



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



Summer 2012

Volume 13 No 3

CONTENTS

Page

From the Editor

State President’s Letter 3
 Our wonderful conference venue 4
 The History of Aylesford Priory 5
 Education of Girls with Autism 7
 Success in Adversity 8
 Generating Enthusiasm for
 Music in Primary Schools 10
 Regional Director`s Report 11
 The GB Spring is Rising:
 Strategic Action Planning 13
 Sir Thomas Wyatt 14
 The Allington Belle, the River Medway
 and Global Warming 16
 Alpha Chapter Report 17
 Unity speaks in the Netherlands
 on the London Wetland Centre 19
 Beta Chapter Report 20
 Gamma Chapter Report 22

The photo on the front cover reflects the wonderful spirit of our GB State Conference. Together in the Spring sunshine are (left to right):

Kate York (European Regional Director), Brigitte Wichmann (Past Germany State President), Sheila Roberts (GB State President) and Margarita Hand-schmidt (Estonia State President).

*



As Sheila tells us in her report on page 3, this edition is mainly devoted to this year’s Great Britain State Conference, held at Aylesford Priory. As the front cover picture shows,

we had plenty of sunshine! As always, thanks to those who responded to my ‘requests’ for reports on various aspects of the conference, and in particular to Bettina Kulsdom, who took most of the photos you will see.

There will be fewer members than usual going to the International Convention, this year to be held in New York, particularly because it will be very expensive. It will therefore be even more important that as many people as possible send in material for the next edition of GB News – all contributions gratefully received! It would be especially interesting to hear what members are up to apart from their involvement in DKG – there are lots of busy people out there. Please send in any material by mid-August. Thank you in anticipation.

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)

THE CANTERBURY AWARD

Congratulations to Zoe Newman, of Beta Chapter, recipient of this year’s award. We look forward to her report in due course.

Sheila Roberts

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT: 2011-2013

Summer is approaching and the hosepipe ban firmly in place for many of us. I hope everyone will have a wonderful relaxing summer, and that those going to New York enjoy the stimulation of the DKG International Convention. Our own State Conference at Aylesford, whose events are described in this edition, was a great success. Our speakers were first class, the entertainment fun for all, and the surroundings so calm and beautiful. It was wonderful that so many were able to attend, including members from both Germany and Estonia and Kate as our international representative. Great also to welcome DKG new



members to their first state conference, along with a number of guests, of whom several have indicated interest in becoming members. We were very blessed by beautiful, warm, sunny weather- except for the river trip on Sunday when it was definitely a 'March Day'.

So many members contributed to making the weekend successful, and I have already sent out a thank you letter to all concerned but one person stands out for the major effort she put in both before, during and after the conference, and that was Kathy Hodgson. We all know Kathy is State Treasurer and handles our financial matters expertly at all times, but her handling of booking forms and registration for this particular conference was over and above expectations. The number of variations she negotiated beggar belief - from whole weekend, to single night, to day only, to half day, to single meal etc etc. Kathy, you are a 'Wonder Woman' (and she still managed to teach her class full time until late Friday afternoon and take them to a festival on Sunday afternoon). Thank you so much from all of us.

We were delighted to hear that Jess and Sue Torr of Beta Chapter have been awarded \$1,700 by DKG's Education Foundation to further support the marvellous work in literacy, the 'Shout it out' project, initiated by Sue. Also that Zoe Newman, also from Beta, is the recipient of GB's Canterbury Award, receiving £350 to help fund her current degree studies with the important focus on Children's Literature.

As the end of the summer term sees a change in chapter officers, I would like to thank the current Chapter Presidents for all their hard work and support in making DKG successful in their areas, Diana Bell, Alpha, Gail Gladwin, Beta and Carole Stirling, Gamma. I look forward to working with the new presidents next year and feel sure they will take their chapters ever forward.

Finally but very importantly, our Strategic Action Plan (SAP) continues to focus on strengthening and increasing membership of our three chapters. I ask all members to become involved in this: bring a friend along to a meeting or visit, invite someone to become a member, and above all, continue making everyone welcome and valued. I had several messages from guests at our Aylesford Conference who commented on precisely that aspect of DKG - 'so warm and welcoming'. A wonderful accolade: thank you everybody.

