



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



**DIVERSE ROLES
IN EDUCATION**



SPRING 2010

Volume 12 No 2

CONTENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

	Page
State President's Letter	3
Canterbury Award Recipient	4
Healthcare Award	4
The Royal Society Exhibition	5
Cambridge Expansion Project	6
Dr Terri Apter, Siblings	8
Becoming a School Governor	10
On being a School Governor	12
Great Britain Achievement Award	13
Home Teaching	14
Judging for the Teaching Awards	15
GB State Conference	16
International Speaker	18
Visiting London Primary Schools	19
Books that inspired me	21
Chapter Reports	21
Alpha	21
Beta	22
Gamma	23

Lavinia's article about *The Royal Society Summer Exhibition* reminded me what a fabulous treat it was. The 350th anniversary celebrations should be worth looking out for.

I am pleased to include the article by the Estonian member, Tiina Aunin, on how she had used the money from the Canterbury Award. Writing about awards, if you can you help with the Great Britain Achievement Award, Anne Cattoor would love to hear from you. See page 13.

In this edition the main body of articles show how some of our members are working with children, or involved with schools, not as classroom teachers but in other more diverse roles.

I will include more about our work next time. All articles to me by 25th April please by post or dbell@debrett.net

Diana Bell *Editor*

The photographs on the front cover are from Joan Carroll's School and the visit to Maine, USA, by Sue Torr MBE.

OUR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN SPOKANE 20-24 July 2010

The 2010 International Convention will be held on July 20-24 in Spokane Washington, the 'Lilac City'



Over 2000 members will meet in the Spokane Convention Centre in the heart of the city, on the river. They will continue to share ways to promote the professional and personal growth of women educators and excellence in education.

A large thrust of the convention will be 'the consideration of the organisation's *Constitution and Standing Rules*'...in order to better organise, streamline and bring the governing documents into the 21st century.'

Spokane has 'something for everyone...spectacular views of the mountains and the Spokane River Falls, epicurean delights, walking trails and, of course, shopping'.

Editor

DIANE BILLAM
STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT: 2009-2011

As you will see in the separate information in this Newsletter, plans are well advanced for our next Great Britain Conference, to be held at the Chaucer Hotel, Canterbury, on Saturday, 17 April 2010. I hope that many of you will make a weekend of it, and join us from Friday afternoon until Sunday lunchtime. A registration form is enclosed, and is also available via our website: please see the separate details in this Newsletter. Thanks are due particularly to Kathy and Gloria, who have helped me so much on the financial and planning side to get as far as we have.



We plan to include training for incoming Chapter Presidents and Treasurers on the Friday afternoon: a committee is working on the substance of this. Each Chapter will need to have elected their incoming Chapter President and Vice President to take part in this training, together with the Chapter Treasurer who is selected by the Chapter President. We hope that shared experience will give confidence to the incoming officers. For those who cannot attend on Friday afternoon, printed information will be available, plus the appropriate Guidelines from the Society.

The theme of the conference is `Nurture and Inspire`, which I believe is one of the primary purposes of teaching students. Each of our speakers will contribute to the theme in various ways. The first is Professor Carl Parsons, Professor of Education at Canterbury Christ Church University and Visiting Professor at the University of Greenwich, who has chosen the title: `Excluding children from school in England: killing (some of) our children slowly`. When he spoke before, I was mortified to discover that we have the worst rate of exclusions in Europe, and exclude younger children than any other European country. He has researched school exclusions for sixteen years.

Our second speaker is Dr Snezana Lawrence, a Lecturer in Mathematics Education at Bath Spa University, who until September 2009 taught mathematics and was the Director of the Langton Institute of Young Mathematicians in Canterbury (see the article within `On being a school governor`). The title of her talk is `Newton for Ladies`, on which she spoke at the Royal Society in October.

Our third speaker is Dr Becky Parker, Head of Physics and Director of the Langton Star Centre: she will certainly be an inspiration, and will talk about `The Langton Star Centre: how physics can come alive for young people`. Birgit Svensson, our Regional Director, will fortunately again be with us, and will give us an update on Society matters. We shall conclude with our AGM. There will be an exhibition of art, craft, poems, photographs etc by members. Please let me know if you would like anything included: the more the merrier.

Our Delta Kappa Gamma International family has been extended: in November we were joined by Panama. If you have seen our latest trifold information sheet,

you will see that their name and their flag have been added. Efforts have also been made to extend our own `family` in Great Britain: there have been two meetings in Cambridge which have been well supported both by existing members and by those who we hope will join us soon in forming a Cambridge chapter. We're so nearly there! Thanks are due to all those who have done so much to make this possible, particularly to Diana in finding an excellent venue within Addenbrooke's Hospital. What's that quotation? `You never get a second chance to make a good first impression'! Kate has also done an enormous amount to make our ambition a reality.

Diane Billam *Gamma Chapter*

CANTERBURY AWARD: REPORT FROM ESTONIA

Dear Kate (*Kate York was granted the award to support Estonian members—Ed*)



My workshop took place in the framework of session 2, Thursday August 6 and lasted more than one hour. My 20-minute Powerpoint presentation, *Interrelations of Literature and Visual Arts. Interdisciplinary Ways of Teaching Comparative Literature* - met with a favourable response. The audience (approximately 35 people) had a lively reaction to the paintings and poetry by Estonian creative women. Although there were only few questions (it is only understandable in case of

the cultures of minor nationalities) the discussion that followed even exceeded the time limit. 3-4 women approached my desk and commented privately on the pieces of art depicting women of the Soviet period.

The Art Museum of Tallinn got the 2008 Award of the Best European Art Museum. Its collection of Soviet-period social realist and modernist paint and sculpture is one of the most interesting and well-displayed among the sort of art of the former Eastern block countries. The slide show illustrating my talk proved successful, too.

