



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



EUROPEAN FORUM COMMITTEE

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Photo on front cover shows the European Forum Committee Members: Dagmar Ullman (Germany), Heli Piikki-la (Finland), Anu Ariste (Estonia), Riet Smits-Hoenederken (Netherlands), Ingibjorg Jonasdottir (Iceland), Marika Heimbach (Germany), Ingrid Christiansen (Norway), Sheila Roberts (GB), Catherine Bringselius Nilsson (Sweden).

Once again we have had a great year in DKG Great Britain. I hope the contents of this edition will give an indication of how busy we have been in the past year: lots of meetings, our own very successful State Conference in Tonbridge, the European Regional Conference in August in Amsterdam.

The year to come offers just as much promise. You will find within reference to our GB State Conference at Aylesford Priory, such a great venue, to our joint Alpha/Gamma meeting in May at the London Institute of Education, and to the DKG International Convention at the end of July in Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. These are also listed on page 9.

There were also some very enjoyable Chapter meetings, with more to come this year. See the Chapter Reports on the last few pages to illustrate this point. If you add that to the DKG Opportunities listed on page 14, you can see why we should try to make this the year when we introduce more women educators to the advantages of being a DKG member.

Please let me have any contributions for the Summer edition of GB News, by post or attachment to email, by 23 April. Text in Word or similar is best. Accompanying photos are especially welcome. dbillam@hotmail.com.

Diana Bell

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT: 2013-2015



As we move into 2014, I would like to thank our chapter officers for their hard work during the last year: Planning, finding interesting speakers and venues, running business meetings and organising visits and parties all add up to making DKG an interesting and fun organisation.

Now is the time to think about electing **chapter officers for the new biennium**. I hope that many of you will consider taking on the role of Chapter President, Vice-President or Chapter Treasurer and put yourself forward. Training is provided at the State Conference, members of your chapter can be asked to take on roles to help you, and there are plenty of members who can be asked for advice. We will announce the names of new chapter officers at our State Conference.

I am delighted that Kathy Hodgson, our State Treasurer and Vice-President, has been nominated to join the International Finance Committee, a very prestigious position. Jess Curtis' idea for a new DKG song, put forward at the Regional Conference in Amsterdam, is coming to fruition. Ros Price has drafted some lyrics and Carol Dawson is working on fitting lyrics to music.

State committees have been busy. The Membership Committee put together plans for expansion. According to the latest statistics, Great Britain membership is slowly growing. We welcome new Alpha member, Penny Kinnear, and our first Associate member, Elisha Wagstaff, Ronnie's daughter. Sheila Roberts, our Membership Committee Chair, has been giving consideration to how we might invite young educators to join us. Do think who you might invite, a group of young people could meet and discuss their own concerns.

The Conference Committee has been hard at work preparing for our State Conference in Aylesford, Kent, at the end of March. So many members said they had enjoyed the last conference there, (the peaceful atmosphere was often mentioned) and looking at prices elsewhere, it seemed a good idea to return. Do help our State Treasurer by booking early!

We have an interesting conference programme. We enjoyed Dorcas Rogers' son Kevin's talk so much last time that when he offered to tell us about his year of teacher training in Croydon, we jumped at the chance. We are also delighted that Dr Lace Marie Brogden, the Northwest Regional Director, will join us. A member since 1994, Lace says that she feels fortunate to have served the

Society in a variety of roles, both within her home province of Saskatchewan, and internationally. She balances service to DKG with her full time, professional work at the University of Regina, Canada, as Director of the French teacher education program, the *Baccalauréat en éducation française*. She has two children and says that her most important life work is that of mother, daughter, wife and friend. Lace will update us on Society business and then speak on our conference theme, '**Develop Your Voice: Inspire Others**'. She will be followed by our Keynote Speaker Dr Lesley Hendry telling us about the voice and how we might look after it. This will be followed by a very special session with the Weald Storytellers.

The biggest event of the biennium is the International Convention, this year in Indianapolis. Attending a convention is a great way to network, see DKG in action and make friends. There are always 'top-notch' speakers, and members provide interesting workshops. Do consider joining us there.

DKG offers many rewards besides friendship, networking and travel opportunities, for example the Cornetet Professional Development Fund, (also available to non-members). These funds can be used for conference/seminar expenses, online courses, workshops and other non-degree programs. For more information go to www.dkgef.org, you can also find out more about our wonderful organisation at www.dkg.org.

