



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS  
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

# GB News in Brief

Number 4

Spring 2024

## Great Britain State Conference on Saturday April 20th 2024

Our GB State Conference will take place at Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, Dulwich Village, London SE21 7AL, with thanks to Claire Purcell the Headteacher.

After coffee at 10.30 - 11.00am, Claire has kindly agreed to take us around this 'Outstanding' School which has a lot of 'state of the art' kit in a number of Victorian and modern buildings. Music is a strength of the school with a large majority of the pupils learning an instrument.

After our tour Claire will talk about their latest Ofsted - some amazing changes since my time! We will then have a 'Bring and share' lunch, followed by the Annual General Meeting. Tea will follow and we should leave by 3.30pm.

I do hope that we have a good turn-out at our first face-to-face State Meeting since Covid, with both Alpha and Gamma Chapter members. It will be good to see everyone in person again.

Diana Bell, GB State President.

### Picture Correction



In the last issue, Winter 2023, I explained that Marika Heimbach, Chair of the European Forum, had liked Bettina Kulsdom's pictures so much they were put on the European Website and Bettina became 'Artist of the Month'.

Marika followed this article up with an email saying that the "picture is of the postcard our daughter Judith framed. It fits perfectly our three grandchildren, Polly, Teddy and Leo".

Marika then said that "the photo you added is of the same series Bettina created for printing the postcards, all of them sold as she told me. I vividly recall the meeting when I met Bettina. So many

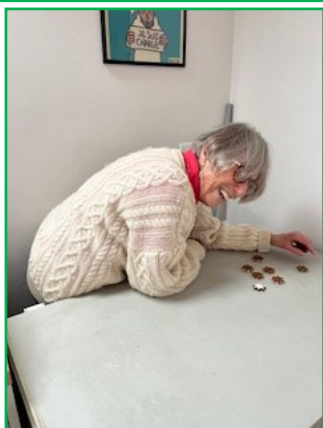
good memories. I am looking forward to the next conference in GB!"

***The picture I should have used is on the left.***

Diana Bell, Alpha Chapter.



### Gamma Christmas Lunch



On Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December six members of DKG Gamma enjoyed a lovely 'Christmas get together' and lunch at the home of Sandra Blacker. It was great to meet up in person and to catch up on each others' news. We started with coffee and mince pies and lots of chat while everyone arrived.

This was followed by a buffet lunch provided by the group and including Sheila's wonderful 'Cheese Gougere with Curried Prawn and Avocado', Kathrin's very special 'Lemon Cheesecake' and a variety of quiches, salads, and Christmassy biscuits.

Unfortunately, one plate of Christmassy biscuits 'somehow' slid down the back of the freezer! The photo shows Sandra nimbly climbing over the top and emerging with the escapees!

Evelyn Goodsell, Gamma Chapter.





The weather on the day of our Christmas outing was certainly challenging, with heavy showers and high winds, but once inside the Museum of London Docklands all that was forgotten.

The Fashion City exhibition had a special interest for me. My first job in London was in Soho as a P.A. for an agent for textile mills supplying all the major fashion houses. So many of the exhibits were about the people I had known and the products they made. My mother and her sister had also worked in the fashion industry, Mum as a sample hand dress-maker and colour matcher and my aunt as a milliner, so the exhibits showed much of their history as part of its history too, even explaining some things I had known little about before. So it was a very poignant visit for me.

**The life and work of Sophie Rabin (then Sophia Neshaver) gives an insight into the experience of being a Jewish Londoner in the garment trades in the early 1900s.**

**The Jewish population of London's East End was around 100,000 in 1914, the year that the Neshavers came from Poland to Whitechapel. Their new neighbourhood was filled with the noise, colour and culture of Ashkenazi (Eastern-European) Jewish life. A popular Yiddish theatre, the Pavilion, and the bustling Sunday markets, including Petticoat Lane, were just a short walk away.**

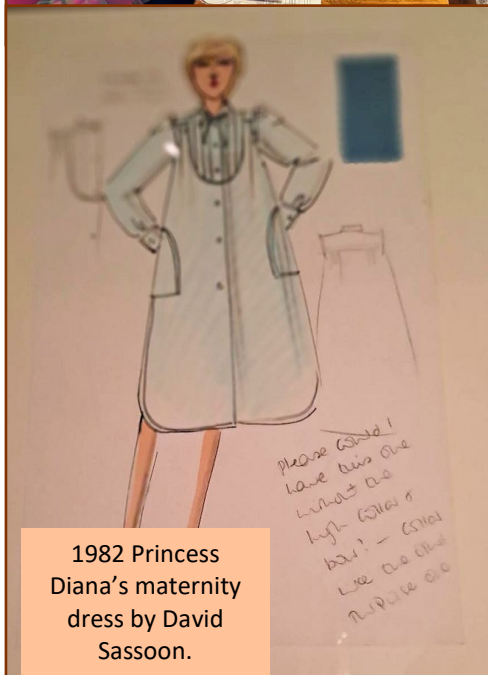
**Though many Jewish East Enders experienced extreme poverty and hardship in the late 1800s, a network of Jewish charities worked to support and stabilise the community. By 1914 living conditions had improved for many. There were good job opportunities for young workers like Sophie.**



With exhibits from nearly two centuries of the fashion industries existence in London the range of items was extensive and impressive in its quality, beauty and inspiration. I highly recommend a visit.