OUR WONDERFUL CONFERENCE VENUE

A warm welcome at the Friars, Aylesford awaited DKG participants following clear travelling instructions from Kathy and Sheila plus a last minute diversion via Eccles on account of bridge repairs in the centre of Aylesford. First impressions of the venue revealed a well stocked pond with a variety of wild fowl, blue anemones and daffodils under trees soon to burst into leaf and many delightful corners and pathways to explore. An attractive map on the wall opposite Reception indicated where these paths might lead. The view from our own particular accommodation looked across a quadrangle of grass, surrounded by mainly older buildings, where one of the doors opposite opened into the refectory. We had ample places to store clothes in our room - even the choice of four beds - and heavy doors over which wisteria was shortly due to flower.

As we wandered into a hidden garden sheltered by a thick hedge, we joined our colleagues on the benches and were warned that the birds, disliking red and purple colours, had pecked at our state president's leg. A hard, painful lesson and next morning I did not linger, but hurried past the pond on my way to my car to collect something from the conveniently large car park. A strong smell of fox was evident and reminded me that I had heard anxious screeches from the ducks and geese in the night.

At our first session - a talk from Father Michael Manning - after supper, we learned more of the long history of The Friars, which helped us to appreciate and negotiate cobbled paths and hidden doorways on our way back from the Conference Centre. We mused on how the original inhabitants, pilgrims, private owners through the ages and Carmelite friars in the 21st century might reconcile peace of reflection so close to a noisy motorway. It was good to meet other weekend residents and hear their sung graces resonating in the refectory before meals.

I had previously visited The Friars for a children's activity day. Bishop Nazir Ali, previous Bishop of Rochester, entertained my youngest grandson with a rope from the tug-of-war, when Joe was just beginning to walk. A memorable picture! The open-air chapel was then in use and was full of interesting presentations. This year our members enjoyed our own activities including singing and dancing. When we had a spare moment on Sunday before the boat ride from Allington to Maidstone, we had time to wander into the extensive grounds, enjoy a delightful venue, justifying a further visit, staying a little longer and relying once more on gorgeous spring sunshine.

Mary Wardrop (Gamma Chapter)



A black swan glides around the lake

What a beautiful setting for a conference! There were many peaceful places to sit



THE HISTORY OF AYLESFORD PRIORY

This year's State Conference began with the chequered history of Aylesford Priory being presented by Fr Michael Manning. We had all arrived on a sunny Friday afternoon and the buildings were very picturesque in the pretty Spring gardens. It was difficult to think of the land being the home of Carmelites in the thirteenth century.

The origin of the Carmelites was on Mount Carmel before the thirteenth century. It is believed that there were two groups originating from those who were sent to the mountain as a penance and soldiers who had remained there after the Crusades. When they were forced to leave the Holy Land around 1238-1240, they were taken by ship back to Europe and one group came to Aylesford and were given the land by Baron de Grey. They first had to drain the land and finally built

their first church in 1285 together with somewhere to live and somewhere to eat. We were privileged to eat our meals in this early refectory which is the only surviving building. The early Carmelites offered accommodation to pilgrims travelling the nearby Pilgrims'Way.

Fr Michael lightened his tone when he explained that things changed when Ann Boleyn came on the scene in 1536. He explained very succinctly how the two Thomases (Cromwell and Cranmer) worked out how to overturn the church. The Friars were asked to leave in 1538 and they dispersed to a variety of roles from clerical to the criminal and remained away for the next 400 years.

The land then was given to Thomas Wyatt, but when his career "took a nose dive" the land returned to the Crown. It was sold to John Sedley who made major changes. Only two sides of the Cloister were retained and they remain today. Sedley sold the land to a Dutch banker who made many changes but as a Royalist he was thrown out during the Commonwealth. John Banks created most of what we see today. There is the strong Jacobean influence and from 1657 to 1678 it became a luxurious country estate. His daughter married Henryard Finch who was made the first Earl of Aylesford. He moved to Derbyshire and the present Earl still lives there.

During the 18th and 19th centuries the land remained in private hands. Mrs Copley-Hewitt owned it in the 20th century and it was a popular social gathering place. In 1930 a fire gutted the whole of the Cloister area and much furniture and paintings were destroyed. However, Mrs. Copley-Hewitt restored it and timbers from the old ship Arethusa were used. This took most of the family fortunes and it was put on the market in 1949. At that time Killian Lynch was the Parish Priest of Faversham. He sent letters to Carmelites throughout the world and raised the required £25,000. Father Malachy Lynch became the first Friar and there is a bust of him in the Priors Hall.