We have a wide educational remit for members and meetings. We all know someone who would make an excellent member, why not ask them?

Diana Bell



This photo shows Ingibjorg Jonasdottir from Iceland, who chairs the European Forum Committee, and Marika Heimbach, from Germany, who is the current European Regional Director. (See Sheila's report on the next few pages)

EUROPEAN FORUM COMMITTEE MEETING, NOVEMBER 2013

This year's meeting of the European Forum Committee was held in Rastede in North Germany. The original plan was to have it in Denmark, at the home of Mette Plug, Denmark's State President. Sadly, a few weeks before the date, Mette's house burnt to the ground. She lost everything, but thankfully, nobody was injured. Incredibly, none of the delegates had already booked flights to Denmark. Marika Heimbach, Regional Director, and Dagmar Ullman offered to host the meeting in Rastede. The nearest airport is Bremen, but flights were from Stansted at such an early hour, I would have had to leave home at 2.30am. I didn't relish that, nor the train journey to Rastede from Bremen. Harry kindly agreed to come with me, flying from Manston into Amsterdam, hiring a car, and then drove us to North Germany. Ingibjorg Jonasdottir, who had also flown into Amsterdam, came with us.

The committee meeting was held in the beautiful home of Marika, with husband Hans being chef for the weekend, - and what a fine accomplished chef he is! (Thanks to the storm of the previous week they had a tree through their roof, but they carried on regardless!) The meeting, meticulously planned and efficiently chaired by Ingibjorg, lasted the whole of Saturday. The agenda was comprehensive. There was discussion on matters arising from the meeting in Amsterdam and minor changes to Forum Operational Guidelines. These included 'Forum Committee meets annually for planning and discussion, **preferably** in first weekend of November'. The ongoing matter of timing of the European Conference was discussed as several of our members are unable to attend because term starts earlier than the time of the conference. It was agreed that Marika would raise the matter, yet again, with DKG's Admin Board.

Financial matters were discussed including Regional Director's expenses and the agreed contributions of 1 euro per member from each state to help meet those expenses. As has previously been the case, two countries have not yet contributed. It was agreed that the contribution of 25 Euros from each country for the European Achievement Award would be collected in 2014. It was suggested that individual voluntary contributions for Emergency Fund be taken at each State Conference. The Forum's SAP was also discussed, including communication between European countries. Use of European website was high on the agenda. In Amsterdam we had such excellent workshops on educational matters, that it seemed a shame to simply drop the discussions. Consequently, members are urged to send in projects on educational matters and to open discussion groups on the website. Some may wish to start a blog.

There was much enthusiasm for Jess's agreed proposal for a new DKG song. As an example and to generate enthusiasm, I took copies of the lyrics written by Rosalind Price from Gamma Chapter, plus the DVD which she had made. It was in an unfinished state but everybody was really impressed with Ros's words, noting how they caught the character and spirit of modern DKG. Members agreed to contact State Presidents to urge members to be creative and write their own compositions. (As I write this at only 3 weeks after the meeting, I have heard that a Norwegian member has produced a song already). In GB, Carol Dawson has offered to compose the music for Ros's lyrics. The committee agreed to post the songs on the European website, and allow a two month period from when they are all posted, for members (or chapters) to choose the winning song.

Membership issues were high on the agenda. Marika circulated her survey of the needs and attitudes of younger members from the Amsterdam Regional Conference. One proposal is that 'interest' groups could be a feature of conferences, eg a meeting of language teachers, a meeting for younger teachers. Marika wondered about a 'special branch' of DKG younger members. This latter poses a problem. What is the cut off age for eligibility of 'young'? When and how do you tell a person they are no longer eligible for membership of the 'youth wing'? I shared our GB idea of inviting student, non-dues paying 'associate' membership, for those training as teachers. This idea met a lot of approval and members will share it with their own Executive Boards.

Before and after the day's work, there was plenty of play. On Friday evening we all enjoyed a superb dinner at the home of Dagmar Ullman. This was despite the fact that she had been teaching all day and her husband was very ill in hospital. (Thankfully he is now recovered and back at home). It was a wonderful way of relaxing after the long journeys and getting to know the other committee members. On Saturday evening Marika and Hans put on a big surprise party for everybody. Local chapter members and their spouses were all invited. The evening started with entertainment by two musicians: a violinist who also sang, and a pianist who is also a DKG member – and is British, teaching Latin in Rastede! Towards the end of the evening there was yet another unexpected treat, - a performance of Irish dancing by a German DKG member.