Thank you for the stipend. I hope that my presentation justified it.

Cordially, Tiina Aunin

Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature, Tallinn University

HEALTHCARE AWARD

Dr Tim Wreghitt OBE (centre), our Keynote Speaker at the State Conference in Cambridge earlier this year, being presented in November with the prestigious Healthcare Scientist of the Year Award 2009. Ed



THE ROYAL SOCIETY SUMMER SCIENCE EXHIBITION

I like toys, and I especially like the Slinky. My children had one and loved to watch its rusty metal walk down the stairs. Now they come in rainbow plastic and I acquired a new one at the Royal Society Summer Exhibition.

I missed the day when others went and enjoyed a guided tour with Joanna Cor-den, Archivist, even having lunch in one of the posh rooms. However, I heard all about it and how interesting it was and this gave me the incentive to visit, by myself, on the last day. I am glad that I did.

I played with everything that was to be played with, from competing with the dolphins' recognition of objects using sonar (I must brush up my sonar technique... I could not sort out a rubber barrel from a metal buoy!), to making origami snapdragons. But you know playing does really lead to learning. And I learnt many things.

There were more than twenty fascinating interactive exhibits ranging from 'The Snapdragon's tale', the study of genes that influence the symmetry of the flower, to 'Chasing cancer with a flash of light' which showed the new optical techniques being developed by The Royal Free Hospital and University College London, to identify whether breast cancer has spread. There were ladybirds, snails and fluorescent fish, and a first edition copy of Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species*.

It is hard to choose, but my favourites were:

'The magic of Computer Science': I must have spent at least half an hour watching a handsome young man performing magic tricks. This was to demonstrate that apparently there is a link between the creation of magic tricks and the creation of user-centered software for computers.

'The Teenage Brain - A Work in Progress': a humorous title for serious research revealing that the brain undergoes dramatic development in certain regions during adolescence, explaining behaviour and raising questions regarding education and whether lessons could be tailor made for the developing teenage brain.

'Our Cosmic Origins - Building the Milky Way': The centre-piece of the exhibit was a 3D cinema showing the milky way, how it was built and how it has developed. If you reached out you could touch the stars.

A wonderful and stimulating day out, and it was all FREE. I do not know how many London schools have visited it, but I saw very few children around when I was there. I felt that was such a pity. I shall certainly be putting the message out for next year to my local schools as I felt it was a first rate educational experience.

Anyone who did not go can still experience a virtual tour by logging on to www.summerscience.org.uk where all the are explained. Incidentally my granddaughter, Megan, commandeered the new Slinky and it's now slightly damaged but still well loved.

Lavinia Soul Alpha Chapter

CAMBRIDGE EXPANSION PROJECT

In Great Britain two of our present chapters were founded shortly after DKG was first chartered here in 1977. Our third chapter, Gamma, was founded in 1982, largely due to the efforts of Pam Irons. For some time now, the idea of expansion to form a fourth chapter in the Cambridge area has been 'in the air'. Last year it was decided to push ahead with the idea - to turn the dream into reality.

With this in mind we made a start early in 2009 by 'networking' with personal 'educator' contacts in and around Cambridge. Fitzwilliam College had been selected as the venue for our state conference, so the next step was to invite our Cambridge contacts to come as our guests. This was successful - we had made a start. In June, we invited those who we had already met to join us for a 'riverside tea' at the Doubletree Terrace Bar, where we talked about DKG.

Adopting the recommended model of ensuring that expansion meetings should have an educational aspect, we invited Terri Apter (psychologist, Cambridge Senior Tutor, and author) to speak at a meeting proposed for 10 October. Terri was already known to many members, having been a previous conference keynote speaker. The issue of a suitable venue was a challenge. Diana Bell managed to arrange the use of a lecture room at Addenbrooke's Treatment Centre (ATC) through the 'good offices' of one of our keynote speakers from the state conference. With a date, a speaker and a venue secured, the next step was to invite women from a broad educational spectrum to come to the meeting. A group of members from Alpha and Gamma chapters set to work to publicise the event and to make detailed arrangements.

We decided to work via our existing contacts, alongside a broader 'mailshot' to schools and colleges across the educational age-range within Cambridge itself, Ely and Newmarket. To achieve this, we used the Internet to find useful websites, then personalised letters, with which we sent copies of a poster advertising the meeting. We also wrote individually to people we had previously met, again enclosing posters. Although we could have used email for making contact, we thought we were less likely to achieve the display of posters if we relied on recipients to print them.

After the State Executive meeting in September, we spent a hilarious hour or so assembling the materials ready for posting. The most challenging job was the sealing of 84 envelopes which were not self-adhesive. Before the meeting, I had left Dorothy Haley in charge of the car in a Canterbury side-street while I sought out the nearest Post Office for stamps. It was above W H Smith, where a lengthy queue of French students was waiting to buy stamps for their postcards. With our mission accomplished, we posted all 84 envelopes....and waited.

On 10 October, eleven members from Alpha and Gamma set off early and were



**Evelyn, Liz, Sheila and Dorothy
preparing for the meeting**

at the ATC shortly after 9.00 am. We were equipped with Janny Kisteman's DVD about DKG in Europe, a goodly supply of the new-style trifold leaflets, copies of GB News, DKG News, the DKG Bulletin, a photo display about the European Regional in Oslo, and various other publications. Also very important was a generous supply of tea, coffee, home-made cake and quality biscuits.



The inaugural meeting

By 10.30 am, five guests had arrived, of whom three were personal contacts, one had seen our poster, and one was the speaker's daughter! Only one person from the previous meetings was able to come, so our overall group of contacts now totalled ten.