Since that time the buildings have been created, much art work now decorates the walls and sculptures enhance the chapels and grounds. Fr Michael explained that The Friars has taken on "a life of its own". It is a retreat centre, conference centre and a green space for people to come for safety. DKG members saw some of this activity during the weekend with the chapels being filled on Sunday and the grounds becoming alive with families enjoying the lake and feeding the ducks and swans.

Bettina Kulsdom (*Alpha Chapter*)

EDUCATION OF GIRLS WITH AUTISM



Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith is the Head of the National Autistic Society School, and spoke about the important features of education of girls with autistic spectrum disorder. Often this is not diagnosed, or girls are put into male-dominated special schools. Or women can be diagnosed very late, leading to their being alone, unsupported and unemployed. They tend to have passive personalities, and be compliant, so do not come across with social impairments. They do not make eye contact, they disguise their difficulties, and they are not disruptive. Boys, on the other hand, tend to externalise. Autistic girls' inter-

ests are often the same as other girls, but more extreme, leading to obsessional interests around relationships and people. They live with imaginary friends, or collect things about people without interacting with them.

Since boys tend to be over-represented in special schools, girls present as shy outsiders. Since they care what their peers think about them, they tend to pretend to be 'normal'. They are not good at empathy, so tend to get locked out. They imitate other girls, but cannot hold reciprocal friendships and become distressed. They are avid observers, they copy everyone, trying to become that person. They can therefore forget who they are, and can self harm. Why is it more difficult for girls?

Girls' relationships tend to be much more complex than boys': for girls, it is social communication and talking, for boys it is doing. Girls and boys fight and bully differently: girls tend to gossip and exclude. Early diagnosis is important. Girls need to acquire skills and confidence to enable them to decide what is right for them. They do not want to spend time discussing serious topics or feelings: they want to spend shorter periods talking about common interests. An ideal social life for girls would be small, 'someone in my world', time alone, one-to-one, shared interests, email/texts/phone. They need to understand about friendships: what are they for? What are the rules? How do I get one? What is a friend? What's in it for me? Is it worth it?

Play and imagination can meet special educational needs: their need for structure, the fact that they tend to be visual not verbal, love reading, are strong systemisers, and often find males more compatible. They also need teaching methods that play to their strengths: modelling of people, video modelling, role play or drama, writing narratives about social situations, with explanations. They want facts and information as opposed to sentiment, social scripts for social situations, TV/movies, books and the internet. They need pre-teaching of content so that they can pre-prepare, their special interests should be used, and they need positive female role models. Most girls by 11 have developed gender identity: if not, it can have a negative impact on developing self-esteem. To build self-esteem and confidence, build on their individual strengths, praise and reward. `All About Me` books are useful: they know they are different, and they care. Leisure and physical activities should also be geared to their interests: all this can help. The many questions afterwards showed that Dr Ashton Smith`s talk had engaged the audience: it was much appreciated.

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)

SUCCESS IN ADVERSITY

For Kevin Sewell, the three most important things in his life are (1) music and being a musician (2) being an Arsenal fan and (3) being a Londoner. The highlight of his life is playing in his own band at Blackpool – awesome. There is nothing unusual about this for a bright young man of Kevin`s age and abilities, except for the fact that he is registered blind. The fact that he discounts his visual impairment to such an extent is due largely to the wonderful preparation for life he was given at New College, Worcester, a special boarding school for the blind (founded in the 1860s as `Worcester College for the Blind Sons of Gentlemen`) which he entered aged ten. The arguments about special schools versus mainstream education will continue, but for Kevin himself, there is no argument: he is proof of the success that special schooling uniquely can provide.

Diagnosed at six years old with Stargardt`s Disease (inherited juvenile macular degeneration) he was blessed with truly supportive parents and his own optimistic temperament; a mere bit of blindness wasn`t going to stop him enjoying football or having fun with his mates. Research by the Rowntree Foundation in 2005 showed that, while aspirations of able and disabled students in the age



range 16-26 were pretty much the same, there were significant differences in the reality of their experience when it came to work, employment and earnings. This trend is exactly what Kevin's school set out to overturn.