We all departed on Sunday, with some of us taking in The Cabbage Festival (!) in nearby Oldnburgh. Harry and I then drove to Groningen, where we stayed with Yvonne van Buhl and her husband, Guus, another wonderful cook! The next day they showed us the sights of Groningen, culminating in a very pleasant lunch where we met up with Trijny and Riet.

What a very memorable weekend: great company, interesting discussions and a wonderful party atmosphere- when not working. Naturally, there was a downside. It was November so the weather was awful! I felt that the weekend showed so clearly, the advantages of DKG: shared hospitality, lively relationships and friendships between fellow Europeans who share similar values.

Sheila Roberts (*Gamma Chapter*)

EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION FUNDS

Do take some time to look at these funds—there may be something which is just right for you for an educational project!



**Members and non-members
are eligible to apply
for Educational Foundation funds for
educational projects and for professional
development at WWW.DKGEF.ORG.
Due dates vary.**

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Looking at the latest figures on DKG Membership it was nice to see that Britain has actually increased rather than decreased in membership figures, but sadly this is only an increase of five over the last two years. Iceland and Sweden still have more than six times the membership we have. Why are we staying as a 'best kept secret' in Britain? For nearly a hundred years invitation to become a member of DKG has been an honour. We need to make DKG really known in Britain. It is time for us to make a major effort to increase membership.

We would like to reach out to those studying to become teachers, and invite them to become non-dues paying Associate Members during their study years. If current members have contacts within this group, invite them to come as day delegates to the conference at Aylesford. It would be really great to have a large number of young teachers and students training for teaching share their ideas at the conference-also at chapter meetings too, of course.

NB A large group coming together would be less intimidating than one person attending a meeting alone.

Sheila Roberts (*Gamma Chapter, Chair Membership Committee*)

2014 will be a special year for DKG GB!

**Annual Conference: Aylesford Priory, Friday 28 March—
Sunday 30 March 2014**

For details see centre pages, and make sure you fill in and return your application form, included as a separate insert with this edition of GB News.

**Special joint meeting between Alpha and Gamma Chapters:
17 May 2014, Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London
WC1.**

For more detail see the Alpha Chapter Report and Programme on page 15. Put the date in your diary now—this event was a great success last year, and we hope to see many of you again this year!

**DKG 2014 International Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana,
USA, from 28 July to 1 August.**

Please refer to the DKG website for more details. The International conventions, held on `even` years (Regional Conferences are on `odd` years!) are always most enjoyable events. Hotel details are now up on the website, as is information on tours.

The following article by Unity Harvey is included here because of the importance of the topic to DKG, which as an international organisation takes a special interest in the teaching of languages, especially additional languages.

EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE

SECOND GENERAL SESSION

Friendship in Education Worldwide

Ruby Trebels opened the meeting. Kate York introduced Dr Adriana Fishta-Beiko who most GB members had already met. (See GB news Summer 2013) Her talk, entitled Teaching English as a Second Language, emphasized her views that for teaching to happen so too must learning; that emersion in a language is insufficient, structure and therefore grammar must be taught too.

We were all pleased to move around under Mari Lauk's direction before settling down again to listen to five talks describing different DKG educational projects.

Taina Hokkanen talked about teaching Finnish to immigrant women who meet for six hours together daily to discuss relevant topics such as health and illness, education, customs and habits.

Moniker Huber's talk was called Tandem, linking education to a moving bicycle, always moving forward at speed with more than one rider who have an aim. Progression will be different according to the age, capabilities and strengths of the riders. The system started in Switzerland with immigrant children spending two to three afternoons with German speaking Swiss families in order to reduce prejudice and enhance cultural knowledge.

Florence Naduk described a project in Eastern Uganda, which had government sponsorship and had benefitted from DKG funding. Few children go to school and only 10% of those who finish primary school go on to secondary education. Children are given scholarships to boarding schools to avoid pressure from home and local peer groups. They would otherwise be working at subsistence level or under. They are even given food for the holidays to enable them to come back the following term.

Carole Stirling described our own project linked with UNICEF and African Governments to provide more teachers and prevent child “drop out”. There is a particular need to provide safe, clean water and separate sanitation for girls. There is a need for education about hygiene and protection against HIV and Aids.