Diana Bell welcomed our guests and gave a really good synopsis of what DKG offers. Terri Apter gave an excellent presentation (see page 8). We asked all our visitors to leave contact details with us.

We went ahead with another meeting relatively quickly - on 28 November at the ATC. We used the same contact and publicity method as before. Liz Day, Alpha Chapter, gave a presentation about the recent Rose and Alexander reports. Her focus was on implications for the school curriculum and the impact on both serving teachers and those in training. Her role as Deputy Course Director on an MA programme makes her particularly well-qualified to talk on the subject. Diana Bell gave the opening welcome, then Diane Billam (State President) gave an introductory talk about DKG, emphasising its international benefits, and publicising the 2010 GB State Conference to be held in Canterbury. She made particular mention of the very high quality keynote speakers who have agreed to participate.



Liz shows her audience the Cambridge Review

Liz Day's talk was very well received, giving a very informative overview of educational development in England from the introduction of compulsory education. She encouraged us to consider the impact of a government-controlled national curriculum, with its advantages and possible disadvantages. She highlighted the future development of the curriculum envisaged in both reports.

This meeting was again supported by members from Alpha and Gamma chapters. It attracted five women, including three new contacts. Several attendees from the October meeting sent apologies due to other commitments at a very busy time of year. The prospect of the Canterbury conference aroused considerable interest.

Our next Cambridge meeting is scheduled for 30 January 2010, when we hope that Gamma member, Trisha Rogers, will be speaking about her involvement with developments in the teaching of maths. Other possible speakers for future meetings are already 'waiting in the wings'.

GB members are involved in the Cambridge Expansion Project for the 'long haul'. By networking with the contacts we have now made, our aim is to consolidate a 'core' group to work with as we move towards establishing a Delta Chapter, drawing from Cambridge and the surrounding area. Although this goal may not be achieved in time for recognition at the 2010 International Convention in Spokane, we are confident that we are making progress and that DKG Cambridge *will* become a reality.

Kate York Gamma Chapter

DKG Inaugural Cambridge Expansion Meeting DR TERRI APTER SPOKE ABOUT SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

with reference to her book **The Sister Knot**.

Members who have heard Terri Apter speak will know that we were very lucky that she addressed our first meeting. She opened her talk by explaining how she had started her research into sister relationships and then the results and patterns that had emerged. She referred to her own childhood and adult experiences with her sister; she could not find references to a relationship which matched the attachment to her sister with its complex feelings of envy, empathy, competitiveness and guilt. Was she alone with these, sometimes violent, feelings or were they shared with others?



She was **not** alone with these feelings. She conducted seventy-four interviews and used the case studies to come to her conclusions. She found that sisters learn they can both love and hate each other, giving rise to a 'powerful unease, as well as competing for love and status'. Dr. Apter questioned why such attachments are not described in psychology. The history of psychology (Freud, Piaget) focuses more on the development of boys and men omitting what is salient for women. Juliet Mitchell (Professor of Psychology at Jesus College, Cambridge) prioritises womens' experiences – the fear that someone is loved more, self doubt, the need for love, envy.

Dr. Apter then gave examples through literature of the complexity of sisterhood. **Drowning Ruth** by Christina Schwartz is described as a stunning portrait of the ties that bind sisters together and the forces that tear them apart, of the dangers of keeping secrets and the explosive repercussions when they are exposed.

Emma by Jane Austin partly explores Emma's need for a sister. Emma's own sister is married and lives too far away for a sibling relationship to develop. So

first through the relationship with her Governess, Miss Taylor, then with the compliant Harriet Smith, Emma can 'have' a sister.

Little Women by Louisa May Alcott is a story about sistering. The lives of the four March sisters are charmingly detailed – Meg, the eldest, on the brink of love, Jo the tomboy, sweet-natured Beth and precocious Amy. Although Beth's model of the sisters as chicks in a nest appears charming, competition in a nest can be rather vicious. However in the case of 'Little Women' the 'chicks' benefit through cooperation, protecting those who share their genes through altruistic behaviour.

1000 Acres by Jane Smiley is a retelling of the story of King Lear. A prosperous farmer plans to divide his 1000 acres between two of his daughters; the third is cut out because she has been insufficiently enthusiastic. Lear's youngest daughter Cordelia was insufficiently flattering about her love for her father. The novel describes the place of women in a predominantly patriarchal culture.

The Color Purple by Alice Walker tells the troubled story of poor black Celie in 1930s Georgia through letters and diaries. She and her long-lost sister Nettie are finally reunited. Nettie is Celie's hope and faith for life. A dominant theme of the novel is the power of women coming together.

Studies of siblings reveal children's understanding of others' minds – that they have independent thoughts, they have an understanding of the feelings of a baby sibling. Children are also very expressive when talking about a brother or sister. For example, a child understands how to annoy his/her sibling by taking away a toy – showing an emotional context; if you are competing, you anticipate the feelings of a sibling who is close. Dr. Apter suggests a revision of old theories of empathy between siblings.

Case studies revealed that envy and resentment between sisters are common. Freud recorded that women dream about killing a sister. Yet the death of a sister is very hard because of the attachment and identification; death ends a life, not a relationship and life-long dialogue. For some women, the mourning never ends.

In making sense of this powerful and complicated bond, anecdotal evidence shows there is a specific issue of jealousy, and a broader issue of envy, which need further research. There is a mix of emotions to be dealt with. This is not a reason to be afraid of 'the sister knot'. Indeed, women without sisters seek sisterhood with their women friends. We all want a sister !!!

Sandra Blacker
Gamma Chapter



Sandra, far left, members and guests at the inaugural meeting

BECOMING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR



I volunteered to become a school governor for my local authority about six months after I had retired from full time teaching. In those months I had realised that I would never be a golf and light lunch-eon lady and I was missing that active connection with education. I was contacted soon afterwards and agreed to volunteer for a primary school that was having difficulty attracting and retaining governors.

