspaper that two parts of the installation, including the 'Weeping Window' are to tour the country for three years, and then will be permanently on display at the War Museum.

Our Christmas party was actually held at the end of November, so more an Advent event. We set to, and made, some lovely Christmas table centre pieces. Many thanks to Dorcas who arranged all the craft stuff, and to Ray who cooked a wonderful Christmas Lunch - the full works. An extremely convivial day was had by all who attended and hopefully to be repeated next year.!

**Stop Press:** We welcome new member, Linda Carr, who has just joined Alpha Chapter.



Alpha table decoration photos by Diana Bell



### **Forthcoming meetings for 2015:**

January 17<sup>th</sup> at 2.00pm, Lesley Marsh speaking on 'Guiding Today', at Holy Trinity Church Hall, Rotherhithe.

February 28<sup>th</sup> a visit to London Docklands Museum.

April 25<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm, Alpha Member Carolyn Olton will speak about her experience of volunteering at Standen, a National Trust property. We plan to have a summer visit there, including a trip on the Bluebell Line

May 16<sup>th</sup> Continuing the volunteering theme, Barbara Kern will describe her volunteering at Sydenham Garden. This will be at the site itself.

June 20<sup>th</sup> To be confirmed.

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

## Beta Chapter Report for December 2014

Despite a number of apologies for our Christmas meal and meeting , attendance although small was enthusiastic. We had invited Grace Strickland, the newly appointed teacher for *Shout It Out* to be with us, but she was unable to be there – so we hope to meet her early in the New Year as a prospective Chapter member. This led on to a lively discussion around our experiences of the initiation ceremony – which elements were felt to be relevant - and otherwise.

We also discussed the DKG survey on the recruitment and retaining of teachers which is shortly to be circulated in Plymouth University - the inclusion of a 'trans-gender' category in many contemporary surveys and whether this survey was to be sent to women only.

One of our members is applying to the Canterbury Award and this led to us talking about the awards and scholarships our members had individually received over the years, and to talk about the possibility of attending the State Conference next year.

**Jess Curtis** (*Chapter President*)

## Gamma Chapter Report for December 2014

We are fortunate to continue to have the use of an ideal room at Beechwood School. The staff there are very helpful in preparing the room with any equipment we need as well as a generous supply of tea and coffee.

To start this year's programme Megan Farmer presented our first talk on Mindfulness, a simple meditation practice that is already popular in many schools. She reminded us that yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery but today is a gift.

Veronica Jones' excellent talk on travelling around teaching children involved in film gave us a real insight behind the scenes. She amused us with many tales and beautiful slides of the many places she had taught. I think we felt we had missed out by staying in our classrooms!

Emily Chalke came to give us a very moving and enlightening talk in November, particularly focussing on her work with prostitutes in Thailand. She was so inspired by one particular young woman that she has set up a charity called Ella's Home. A house will be bought in London for trafficked girls to take refuge.

The party in December was arranged with the idea of bringing DKG into the community. We approached the manager of Simmonds Court, a block of affordable flats and were offered their communal room without charge. Pat Bryer was then booked to present her selection of songs and monologues by the late Joyce Grenfell. Unfortunately several members including myself were ill or otherwise engaged on the day but the response from others, including the visitors, was very positive. With donations received we were able to give Simmonds Court £50 towards their target of enough money to buy a defibrillator for the home. Thank you, Sandra, for your generous hospitality by providing a warm and comfortable place for all to enjoy the shared meal after the show.

We start the 2015 series of meetings with a talk by Jasper Kain on his charity "Football beyond borders". Carol Dawson has kindly agreed to give us a musical experience in February and Anne Goldstein will talk about Spirituality in March. We are researching outings for the winter and summer.

I appreciate the enormous support I have received from every member and look forward with enthusiasm to the future.

**Liz Malik** (*Chapter President*)

Further Information regarding **chapter meetings** can be viewed on our Great Britain Website at [www.dkgeb.org.uk](http://www.dkgeb.org.uk)

Information about the **European Regional Conference** can be found at [www.dkgeurope.org](http://www.dkgeurope.org) - Go to the Swedish web-page where you will be welcomed to the European Regional Conference, Borås, Sweden 5 - 8 August 2015.

**Theme: Education - a Lifelong Dedication.**

**'Come to Sweden for the Europe Regional!**  
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**Mission Statement**

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