Ingela Högburg described the SIWA project, which also receives DKG funding. The people live by an oasis with about 25,000 inhabitants in the Egyptian Desert. Food is grown in their gardens and tourists are few. Girls, who make bride shawls earning a dollar a day, wish to learn English to avoid the middle-man when selling their products. Some achieve a certificate in English proficiency but at seventeen get married and can only work if their husbands allow it. One, who is paid, has a course in her home for eight dysfunctional children. Another has a sewing machine workshop in her home; shift workers mean it is in constant use.

Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)

See also the article about Gamma Chapter`s visit to Pestalozzi Village on 23 November, included within Gamma`s Chapter Report.



THE NETHERLANDS: The schoolroom seemed familiar

After the Regional conference we visited the outdoor Zuiderzee Museum at Enkhuizen.

This collection of houses belonged to villages that were in the former Zuiderzee. Schokland, for example, was an island slowly going down, the soil was weak and the sea wall affected by ship-worm. An evacuation was announced by Royal Decree in 1858 and people had to move elsewhere. They received compensation and were allowed to take any materials with them.

Houses in the museum belonged to fishermen, brush makers, coffin makers and other artisans. The 1905 school room seemed familiar, but the cloakroom was full of clogs!



Great Britain State Conference



The Friars, Aylesford Priory
Aylesford, Kent ME20 7BX

Friday 28th - Sunday 30th March 2014

Develop Your Voice: Inspire Others

KEYNOTE SPEAKER : Dr Lesley Hendy

The Teacher's Voice

Lesley will talk about the importance of the teacher's voice in effective teaching and learning. She will describe the impact of the human voice on children's ability to process information and of her voice training programme, called 'the5voices'. Lesley is a senior research associate for Homerton College, Cambridge.



INTERNATIONAL SPEAKER: Dr Marie Lace Brogden

International News

Since 1994 Lace has served the Society in a variety of roles. Currently the Northwest Regional Director she balances service to DKG with her full time professional work at the University of Regina, Canada, as Director of the French teacher education program.



Develop Your Voice: Inspire Others

Have you ever lost your voice (literally or figuratively)? Have you ever claimed or reclaimed voice?

Using a poetic and metaphoric approach to voice, Lace will share perspectives on women and voice, and the ways in which we can raise our voices for ourselves, for others and for our idea(l)s.

Saturday afternoon



THE WEALD STORYTELLERS:

Mark Bedford and Pat Robson

Stories of pilgrims and pilgrimage.



After supper on Friday

SPEAKER: Kevin Sewell

Finding my Teaching Voice

After some years as a school support assistant and then technician, Kevin, who is registered blind, decided to train as a teacher. He will speak about his experience of teacher training in a Croydon school.



OTHER CONFERENCE FEATURES:

- * Annual General Meeting
- * Training for the new Chapter Officers
- * Music and movement
- * Schools for Africa display
- * Members' own Art and Craft display
- * Raffle and Book sale
- * Registration opens 6.00pm on Friday and 8.45am on Saturday.

Sunday Morning visit to Rochester

Explore this historical gem. Rochester Castle, built circa 1127, towers above the River Medway. Close by are Britain's second oldest cathedral, built about 604, (a place of Pilgrimage), the 17th century Guildhall, now a museum with a Dickens' display, Six Poor Travellers House, a 16th century lodge for weary travellers, and Restoration House (Dickens' Satis House, home of Miss Havesham). There are also many historic buildings, shops and cafés along the High Street.

DKG GALLERY OF FINE ARTS

The DKG Gallery of Fine Arts went live on our international website in November 2013. This is a splendid avenue towards publication through DKG for any member interested in submitting original essays, plays, poetry, or short stories. The Gallery can be located at <https://www.dkg.org/content/dkg-gallery-fine-arts>.

Information on how to submit creative works can be found at

<https://www.dkg.org/content/arts-humanities-procedures-submission>. The next submission period will be January 1 - February 1 2014. Come on, all you creative people! Go for it!

INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

Our European representative on the International Scholarship Committee is Riitta-Liisa Arplainen from Finland,. She has asked State Presidents to promote the International Scholarship Application which is due 1 February 2014. Up to 30 scholarships may be awarded annually. The scholarship amount is \$6000 for Master Degree candidates and \$10000 for Doctoral Degree candidates. Riitta-Liisa says that this is a huge opportunity for European candidates, but not many applications have been sent from Europe in recent years.