My first full governors' meeting was almost my last. I soon realised that recruiting governors was the least of this school's problems. Situated in a small pocket of socio/economic deprivation in an otherwise affluent middle-class London borough, the whole area was designated for future regeneration. Until that day arrived however, no money was being directed to the estate or the school, but it was being used for short term emergency housing for newly arrived immigrant families and difficult-to-house tenants.

In spite of the heroic efforts of an inspirational head and nucleus of committed staff, the strain of coping with so many challenging, needy children from these families, plus around thirty mother tongues in a school of 300 pupils, was taking its toll. Staff sickness and turnover were at worrying levels, staff recruitment near impossible and, added to high pupil absenteeism and low parental support, it was a bleak scenario. The school was on record not only as the worst in the borough but as one of the poorest in the country. The first meeting lasted from 7.30p.m. to 11.30p.m, while the Chair cajoled governors into taking on responsibilities. In desperation to go home to bed I found myself offering my services, so started off in my new role on three committees and two panels. In spite of all its problems OFSTED's (school inspection) comment on the school at the time was that it was an oasis of calm, security and stability for its children.

Things began to improve with the regeneration scheme and the area started to lose its grey, damp concrete, 60's brutalist appearance. Residents turned out in force to cheer when the last tower block was blown up. The estate's appearance has changed completely now. It has a human scale with terraced houses, low rise apartments, tree-lined streets and landscaped parkland. It also has a state-of-the-art community centre with sports facilities, library, internet/computer suite and café, as well as a church, a parade of shops with a farmers' market and a health clinic. All of this on a site that was formerly home to two large, dank multi-storey car parks that no-one dared use, a boarded-up pub and a stretch of balding, scrubby communal grass used chiefly as a canine comfort stop. During the regeneration the school volunteered to become a children's centre to meet the changing needs of the residents. Governors had to spend a great deal of their time setting this up and dealing with changing, often contradictory demands about what we required.



Then in the summer of 2005 the school suffered a series of disasters. First, we lost an excellent Deputy who went to headship elsewhere and we were unable to replace her. Then the Head had to take early, ill health retirement after collapsing suddenly at school. In the same week, the Bursar resigned, the School's Secretary had an accident and was off work for the rest of term and builders carrying out repairs discovered asbestos, hit a pipe and contaminated the school's water supply. One week later the Chair rang me to say she had accepted promotion in her job and would have to resign as a governor and asked if I would be willing to take over her role if elected. To use the cliché 'a steep learning curve' to describe the next year is truly an understatement.

To avoid going into special measures we agreed the borough should bring in an experienced interim head and set us up in an intensive support programme to create stability and improve attainment and standards. That year was an extremely tough one, too tough for some of the staff and governors, but those that remained became a very strong team and my chief concern was to ensure that any new staff and governors appointed would be of a calibre to cope with the challenges we were experiencing.

The upturn started two years ago when we appointed an excellent head. She is a superb role model for the staff and is building them into a strong, aspirational team. There is a vibrancy and enthusiasm in the school that is exciting to be part of and academic standards have risen by 25%. We have an active school council that has set up a school house system, raises funds for school events, created awards for pupils, staff and governors and was recently invited to lunch with the Mayor to talk about their work. The children's 'Courtyard Garden Carers' group won awards in the Sutton in Bloom and London in Bloom contests and were prize-winners in a competition organised by a local garden centre this summer. Our links with a nearby boys' grammar school meant that when we were refurbishing the library recently their VI formers came in and created a jungle-theme mural for us. A donation from Alpha Chapter enabled the school to purchase animal-shaped cushions, a reading tent, finger puppets and mobiles to create an inspirational 'Reading Rainforest'. With the ongoing development of the children's centre accommodation and services, we now have provision for activities from babies to adults for the community. The school has a waiting list!



The definition of a being a school governor is to act as a 'critical friend' to the school. I hope I have been more than that during my seven years of service. There are still crisis moments, (this week builders discovered a WW2 bomb crater when trying to lay foundations), but I hope I am now better equipped to deal with them. I still have no time for golf and any light lunches are often fitted around governor/staff meetings but I am certainly maintaining that active involvement with education that I sought and hope that my service has been of use to a school that I have grown to love.

Joan Carroll *Alpha Chapter*

ON BEING A SCHOOL GOVERNOR

For a decade I was a governor of a City Technology College in Bermondsey, South London, where our students spoke a multitude of first languages, we excelled in sport, with excellent links to Charlton Football Club, and the first Head of this new school was an inspiration. City Technology Colleges were an idea developed by the then Conservative Government, and involved partnerships between the public and private sectors. Bacons College was unusual in this respect: our three main sponsors were the Southwark Diocese of the Church of England, the London Docklands Corporation, and Sir Philip Harris of carpet fame (currently owner of *Carpetright*, and a Bermondsey boy through and through).

I had so much enjoyed this work that when I moved back to Kent, and the Kent Education Committee were advertising for people to become governors, I sent off the form, requesting that as I had been in a secondary school for a decade, it would be good to be appointed to a primary school. So they sent me to Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys! Eleven years later I am still there, thoroughly enjoying the range of work entailed.