First and foremost, they emphasised high aspiration. From the start the boys were allocated by ability, not age; and throughout were prepared for a life of independence and success. The school

was particularly geared to high aspirations in academic, sporting and social life. Kevin excelled in all three departments, but sport, music and drama clearly emerged as his main interests. Football and cricket and – amazingly – skiing – were all encouraged by the school. Kevin explained that, to compete as a blind person, there are minimal changes to equipment and rules. For instance, the football contains lead shot so its location can be heard rather than seen; and in cricket, the ball (also containing shot) is allowed to bounce (once for a catch, and twice for the batsman). Kevin went on to captain the school football and cricket teams and has represented England in Blind Cricket.

The school also provided a great range of musical instruments; Kevin discovered guitar, drumming and vocals. As for his acting career, his first role as 'village idiot' got so many laughs, he was quickly advanced and ended up strutting the boards at the Fringe Edinburgh Festival. I don't know if it was here his other interest – beer – was established. He retains a healthy interest in the subject to this day. At University he also studied Music and Drama, achieving an Upper Second Honours degree.

With such an engaging personality, full of humour and enjoyment of life, it is not unexpected that Kevin has made such a success of his life. But his early training has stood him in good stead throughout. Having been a technical support worker to visually impaired students, he is currently employed at London South Bank University as a clinical skills technician working with computer software; and is considering moving into teaching. What an inspiration he would be, for children of any age and ability. An inspiration to us teachers he certainly was.

Gail Gladwin (Beta Chapter)

GENERATING ENTHUSIASM FOR MUSIC IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

After serving 25 years in the Scots Guards as a bandsman, his army career taking him all over the world introducing him to many different genres of music, Aidan Scahill began training as a primary school teacher. He has resisted becoming a music specialist because he appreciates the bond between teacher



and children that can develop over the school year, an experience which has also lead him to recognise the many benefits music can bring to other areas of education. Aspects of music are present in many other subjects, its presence within literacy, numeracy and science can reinforce learning. SEN children may access learning more easily having had experience with music.

Our first participation exercise was to join in a call/response exchange – an example of behaviour management which many teachers would be grateful to have in their class discipline toolbox. Aidan agreed that music is difficult because it has so many elements (rhythm, pitch, tone, dynamics etc), but bringing music into the classroom needn't rely on keyboard skills. Aidan always starts with rhythm. Some of us took part in a demonstration of how hitting a long length of broomstick with a shorter one can give an experience of different beats – in our case, a very tricky five/four one. We saw a video of three young men using their bodies as percussion instruments, an amazing example of individual and group syncopation.

Boys need targeting – they are of the opinion that music is for girls. They respond well to call and response chants used in physical training, rugby songs and football chants. It is also useful to be aware that many pop tunes are based on a classical structure – we listened to a track which was recognised as having the same chord progression as Pachelbel's Canon.

Aidan's talk was a personal view of music in primary schools. His wide experience of music from all over the world has led him to feel that some elements of his training were limiting, and could lead towards pupils having a negative attitude towards music in the classroom. However, there was a positive feeling amongst Aidan's audience that our education system is greatly enhanced by having such an enthusiastic teacher who communicates such enjoyment with learning which I'm sure is greatly appreciated by his pupils - especially the boys.

Jess Curtis (Beta Chapter)

REPORT FROM THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Kate explained that in 2011 she had been very disappointed when, having listed the dates of the GB conference as a time when she was unavailable, she found she had been assigned to represent International at the Swedish conference for those dates. In order to avoid the same problem in 2012 Sheila sent a request to Headquarters to have Kate as our International Representative and Kate was very happy to be with us all.

The result was that we enjoyed a very clear, concise summing up of recent changes and current issues in DKG. Kate emphasised the many changes that Jeni has made during her presidency and her determination to inspire the Society to greater relevancy to education in the 21st century. The outcome is that great strides have been made in the use of technology throughout DKG, particularly since the appointment of Linda Eller to Headquarters staff. New, updated handbooks have been devised and many Society documents revised. Very importantly also Jeni has initiated a clear move towards greater democracy in the Society, including changes in voting rights and exploring the possibility of introducing electronic voting and the effect of these changes is already being seen.