Last year five scholarship applications were sent from Europe, and five scholarships were awarded to: Svana Fridriksdottir (Iceland), Katrin Kalamees-Ruubel (Estonia), Hillevi Larsson (Sweden) Marja Leena Niitemaa (Finland) and Anu Sepp (Estonia).

This is another brilliant opportunity of membership that we in GB State are not taking up. It is also something we should be pointing out to potential new members, especially the younger ones who may be contemplating further study. Criteria and scholarship applications are available on the Society website at www.dkg.org. On the website, click on Committees, then under the category `Society Mission and Purposes`, click on Scholarships for information and the interactive application, listed under 2014-2015 Scholarship Application.

Diane Billam (State Editor)

ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT

In October we met at London South Bank University where we enjoyed a fascinating talk by Sandra Doyle on, **Micro Moths and Pickled Heads Illustrating and Curating in Owens 'Cathedral to Nature'**. Sandra, who volunteers at the Natural History Museum, showed us many examples of micro moths and explained how her job entails checking their details and carefully pinning them into new display trays ready for research use. She also spoke about her training and work as an illustrator, one of an ever decreasing number of specialists in this field, all done painstakingly by hand. She showed us some of her fabulous illustrations and explained how she had researched her brief (sometimes from pickled specimens) for illustrating a book about bats.

It was good to spend time with the speaker. Alpha members discussed the kind of meetings they would be having and had decided that there should be some full-length business meetings, some business enacted by e-mail, and some meetings where the speaker was allowed plenty of time to give their talk and for members' questions. Dorcas Rogers, Chapter President, was keen to point out that since speakers put such a lot of time and effort into preparing their work that they should be given enough time to present it and answer questions.

Holy Trinity Church, Rotherhithe, Church Hall, was the venue for our party in November. We decided that it was best to have lunch first before getting started on the handicrafts. The buffet lunch was delicious as usual. The room was then set up by Dorcas and Ray Rogers with all sorts of wonderful things to make cards and wreaths; a variety of ribbons, berries, dried fruit, pine cones, holly, and much more. Plenty of goodies for us to play with! There was a fair amount of chat and amusement along the way, but we ended up with some reasonable looking wreaths and cards.

Dorcas Rogers has had to step down from her role as Chapter President due to pressure of work.

Future meetings:

18 January 2014. 2.00pm at Dulwich Hamlet Junior School. Claire Purcell will take us on a tour of the new classrooms built for the 'overflow' and taking this outstanding school to four-form entry. We will also see the newly renovated Year 3 classrooms. This will be followed by a business meeting.

1st March 2014, (please note change of date). 11.00am, visit to the Geffrye Museum, London E2 8EA. This museum is devoted to the history of the home. It shows how 'homes and gardens reflect changes in society, behaviour, style and taste over the past 400 years'. Entry is free.

28th, 29th, 30th March 2014. State Conference, Aylesford. **Develop Your Voice: Inspire Others**.

26th April 2014. Venue and details yet to be decided.

17th May 2014. 1.30 for 2.00pm start, joint Alpha and Gamma meeting at the Institute of Education, Bedford Way, London WC1. Liz Stopani, who is an Alpha member and Specialist Support Teacher at the Archbishop Lanfranc School, Croydon, plus another speaker.

28th June 2014. Alpha visit TBA.

July and August 2014. Summer outings to fit in with members' wishes.

Diana Bell (*Past Alpha Chapter President*)



At the October meeting Sandra Doyle showed us some of her wonderful illustrations. It was particularly impressive to view them close-up, to get a better idea of the amazing detail which is involved.

At the same meeting Alpha Chapter were pleased to welcome a new member, Penny Kinnear. The picture shows Dorcas Rogers, Chapter President and Lavinia Soul, Chapter Vice-President, with Penny after her initiation.



MICRO MOTHS AND PICKLED HEADS

Sandra's work involves illustrating and curating in the Natural History Museum (Richard Owen's 'Cathedral to Nature'). All her illustrations are hand drawn: nothing is computer generated. Her work is either in the main building, designed by Alfred Waterhouse and opened in 1881, or in the modern Darwin Centre Phase 2, where the Life Sciences Department is centred. Within it is the DC2 Cocoon, a concrete structure, within which are stored 10 million Lepidoptera specimens (moths and butterflies) within 80,000 wooden drawers, in controlled temperature and humidity, arranged so that new cabinets can be introduced on easily moveable compactors. All these creatures have scales on their wings, which makes them fragile. Sandra's work involves removal of specimens from field collection boxes, stage-mounting them and attaching data labels. They can be distinguished by the fact that butterflies have knobs on the end of their antenna, whereas moths' antennae are feathery. They also have a different wing position at rest.