As one of the longest-serving governors, I am now Vice Chair of the Full Governing Body, Chair of two of the four committees: Resources, and Learning, and a member of the Simon Langton Foundation. Our work on these committees centres around the School Development Plan, and we are required to hold the Senior Management Team to account for all that happens in the school. Every governing body represents a range of interests: on ours there are 2 Local Education Authority nominees (of whom I am one), 7 Parent Governors (elected by the PTA), 3 Staff governors, 3 Community governors, 4 Foundation governors, with the Headteacher an ex-officio member. The Foundation goes back into history: Simon Langton was a brother of Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury who played a large part in the events leading to King John's signing of Magna Carta in 1215. He himself was Archdeacon of Canterbury for about twenty years, and on his death in 1248 left charitable funds for the poor of the city. The Foundation's assets are held in trust as an Endowment Fund for the benefit of both the Boys' Grammar and the Girls' Grammar. I am also responsible for signing all the cheques which go out of the school, and verifying the direct debits via an online link to the National Westminster Bank. This entails a session of 2-3 hours once a month. I am from time to time interviewed by the County Auditors to check that I know what I am doing!

The school is an inspiration. We are a Science Specialist school, and have 170 students taking Physics A level, the highest number of any state school in the country. The art and drama is outstanding, and we have a wide range of musical ensembles from jazz bands to full orchestra. The sports teams excel across a wide range of activities. Our Sixth Form, which takes girls as well as boys, is widely accepted in the neighbourhood as a good place to be, whatever subjects you wish to take, but especially if you aspire to a Russell Group university in

Science or Engineering or Mathematics. Our plans for the near future include facilities for cooking, including a café, a planetarium, and a new Science block. This has required the Resources Committee to take a very deep breath, having looked at all the plans, and to back the school to the hilt in its bids for funds from a variety of sources. I have been very pleased recently to welcome the Head Boy onto the Learning Committee, where his contribution is invaluable.

I am proud to be associated with the school, to be using skills and experience accumulated over a lifetime of work for the benefit of my community. Governors are very often needed: do think about applying. I can promise you will find it an interesting experience.

Diane Billam *Gamma Chapter*

GREAT BRITAIN ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

While travelling to various State Conventions during my time as European Regional Director and International speaker I was always impressed by the variety of awards given to members. I knew of the International Achievement Award but became aware that many State Organisations had their own Achievement Award. We discussed the idea of a GB Award and decided that it would be a way of honouring a member for something special. We agreed that there should be wide criteria to cover the Society Purposes. There were, of course, other things to consider - what should the award be and how would it be financed? It was finally agreed that the award would be given biennially and that it would be funded by gifts from members. It would also be awarded by the votes of all members. After a long search we chose a rose brooch of sterling silver and golden amber and we named it 'The Golden Rose for Sterling Service'. We raised enough money to buy five roses, giving us ten years of honour.

The first recipient was Lillian Lynch who courageously fought cancer for 10 years while continuing to serve Gamma Chapter and regularly attending State and International Conventions. After her death we named the award 'The Lillian Lynch Award' in her memory. The other recipients have been Phyllis Kern of Alpha, Loetitia Stone of Beta and Pamela Irons, initially of Alpha and then a founder member of Gamma. So we have one rose left to award in 2011.

We now have to begin looking to the future. Are we continuing the award or do we want to make changes? Can we raise more gift money to finance it and what form should it take? Then, finally, who is willing to organise the award, as after ten years it will be time for me to hand over to another member. It is not an onerous task as it only happens once every two years and I am more than willing to share my experience. However, like all things within this great Society, we must move forward and make any award fit for the present time. Please let the State President know if you are the person to take on this pleasant task. You will be pleased you did.

Anne Cattoor *Gamma Chapter*

HOME TEACHING



Home teaching, is not home schooling. There are no tests to take, no standards to meet and no curriculum that must be covered. On a primary level, home teaching is what most parents do every day without realizing it. Just as a typical lesson plan takes much preparation, taking our children's daily actions such as etiquette, dressing, and feeding themselves to the next level also needs some preplanning to become true lessons. Home teaching should be fun, stress free, spontaneously structured and child-led with a parent's gentle hand of guidance.

Being a mum of two now has been like my first day as a new teacher all over again, but with two completely different year levels in one classroom. I find myself falling back on my 10 years of formal training and experience in schools when it comes to raising and home teaching my boys. If you walk into my house at any given time you would find a typical family setting: no blackboards or rows of desks neatly situated in their own separate section of the house. Yet, we have a schedule which, for the most part, stays the same week to week; different 'subjects' are taught throughout the week, we have field trips and pop quizzes, just as you would in a formal school setting, all preparing them for what's ahead.

Far too often parents become 'suckered' into buying the latest fad that teaches their child "x". While in America recently, I saw an advert selling a reading program that teaches babies as early as 3 months through toddlers to read. They play on parents' fears by stating, "*Studies prove that the earlier a child learns to read, the better they perform in school and later in life. Early readers have more self-esteem and are more likely to stay in school.*" (www.yourbabycanread.com available at the URL accessed 27 November 2009). Parents spend \$199.95 (or £199.99 from the website) for this program to get their baby reading before their peers. The market playing on our parental insecurities is huge. Products like this are not necessary to produce intelligent, well-adjusted children. An activity as simple as cooking with your kids offers so many teachable moments, counting, fine motor skills (chopping vegetables), patience, listening, following instructions, food groups... the list is endless, but how many parents actually take the time to cook a meal with their child? Yes, it might be frustrating at the beginning, but isn't everything at first? As the German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, 'Treat a man as he is, he will remain so. Treat a man the way he can be and ought to be, and he will become as he can be and should be'.



Fairy Cake
batter mixing

I am blessed that I can stay home and teach my children during their impressionable years; however, working parents don't have to miss out on these early learning opportunities. The car ride to and from nursery or bath time are perfect

educational moments for children; taking advantage of these times, in the long run, has a great effect on them. They are listening even when they do not seem to be. I love home teaching, and while the hours are long and frustrating at times, just as they are in the classroom, I wouldn't trade this job for any other.