Jensi has encouraged all states and chapters to develop a strategic action plan to develop the Society and increase its influence. In this respect, involvement in supporting Unicef's Schools for Africa project is key. Kate pointed out that Great Britain, in spite of our small membership, is working hard to support the Society to achieve its vision by forming an SAP working party to assist in strengthening and extending existing chapters and uniting all chapters to support the Schools for Africa project.

Kate reminded everyone that we have been invited to attend Germany's conference in Leipzig 17th to 19th May 2012, and that the 2013 Regional Conference will be held in Amsterdam from 7th to 10th August. All details of both these events can be found on the GB and European websites.

Joan Carroll (Alpha Chapter)



Joan thanks Kate for her contribution with some beautiful flowers.

There was beauty and plenty of things to interest us all around on the GB Conference weekend. We saw plenty of 'messaging about on the river'.



THE GB SPRING IS RISING

STRATEGIC ACTION PLANNING

Since the Strategic Action Plan was initiated by international HQ, the group in Great Britain has worked hard during three committee sessions in August, September and February 2011/2012. Additional, informal discussions had previously taken place with individual members, research explored, followed by an activity report submitted to the Executive Board in January and an oral report at the GB Conference in Aylesford.

In the first instance, our principal aim has been to retain and recruit educators, exemplified by all members encouraging guests to meetings and the Annual Conference and contacting former members whose membership had lapsed. Membership packs and Power Point presentation have been shown and discussed in meetings and collections for the DKG project “Schools for Africa” have aroused interest and a very worthwhile sum via the United Nations. The film “First Grader” has been dramatic in focusing educational issues. Particular interest in Professor Pfeiffer’s talk in Baden-Baden, reported in the Autumn edition of GB News, has been followed up by the group. We recommend looking up the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) website for further information on the effect of the internet on vulnerable youngsters. Thus, we are building up resources for both teachers and parents.

After the training for the incoming chapter officers in Aylesford, the state SAP is to concentrate on Leadership Development (including Mentoring Early Career Educators) and effective Communication. Our next meeting in May will reflect on the work so far, complete a report for Beverley Helms and plan our future activities.

Mary Wardrop (*Gamma Chapter*)



Another view of the wonderful buildings of Aylesford Priory

SIR THOMAS WYATT

Gail Gladwin fascinated us with her account of Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503-1542), born at nearby Allington Castle. Over six feet tall, handsome and physically strong, Wyatt was a poet, and an ambassador for Henry VIII. Precocious and clever, he was educated at Cambridge, graduated at 17, then followed his father to Court. He married Elizabeth Brooke, daughter of Lord Cobham in 1522; son, also Thomas, was born in 1523. In 1524 he was appointed as an Ambassador. He separated from his wife (on the grounds of adultery – quite ironic in view of his own affair with Anne Boleyn).

Wyatt was a lyric poet, credited with introducing the sonnet into English. Although not published during his lifetime, 156 poems can definitely be ascribed to him. A linguist, musician, composer of love songs, he was skilled in the use of arms. He regularly returned to Allington for respite, hunting and walking, and when he needed to keep a low profile! During a visit to the Pope, when Henry wished to divorce Katherine of Aragon, Wyatt was captured and held for ransom. He escaped and was appointed Marshall of Calais and, subsequently, Commissioner of Peace for Essex.

A series of affairs and flirtations at Court earned Wyatt a reputation as a 'serial monogamist'. Many love lyrics can be attributed to this period of his life, including ***Forget not yet***, which begins with:

Forget not yet the tried intent
Of such a truth as I have meant....

Knighted in March 1536, Wyatt was imprisoned in the Tower two months later, at the same time as Anne Boleyn. Anne was beheaded, charged with adultery and treason, but Wyatt was sent to Allington, placed under his father's supervision. Possibly Wyatt had warned Henry about Anne's infidelity. Although it didn't initially suit Henry to listen to the warning, later it did!

Wyatt captures illusiveness and danger in ***They flee from me who sometimes did me seek***. The final verse:

It was no dream: I lay broad waking.
But all is turned thorough my gentleness
Into a strange fashion of forsaking.