The main task is the curation of the world Cochylini in the British Museum collection. There are around 7000 specimens of 400 species. They had to be moved from the old cork-lined drawers to plastazote lined unit trays. Specimens were amalgamated to incorporate new accessions and supplementary collections. The cork linings were removed and disposed of, and the drawers cleaned ready for re-use.

Sandra then showed us portfolios of her astonishing art work, which exemplified an amazing level of skill and dedication.

Barbara Kern (*Alpha Chapter*)

ALPHA CHAPTER'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Unity has always been able to think outside the box.... Whether we decorated with oranges and cinnamon stick or holly and baubles we all made neat circular symmetrical creations. They were pleasing and looked good. But not Unity, hers was inspirational - an exploding firework, with a trail of holly and silver sparkles. If we sent it to the heavens, we would have a newly discovered comet. It will look amazing gracing her front door.

We arranged our Christmas party meeting early so that we could make cards and wreathes and table decorations for Christmas. I arrived at our Christmas gathering at Rotherhithe on a number C10 bus. This was a good start as I have always shied away from travelling on the bus in London. Admittedly I only took it

from the station at Canada Water....but finding the Church hall with such surprising simplicity gave me that feel good factor to begin the day. Dorcas had already set up the side tables with ribbons and bows, red, green and gold and tinsel and baubles and card and glue and all manner of sparkly things. Similar, although more sophisticated, to the supplies we used to put out for the children at Christmas-time. This time it had been done for us. Added to this was a large quantity of holly gathered from Unity's garden.

I like 'Bring Something' buffets, as there is always a new and interesting dish, to tickle the taste buds. When I arrived there was already an array of salads and meats and cheeses sitting temptingly on a side table and as more members came so the banquet grew and the variety grew with it. We decided to have lunch before making wreathes and cards. Over lunch, Dorcas informed us of the ideas raised by Gamma chapter, resulting from the talk by Susan Walton, the Director of the Pestalozzi International Village Trust. The thinking is that as part of our charitable projects we support the UK Pestalozzi work. An immediate requirement is for donations of suitable winter clothing and shoes for the students who arrive from hot countries ill prepared for the British winters. This gave us much 'Food for thought', a charitable project that we could relate to, at a more local level, supporting students at the Pestalozzi base in East Sussex.

The wine was drunk and the chatter began and a convivial clearing of the tables made space for our creative sides to emerge. Some began with cards, most of us began with wreathes. As you can see, from our photo, for a bunch of amateurs we have produced some fine examples. I think you could almost eat Liz's orange and cinnamon ring. It would complement the fine fruit liquors that were being sold to raise funds for the church. The afternoon passed quickly, and it was soon time to clear the room and return home. This I did, laden down with assorted purchases from the church stall and my unfinished wreath (faced with a crowded train journey back to the frozen north I decided not to add the holly). Maybe I should 'copy' Unity with some off-centre green additions, to finish it off.

Our Advent Party was a really enjoyable experience, good company, good food, wine, conversation, and creative activities with a purpose.

Lavinia Soul (Alpha Chapter)



Alpha members demonstrate their Christmas wreaths. Diana Bell took the photographs.

Lavinia enjoys the extensive buffet



BETA CHAPTER REPORT

We met for Christmas on Wednesday 18 December at the Plymouth Arts Centre. It made an unusual and agreeable meeting place. Lunch was served upstairs in nice Christmassy surroundings and we had a good catch-up time with the members able to attend. Downstairs, the independent cinema was showing 'Gravity' for those brave enough.

In spite of current difficulties (ill-health, bereavement) the Chapter is proud to be supporting the work of Sue Torr, and she and Jess are forging ahead with Plymouth University links. So we are hoping 2014 will bring us greater successes to report soon.

Meanwhile, best wishes to Alpha and Gamma for a sparkling New Year.