Elizabeth Chambers *Alpha Chapter*

JUDGING FOR THE TEACHING AWARDS

For over ten years all schools across England, Wales and Northern Ireland have been invited to nominate their most outstanding school governors, headteachers, teachers and teaching assistants for a Teaching Award. Anyone can make a nomination online. www.teachingawards.com

There are a number of different categories of award, all with sponsors, such as the National College for School Leadership, BT and The Royal Air Force. The award panel judges are all volunteers, many being previous award winners. They come from all aspects of education. I am a retired junior school headteacher and have been a judge for three years. My team has been responsible for the Department for Children, Schools and Families Award for Governor of the Year, London Area.

After nominations are received and endorsed, the team use this information to assess candidates against agreed criteria. We then do what I think is the best bit — visit the finalists in their schools and help the schools celebrate their governor's achievement. I set up the meetings and the schools provide a programme for the three of us. For a few hours we meet anyone and everyone who can contribute to our knowledge of the governor and the role they play. We meet staff, parents, governors, children, representatives from other organisations such as the local authority, all wanting to tell us about their amazing governor. I found this a wonderful, and often moving, experience.

The finalists, most of whom go on to the next stage, receive an invitation to their local awards ceremony and seminar. There are thirteen regional ceremonies and at each the awards are presented to the selected finalists in front of two hundred or so guests. These ceremonies offer a wonderful networking opportunity on a very special day dedicated to celebrating the achievements of schools and education professionals.

Judges are invited to the main UK ceremony, and this year eleven inspirational individuals and one outstanding school won a Gold Plato (see picture above). I was delighted that Spyros Elia, whom we had chosen to be the Winner of the DCSF Award in London, went on to win the national award. Spyros is Chair of Governors at two South London primary schools and is truly inspirational. The awards were televised from the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, Spyros' award being presented by TV's Choirmaster, Gareth Malone.



Diana Bell *Alpha Chapter*

GREAT BRITAIN STATE CONFERENCE 2010

Friday 16th – Sunday 18th April

The Chaucer Hotel
63 Ivy Lane, Canterbury, Kent,
Tel: 01227 464427



NURTURE AND INSPIRE

Speakers



Professor Carl Parsons, Professor of Education at Canterbury Christ Church University and Visiting Professor at the University of Greenwich.

Excluding children from school in England: killing (some of) our children slowly.

We have the worst rate of exclusions in Europe, and exclude younger children more than any other European country. Professor Parsons has researched school exclusions for sixteen years.

Dr Snezana Lawrence, a Lecturer in Mathematics Education at Bath Spa University, who until September 2009 taught mathematics and was the Director of the Langton Institute of Young Mathematicians in Canterbury.

Newton for Ladies.

Snezana has recently given this talk at the Royal Society.



Dr Becky Parker, MBE Head of Physics and Director of the Langton Star Centre.

The Langton Star Centre - how Physics can Come Alive for Young People.

Becky is Specialist Adviser to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee. She has recently made a ***Horizon*** programme explaining Quantum Theory.

European Regional Director, **Birgit Svensson**, will be travelling from Sweden to give us the latest Society news.



Other conference features include

Great Britain State Annual Business Meeting.

Friday Night Fun quiz led by renowned quiz master, Evelyn Goodsell. One rule: no arguing with the Quiz Master!

Saturday evening 4 course Gala dinner followed by singing together led by conductor of local U3A choir.

Sunday choices:

- a) Morning Service in Canterbury Cathedral.
- b) City Walk led by one of Canterbury's City Guides. This will include a visit to the Cathedral Precincts, always an inspiring sight. Cost £5.00 per person.
- c) A river trip: The architecture alongside the River Stour is very interesting, and the rowers are well informed. £7.50 per person.

Registration: Friday from 5 pm, Saturday from 8.45 am.

Please refer to Registration Form (enclosed and on web-site) for conference expenses.

Accommodation must be booked directly with the hotel.

Friday night

Twin/double (2 sharing) - £95 for two – dinner, bed and breakfast.

Twin/double (single occupancy) - £80 – dinner, bed and breakfast.

Single - £70 – dinner, bed and breakfast.

Saturday night

Twin/double (2 sharing) - £75 for two – bed and breakfast.

Twin/double (single occupancy) - £65 – bed and breakfast.

Single - £55 – bed and breakfast.

(Saturday less than Friday because the gala dinner is priced separately). See Registration Form.

The agreed rates are only available by booking direct with the Hotel and quoting the Delta Kappa Gamma Conference. These rates are not available via on-line booking.

NB The Chaucer Hotel is a listed building, with no lifts. All bedrooms are first floor or above. There is ample parking for guests available, in front of the hotel and just along Ivy Lane. There are also public car parks available alongside the City Wall, and in Holman Meadow long-stay for those staying for the weekend.

Ground floor accommodation is available at the **Falstaff Hotel** (near Westgate Towers). £75 room (double) only, with meals to be taken at the Chaucer and charged by them. Book via the Chaucer Hotel.

Do please come along! Book as soon as possible

Deadline for booking accommodation February 28th

Guests are very welcome.

Reminder. Training for incoming chapter presidents and treasurers will be offered at this event on Friday afternoon, see State President's letter. Nominate your 2010-2012 Chapter President and Vice President at a meeting soon. Ed

INTERNATIONAL SPEAKERS FUND: USA VISIT

After an amazing journey (the flight to Boston was very comfortable and I watched two movies), I caught the coach to Portland where Sue Stinchfield and her husband were waiting for me. The next morning, despite my jet-lag, it was straight into visiting schools for the next two days; first giving talks to teachers, then into the classrooms, talking about the importance of education; and, from my experience, what can happen if children don't put their hands up and ask the teacher for help.