Restored to favour, Wyatt became Marshall of Conisburgh Castle and Sheriff of Kent. Later, as Ambassador to Spain his mission was to reconcile crowned Heads of Europe to Henry's succession of marriages and divorces. Returning to Allington, high in the King's favour, further special missions abroad followed. Subsequent disgrace and imprisonment concerned Thomas Cromwell, whose execution in June 1540 was witnessed by Wyatt. In a brave and risky sonnet, he grieved for the loss of a great man.

Back at Allington, Thomas wrote penitential psalms. Within a year, he was charged again with treason. Catherine Howard (Henry's fifth wife) intervened on his behalf. Thomas was granted a full conditional pardon—he must become reconciled to his adulterous wife! In 1542 he died of fever while in Dorset.

As an epitaph, Gail read from Wyatt's poem, *My lute awake*:

Now cease, my lute!

Now is this song both sung and past;

My lute be still, for I have done.

Thank you, Gail, for entertaining us with 'highlights' from Wyatt's life and poetry. We thought of him the following morning, as we floated past Allington Castle on the *Allington Belle*.

Kate York (*Gamma Chapter*)



We sailed past Allington Castle on our Sunday morning trip on the *Allington Belle*

Gail at the lectern

THE ALLINGTON BELLE, THE RIVER MEDWAY AND GLOBAL WARMING

On the cold sunny morning on the last day of our conference, a large group of DKG members found their way to the Allington Belle, a Mississippi style paddle boat to cruise along the river Medway, the longest river in Kent. The water flows from the High Weald to the Thames Estuary through rocks 30 million years old formed in the Tertiary period. To assist in navigation for small boats, Allington Lock was first attempted in 1792 and a substantial one constructed in 1881. We admired the current one built by the Environment Agency between 1998 and 2000. Boarding here, we were soon absorbing the scenery punctuated by the Thames barges, canal narrow boats and other small craft moored along the tow-path. We waved to canoeists. We passed Allington Castle (which was once owned by Sir Thomas Wyatt) and then small marinas. Further along, Whatman's Millenium Park came into view. It was designed with islands and reed-beds to encourage wildlife like otters and given to the public for their enjoyment in 1964.

As we reached Maidstone Town Centre, our guide pointed out how the river can change. In 2000 there was a devastating flood rising to within 6 inches of the top span of the arch of the bridge. Now the river hardly flows. Much of the water has been taken out. Because of the drought, Bewel Water which supplies most of Kent with water has had to be augmented. Apparently the water has to be replaced but not immediately. This led me personally, to reflect on how it is fairly easy for scientists to predict global temperature changes in the future but how much harder it is to predict precipitation. The south and east of the country is in drought at present and our rivers and canals in crisis. Global warming is undoubtedly happening and temperate areas will get drier. There will be more extreme weather events and sea level rises. I can only hope that the Copenhagen Accord will hold and temperature rises limited to two degrees above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century. To achieve this, global carbon dioxide emissions need to peak by 2020 at the latest and developed industrial countries need to reduce their emissions by 80% by 2050. We must do all we can to adopt a low carbon economy and preserve our rivers, lakes and water ways with their rich biodiversity. Future generations depend on us for their very security.

On our return journey, we moved around the boat enjoying coffee and chatting. We all agreed that the cruise commentary was most interesting and that the scenery was delightful. The river trip made a perfect ending to our conference.

Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)

ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT

Diana Bell (Chapter President)

Our January meeting at Dulwich Hamlet started with an interesting presentation from Norna Moses about her continuing involvement with education since retiring from headship. Norna has been involved with teacher retention, training and recruitment, including many projects such as teacher wellbeing. We were delighted to meet Claire Purcell's gorgeous new daughter, Olivia Rose.

In February, sixteen Alpha and Gamma members and guests visited the Wellcome Trust for the 'Incurably Curious': Miracles and Charms Exhibitions. Kate Forde, Curator, showed us around and gave us a wonderful insight into what we were seeing. There were many Mexican Miracle paintings, votive offerings given in answer to a prayer, showing the moment of delivery from disaster by saintly intervention. Examples included a 1940's medical scene thanking the saint and the doctor for recovery from facial cancer. There was also a whole wall of modern votive offerings from a silver mining community in Northern Mexico, with thank you letters, documents, artifacts and even wedding dresses on display... 'make me the wife he deserves'.