Gail Gladwin (Beta Chapter President)

GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT

The chapter held three meetings in the autumn. On **7 September** Gloria gave a talk about her ataxia. She suffers from Ataxia SCA 6, a debilitating hereditary condition for which there is no cure, and the disease is progressive, with worsening symptoms such as poor balance, difficulty in walking, fear of heights, tiredness, etc. Ataxia UK hopes that, possibly through stem cell technology, a cure will eventually be found. We were all very impressed with Gloria's clear-eyed and courageous acceptance of her condition, and thank her for enlightening us. On **26 September** at Sheila's house Dorothy Swann gave us an illustrated talk about Amazonia, and incidentally discovered that she was known to Barbara Kern, of Alpha Chapter, who came from London to meet up. **23 November** we went to the Pestalozzi International Village, being joined by several Alpha members (see separate report which follows). **7 December** was our annual Christmas get-together, and we were delighted that Dorothy came having recovered from a bad fall. We all got sticky making decopatch items for the festivities. Seventeen members came.

Future Dates at Beechwood School

25 January: Jackie Ashton will talk about her daughter Felicity's exploits in Antarctica. She organised and led the first female team to the South Pole. They were an international team of women from the Commonwealth, some of whom had never seen snow before! Most recently she crossed Antarctica coast-to-coast **solo**, which took around 78 days. First woman and first Brit to do so. Felicity went to Tonbridge Grammar and after University worked as a meteorologist based in Antarctica.

22 February: Veronica Jones will talk about her new teaching life as a tutor to children who cannot go to school because they are filming on location or on set. Hoping for some gossip!!

22 March is a business meeting prior to our Conference.

17 May: joint meeting with Alpha Chapter at the Institute of Education, London (see Alpha report)

7 June: TBA. Two summer outings TBA June and July.

Sandra Blacker (*Gamma Chapter President*)

PESTALOZZI INTERNATIONAL VILLAGE



Students at lunch with Roz (left), Liz (centre), and Dorcas and Ray (below). This was a very happy occasion.



Our visit to the Pestalozzi International Village took place on a bright crisp day in November. The Sussex countryside was perfect. We enjoyed the magnificent views that are a beautiful feature of the site. Twenty two members and guests gathered in the newly refurbished Peace Room. Sue Walton the present Chief Executive, described how, after her first visit to Pestalozzi, as a child, she had become 'smitten' and so her involvement grew until she is where she is now.

She outlined the original purpose of The Pestalozzi International Village (PIV), which was to help displaced children from 6-16. Now, PIV supports very bright but poor students with full scholarships to study the International Baccalaureate (IB) at Sussex Coast College. This course is due to change and future students will be studying enhanced A-levels. There have been some full fee-paying students over the years.

Selection of students is a joint project with partners in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Tibetan community in India, and most recently - Belize. Selections are made in the home countries and the chosen students, after fulfilling UK border criteria, make their home in England. 21 students were recruited this year. There are wonderful stories of the tenacity and courage of the students, despite the odds, to achieve their dream at Pestalozzi (look at Pestalozzi.org.uk/alumni.) During their two years at PIV, the students follow a holistic programme The Head, The Heart, The Hand as proposed by Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. The Head is academic study via the IB. All the students achieved 100% pass rate in 2013. Those students will go on to Higher Education at universities in USA, Germany and UK where they can obtain a full scholarship. The Heart is concerned with giving to the community and students have helped with the elderly, in schools and sharing their culture. The Hand element is fulfilled as the students volunteer for such activities as gardening, placements in hospitals and other work experience. All the students have made a difference to the community.

Sue finished her talk by describing how it costs £15000 a year to fully support each student and described ways in which the funds are found (always a struggle). We found out ways in which to continue our support; our first project will be to donate warm winter clothes - we saw students walking around in flip flops !!! The Gamma and Alpha members who came to Pestalozzi were enchanted by the students who we met and talked to at lunch time. We found out how their lives were changing and the clear decisions they are making about careers and how they will be returning to help in their home countries when qualified. (Pestalozzi.org.uk). We had a wonderful day. It was good to see so many members and

We hope to follow the progress of the students and will consider further ways to support them. Please subscribe to the newsletter for more stories and ways to get involved (Pestalozzi.org.uk).

We had a wonderful day. It was good to see so many members and guests.



The pictures show Sue Watson delivering her presentation, two of the wonderful Pestalozzi students, and Dorcas talking with Sue Watson after lunch. My thanks are due to Kate York for the pictures (what kind of editor forgets to take her camera?!), and many apologies are due to whoever contributed this excellent article, as I omitted to make a note of her name when I saved it.



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