All of the schools I visited were in new buildings and felt very spacious. All the teachers were very welcoming and couldn't do enough for me. I found that the numbers in the classes were smaller than over here, the atmosphere seemed calmer and it felt you could give the children more time. Some children start school as early as 7.30am and finish at 2.00pm, which I thought was a bit much. What I also found strange were the intercom announcements which occurred

quite often and interrupted lessons. There are stars and stripes flags everywhere. Every day the children stand up, put their hands on their hearts and swear allegiance to their country – I thought this was very cute. Altogether I visited over five schools and an adult education centre where my visit was filmed for local television.

Then it was the two-day Conference. The location was absolutely fabulous – I could see the sea from my bed. The Conference building was all glass. The first day of the Conference I spent getting my display ready and mingling with the many ladies who were beginning to arrive. I was getting very nervous about my talk and workshop, which I was to give the following day. The feedback from those who attended my workshop was excellent – they loved the story about my journey from the beginning, in the community flat, to where I am now, particularly when I had my first encounter with Tony Blair.

As for my talk, I showed the DVD of my play, then went on to give my talk, which was filmed. The questions afterwards showed that the audience had listened intently and had been moved by my talk. Just before I sat down, I presented the President with a plaque and letter from the Lord Mayor of Plymouth. After the letter was read out, everyone spontaneously burst out the National Anthem. I felt so proud to be there and to be a member of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society – and also to be British. Even though it felt like my feet hardly touched the ground,

there were times when Sue and I went for some wonderful tours – to the mountains, where I saw buffalo, on a foliage trip, to the flower gardens, the lakes, and a shopping mall. The whole experience is going to stay with me for ever, and I would particularly like to thank Sue and her husband who were such wonderful hosts. Also, thank you to the ISF for the sponsorship which gave me the opportunity to go. If there are any future invitations to speak anywhere in the States, I'll be there!

Sue Torr MBE Beta Chapter

VISITING OUR LONDON PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Primary schools are highly valued havens of educational and social activity:

'It quickly became clear (from our extensive research) that while primary schools are under intense pressure, they are in good heart. Highly valued by children and parents, for some they are the one point of stability and positive values in a world where everything else is uncertain.' (Cambridge Primary Review 2009)

Many teachers and support staff find working in a primary school is a privilege. Although there are always shortcomings, it is a job from which staff gain much job satisfaction, most importantly the involvement with children at the age when they are highly responsive and sometimes quite dependant. Equally a visit to a colourful, active primary school in session is a delight and for some a life-changing experience. One of my responsibilities (as a college lecturer, Ed) is organising a primary school visit for young men from other professions considering working with children. They are astounded by how committed they feel about the prospect of changing their work, sometimes involving a considerable drop in salary, to take on a vocation where they feel they can affect young lives.



But some primary schools are not as friendly as they think they are. They are generally close communities who do not always appear welcoming to outsiders. They are also obliged to have robust security systems, which usually mean high fences to deter intruders and confine their charges. We have all been horrified by the disastrous attacks from dangerous members of the public and some children are not always happy in school and might try to escape. It is a challenge for schools to be welcoming at all with such constraints.



But once you have stood at the gate and buzzed reception, declared who you are, the purpose of your visit and walked around the playground following stencilled feet on the tarmac or notices signalling the office, then you are greeted by welcoming displays, often in many languages, and

pictures of the staff and pupils smiling out at visitors.

But the signing-in process is still not complete until you have signed the visitors book with the purpose of your visit (again), point of contact and who you are and who you work for. Only when you have fixed a visitor badge to your clothing are you permitted to venture into the corridors and classrooms. Fortunately there is no requirement yet to carry round your CRB check, although all regular visitors are required to have one. The government increasingly seeks to 'police' all access.

Schools are also very busy places. Reception staff are kept on their toes responding to visitors, phone calls, staff and pupils and everyone is in a hurry to have their needs attended to – such is the pace of life in offices and classrooms alike, with adults attempting to satisfy constant series of demands from needy youngsters.

When I go into schools it certainly helps to have a role and a purpose, which is sometimes to assess a student's teaching performance or to consult with the Head or Deputy about developing the Teacher Training Partnership they have with my University. It helps that I have my own badge with my university workplace visible. It identifies me and gives me status, which enables me to get things done. I feel valued when I can pass on years of classroom experience constructively to help a beginner teacher to make progress, and particularly excited when I recognise a talented student with demonstrably effective professional skills.



Although these observations might be generic, schools do present very different cultures. This is largely dependent on staff, both teachers and support staff. Some treat you as a visitor and attend to every need, others greet you as a colleague. The initial reception might be marginally less welcoming, but they are sometimes more purposeful in getting things done.

Developing a good relationship with the head teacher or senior member of staff makes the world of difference. Immediately you are included in the culture and purpose of the school. Staff share their concerns and successes.

They love to have an audience to share the progress of their class and pupils.

Many of my visits to schools are made at the end of the school day to work with small groups of teachers studying research papers and discussing how this theory relates to their practice. These teachers are working over three years to achieve a Masters in Education. They comment on the demanding learning curve required, but the increased motivation and job satisfaction they experience as a result of their enhanced understanding of policy, theory and practice.

At the end of the day schools are empty soulless places, increasingly comfortable in the 21st Century through the Building Schools for the Future Programme with architecture-designed offices, classrooms and concourse spaces decorated with children's work, but quiet and devoid of the hustle and bustle that makes schools the modern, high-tech, noisy and colourful environments for our new young generations of learners.

Liz Day Alpha Chapter

BOOKS THAT INSPIRED ME

Ruth Jordan recalls books which have had an early influence on her life-long love of reading:

Beatrix Potter *The Tale of Samuel Whiskers*

When I was six years old my mum brought home a baby brother, but he was too small to talk or have fun with. I was told not to visit my parents' bedroom before 8am. So bliss, bliss, bliss, I read my new Beatrix Potter book, but was deeply worried about poor Tom Kitten's plight. Ever since then I have always kept one rescue cat, in the house at least! My parents knew that I would always be content with books for birthday or Christmas. This is true to this day!