We also looked at the collection of Edwardian banker Edward Lovett, who lived in Croydon. His collection encompassed folklore, superstitions, charms and amulets carried for luck or protection. It included items such as acorns carried to protect against lightning, and pennies thrown in water by sailors to buy wind. One charm was a tiny piece of paper from 1872 with the Lord's Prayer spiralling inwards, written by a man of 88 - difficult to read even with a magnifying glass! We ended with the Henry Wellcome Collection of extraordinary objects. These range from diagnostic dolls to Japanese sex aids, Napoleon's toothbrush to a Peruvian mummy. A fascinating visit.

March saw many Alpha members at the State Conference, Aylesford, a beautiful place. We had a very good time listening to excellent speakers and enjoying ourselves. By the time GB News is published we will have watched the film 'The First Grader' and hopefully had much discussion, at our meeting on 28th April.

Saturday 19th May 2012. Visit to Highgate Cemetery. 11.00am West Side £7 tour, see the East Side ourselves. Many famous people buried there.

Saturday 30th June 2012. 2.00pm Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, SE21 7AL. Unity Harvey speaking on 'The Value of the Wetlands'. Visit Dulwich Picture Gallery in the morning. Dorcas Rogers has kindly agreed to change the date of the Summer Barbeque and Murder Mystery event to **Saturday 18th August** so that it is not affected by the Olym-



Thanks for a successful operation

Mexican votive offerings



Votive wall in a village church

Impossible to convey in a small photograph the fascinating detail within these pictures, all painted by amateur artists. The only equivalent we seem to have is the 'shrines' which now appear alongside places where people have died.

(Photos by Lavinia Soul)

**TALKS ON THE LONDON WETLAND CENTRE
IN THE NETHERLANDS**

When Kitty Kruijswijk van de Woude , a DKG member in The Netherlands, asked me to talk about the London Wetland Centre to groups of the Netherland - England Society in her country, I felt it would be like “taking coals to Newcastle.” I had attended a Power Point course in 2002, but had not used it since. “Do talk,” I was told, “Visit next year so you have time to make a presentation. We'll pay your fares and accommodation but at least five groups must request you.” So I took pictures, enlisted the help of my son for technology and requested special pictures from friends at the LWC. Seven groups requested talks, so I visited twice to present to them all. Everyone was so kind. I was met, fed, put on trains, chauffeured around and accommodated in homes or hotels so that I had no worries. I just enjoyed meeting all the people. I was entertained; shown historical places and a falconry museum. I climbed a bell tower and explored old NATO headquarters in caves. I even had shopping time too.

I needn't have worried about the content of my talks. Most of the people knew roughly what I did before I volunteered at the LWC. I briefly described the world shortage of fresh water and some ways in which flooding problems can be alleviated. I concentrated on telling them about our work protecting, promoting and preserving Wetlands and all the biodiversity in it, explaining how we can make a difference as individuals. Many people wanted to visit the LWC themselves after seeing my presentation. Most importantly, I was able to show them pictures of beautiful wild creatures and plants that they might look for and nurture in their own surroundings. On the last night one lady come up to me and said, “We are rich, we are rich!” Another said, “You delight in small things. You have taught me to look.” What more could I want? I would recommend anyone to talk for the Netherland - England Society if they get the chance.

Thank you Kitty and thank you DKG Society for enabling this opportunity.

Unity Harvey (Alpha Chapter)

BETA CHAPTER REPORT

Gail Gladwin (Chapter President)

2012 has started very well for us with a number of successes for our members. We have also had some interesting meetings. Our first meeting of the new year, on 4th February, was something of a new departure; not only in setting - we met in historic Stonehouse – a square designed and developed in response to growing demands of Plymouth's navy during the 19th century – but also in topic: ecology. Sue Blackburn gave us a fascinating insight into her motivations and experiences in trying to take ecology from the university study out into the community.

Our next meeting on 31st March was designed as a report-back to members of the Chapter who had been unable to attend the State Conference at Aylesford. We found we had enough material for several meetings.

Sue Torr's `Shout It Out Learning project`, which has been making such good progress, has reached a crisis over funding, and the Chapter is doing what it can to support her and her valuable work. Certainly it is good news that she has been awarded \$1,700 from the Educational Foundation. However, this money cannot be spent on tutors' salaries or on room hire, which are the areas where at the moment Sue needs the money most.