This very afternoon the electrician is coming around to finalise my new home library (I have filled every shelf, yes!) when he fits spotlights to the base of the top shelf and slips the fuse into the fuse box. Eureka!

As a young, newly-trained teacher, I was also moved by Nevil Shute's book *The Pied Piper*, which details the journey of children being rescued from war-torn Europe, and being brought safely, eventually, to England. I was riveted and spent years doing extra courses in order to work more effectually with young and Special Needs people.

Ruth Jordan Beta Chapter

CHAPTER REPORTS

ALPHA CHAPTER

In September we welcomed Brenda Pearson from Texas. She joined our visit to the Foundling Museum, where we learnt about Thomas Coram, the Foundation, and the links with Hogarth and Handel. Brenda also joined us at our September meeting where Dorcas Rogers put forward strategies for a project for members to support students with their application and interview skills.

October saw Alpha learning about the history of Rotherhithe - see page 22.

In November a few of us visited the John Soane Museum in Lincolns Inn Fields. This was the home of John Soane R.A. (1753-1837) and the setting for his collection of antiquities and works of art.



Qaisra, Dorcas & Liz enjoying their tour around Rotherhithe

Rotherhithe Historical Walk. In October a number of us set off from Bermondsey Tube Station for a fascinating riverside walk, hearing about the history of Rotherhithe. We learned about Prince Lee Boo, a prince from the Islands of Pelew (Palau), North Pacific Ocean, who came to London in 1784. Our guide, Robert Hulse, from the Brunel Museum, ended his talk at the Museum with welcome warm refreshments after the bitter cold outside.



Dorcas introduced us to the Rev'd Andrew Doyle and we enjoyed a talk from him about the history of Holy Trinity Church and its mural by Hans Feibusch. This church replaced the one that was the first to be destroyed by bombs during the Blitz of World War 2.

After visiting the Harvest Festival at Surrey Quays Farm the day ended with a walk through the Stave Hill Eco Park finishing at Canada Water.

In October and November some of us attended the meetings in Cambridge.

Forthcoming Meetings

23 January, 2.00pm. St Mary's College, Twickenham. *Training teachers of today to teach pupils of tomorrow*, Liz Day and Carolyn Olton.

27 February. Venue to be confirmed, speaker TBA.

27 March. Venue to be confirmed, speaker TBA.

15 May. St Mary's College, speaker TBA.

June. Visit to The Royal Society Summer Exhibition at the Southbank Centre.

19 June Sydenham Music Festival for Children, lunch at Barbara's House.

Private Tour of The Royal Society by Joanna Corden, Archivist. Date TBA.

We look forward to hearing from Qaisra Khan about her Everest expedition.

Barbara Kern *Alpha Chapter President*

BETA CHAPTER

Three of our members are dealing with difficult problems in their lives, including serious health issues. We salute their courage and wish them all the very best. It was therefore a depleted group that met in October, though I must say we made up for it in the lively spirit generated. I wish I had recorded everything that members had to say about the books that had particularly inspired them and opened up for them 'the adventure of reading'. I hope to be able to get some written accounts to publish on the web in due course. (See Ruth's report on page 21). There was added excitement due to the fact that Sue Torr had only a few days previously returned from her wonderfully successful International Speaker visit to the USA (for report see page 18).

We are also very grateful to the Finance Committee for allowing us funds to-

wards expansion. Some plans are necessarily on hold now until next year; however, thanks to further generous support, we will be getting trifolds with additional contact information about ourselves placed in all Plymouth public libraries.

Forthcoming meetings:

16 January. TBC Speaker TBA

3 July. TBC Speaker TBA

2 October. TBC Speaker TBA

All meetings 11.00 for 11.30, held at 17 Hartley Avenue unless otherwise stated.

Gail Gladwin *Beta Chapter Caretaker President*

GAMMA CHAPTER

We started the new year with a very interesting and thought-provoking talk by Evelyn who spoke about 'Our Impact on the Environment', in her capacity as a member on the international Personal Growth and Services Committee. She touched on many issues including Promoting the Arts, Lifelong Learning, Effective Communication and Healthy Living. She asked members to list 10 'green activities' and this promoted a lively discussion and a plethora of ideas.

Jennifer Longton was introduced as the new Gamma Treasurer as Kathy is now State Treasurer. Kathy gave everyone a copy of a very effective diagram 'Where does my Money Go?'

On October 10th nine members from Gamma Chapter attended the Cambridge Expansion meeting at Addenbrooke's Hospital to hear Terri Apter's talk about Relationships between Siblings. Several members followed this up by attending the meeting on November 28th.

Our meeting in October was a talk by Elizabeth Allen. It was a fascinating insight into Sex Trafficking and the problems and misconceptions of what seems to be a growing issue.

We were delighted to welcome Pat Walker to our November meeting. She told us about the Southside Young Leaders Academy. Her talk was very illuminating and members showed their interest by the many questions they asked. We were all impressed by what a wonderful and worthwhile project this is.

We have an interesting programme for the coming year and hope members will bring guests. We are all actively trying to recruit new members. I am pleased to say two members who have gone abroad to live have become Reserve members and they hope to continue to be involved with Delta Kappa Gamma.

Forthcoming Meetings

16 January. *Communicating Without Speech*, Rebecca Large.

20 February. *Travels in Tibet*, Dorothy Haley.

20 March. *The Story of the Wakehurst Seedbank*, John Withall

8 May. *Aspects and the impact of Poetry*, Alexander Stillier

June, date to be arranged, a return to Glyndebourne

All meetings 10.00 for 10.30 are at Beechwood School unless otherwise stated.

Robbie Scahill *Gamma Chapter President*



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PRINTER

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

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