Zoe Newman is the sole recipient of the Canterbury Award this year; and she is delighted at the support this gives her towards completing her degree.

Jess Curtis is delighted at the unqualified support she has received from both Chapter and State in furthering her proposal for a competition for an alternative DKG Society International song. She awaits the European Forum's position with interest.

Forthcoming meeting:

Friday 29 June 2012: visit to Powderham Castle



Meals were taken in the centuries old refectory, with stone floors and solid wood tables. This picture was taken by Bettina Kulsdom from the gallery, which also housed a library.



Is there no end to Kathy's versatility? Here she is again (see State President's letter), only this time serving behind the bar, and leading the dance!



Brigitte, Evelyn and Dorothy enjoy a chat in the Conference Room.

Diana Bell thanks Dr Jacqui Ashton Smith after her talk at the beginning of the Conference. Their smiles illustrate the enthusiastic reception she received.



I can't believe that this is the last time I will be writing to you as Chapter President. My two years in office have flown past and I've had an amazing time. I've enjoyed inviting different speakers to stimulate and challenge you. My one disappointment is that I was unable to secure a speaker from UNICEF, however Mary has given me a new lead, so watch this space.

As expected our January meeting with Sheila Brazier, a JP, was fascinating. She talked about the judicial system and presented us with a scenario to get our teeth in to. Sheila explained all the things that had to be taken into consideration and restrictions that had to be taken into account. It was difficult to come to any decisions and as Sheila guided us through the judgements we all agreed how complex everything appeared to be. This was a challenging morning and once again we could have gone on much longer.

In February Marie Edwards came to speak to us about Art Therapy. Marie is employed by the NHS and works with children who find it hard to communicate. She told us about encouraging children to express themselves through art. She was asked if some children would be 'put off' because they didn't like drawing or painting but Marie pointed out that they could use any medium and even the most basic of marks could lead to the most interesting of conversations. It was generally felt that the NHS is lucky to have such an exceptional young lady working for them and the children who come into contact with her as well.

Our March meeting was our State Conference. What a fantastic time was had by all! Excellent, expert, thought-provoking speakers, an amazing venue and warm friendships renewed. How wonderful it is to have fun and share joy when we come together.

We are now looking forward to our 'Bluebell Walk' on **28 April**. Sheila has been on 'bluebell watch' and assures us that they are just at their peak and so we're all excited about enjoying them. However after the deluge of the last few days I wonder what the day will hold for us – I'll have to let you know!

Our meeting on **19 May** promises to be very interesting and then we have our meeting in June to visit Pam Irons. In July I hand over to Sandra Blacker as Chapter President, Liz Malik as Vice President and Jennifer Longton as Chapter Treasurer – we will be in excellent hands! Thank you so much for all your support during the last two years and for being so encouraging. I've had a wonderful time and would like to thank Evelyn for being a patient and good friend who has helped me to find my way while finding out what is involved in the role of Chapter President. I think I just about know now! Thank you also to Jennifer Longton for keeping our finances in order. Looking forward to seeing you all at a meeting soon.



One of the many beautiful parts of Aylesford Priory, on our route from our accommodation to the Conference Centre. Not everyone appreciated the picturesque cobbles!

Our group on the Allington Belle, dressed for a bracing March morning! The photo was kindly taken by our friendly guide on the boat.



A peaceful scene on the River Medway

STATE PRESIDENT 2011-2013

Sheila Roberts
Morvan House, Shoreham Lane
St Michaels
Tenterden
Kent TN30 6EG
saroberts123@aol.com

ALPHA CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2010-2012

Diana Bell
24 De Montfort Road
London SW16 1LZ
dbell_is@yahoo.co.uk

**BETA CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2010-2012
(Caretaker President)**

Gail Gladwin
17 Hartley Avenue
Plymouth
Devon PL3 5HP
sggladwin@live.co.uk

GAMMA CHAPTER PRESIDENT 2010-2012

Carole Stirling
Rose Patch, Cryals Road
Matfield
Tonbridge
Kent TN12 7LN
john.carolestirling@btinternet.com

EDITORIAL TEAM

Diane Billam, Gail Gladwin

DISTRIBUTION

Kathy Hodgson

PRINTER

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

DKG WEBSITES

www.deltakappagamma.org/GB
www.dkg.org www.dkgeurope.org

Mission Statement

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