Our day finished perfectly, enjoying a lunch with friends from Alpha. Thank you Barbara, for once again organising our Christmas outing so well.

**Joan Carroll, Alpha Chapter.**



**1982 Princess Diana's maternity dress by David Sassoon.**



**Wallis 1960's. They copied couture designs, but later developed their own.**



**Mr Rose's 1960 era Winklepickers.**



**Mr Fish Kipper tie 1968.**



An excellent exhibition with so many interesting stories and beautiful outfits. Many names still on the high street today. The history, the incredible cutting and stitching, I loved the Ravis show-stopper evening dress with its amazing flared insert at the back.

*All Fashion City pictures were taken at the exhibition.*  
**Diana Bell, Alpha Chapter.**

The third 'Guvnor' of Moss Bros spent a staggering 65 years working for the family business. Harry Moss (1896-1982) started on the shop floor aged 13, progressed to Director at 25, and finally became Managing Director 13 years later in 1934. Harry was a beloved boss, and an innovator who thoroughly understood the business of fashion.

### Marks & Spencer in London

When Jewish migrant Michael Marks opened his stall in Leeds' Kirkgate Market in 1884, he created a cornerstone of British culture. Marks & Spencer became an important national retailer, and in 1924 moved their head offices to London.

From the 1940s onwards M&S strengthened its position as a leader in the crowded high street fashion market. These efforts were led by Head of Design Hans Schneider, a Jewish refugee from Vienna, whose familiarity with the world of couture ensured a strong focus on design.



### Professor Dennis Tourish on Cults



Professor Dennis Tourish from the University of Sussex is an expert on Cults. He had even felt part of one when involved with the Militant Tendency in the 1970s. A "dawning awareness" made him feel this wasn't quite right.

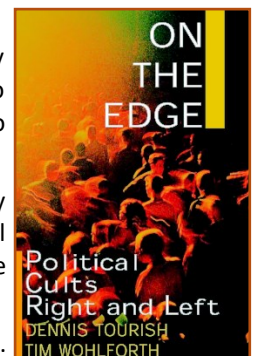
His engrossing talk took us on a journey through what a cult was, including the myths – is a cult just an alternative religion that allows freedom once you join? He explained the role of charismatic, privileged leaders, the all-knowing compelling gurus who demanded excessive devotion from followers. They create an authoritarian regime where nothing can be questioned.

A cult, Dennis told us, was about the subordination of the individual to the collective. Unsurprisingly, a cult will expect extreme time commitment, particularly while members try to draw in other vulnerable people. Students away from home for the first time can be fragile and open to these groups in Freshers' Week. A large amount of money is usually donated by the devotee.

We also heard how people caught up can be highly susceptible, often adjusting their perception of reality to fit their cult's world view. Seemingly bizarre beliefs are promoted, such as the arrival of spaceships to take the adherents to the 'next level' – a view held by the Heaven's Gate group, who were eventually to commit mass suicide.

Dennis' talk made me reflect on over-charismatic head teachers I've witnessed over the years, who fly high for a while, delight Ofsted, but who later crash down to earth. They lead worn-out teachers who feel duty bound to do more and more, working even longer hours, unless otherwise they aren't seen to be devoted to the cause. Perhaps this isn't truly cultish behaviour but it's certainly unhealthy.

**Anne Goldstein, Gamma Chapter.**



### Canada - Europe DKG Meeting-Cultural Exchange

#### Saturday January 13th 2024

Lorna Berlinguette, Area Representative of Canada, chaired the meeting. She was so pleased to be able to welcome 87 members of DKG. Before the meeting started, as is customary in Canada, she acknowledged the land once belonged to the indigenous people.

Debbie LeBlanc, our International President, gave us greetings and welcomed the opportunity for shared discussion and to be inspired, enlightened and informed.

Lorna then welcomed Marjorie Sinclair, Past Area Representative for Canada and our Zoom master, Connie Rensink, First Vice President, Marie-Antoinette Hubers de Wolfe, European Regional Director and Marika Heimbach, Chair of the European Forum.

Lorna then invited the various States to give us some indication of the state of their membership - how many Chapters, members, projects, charities and ideas to increase membership. They also told us about the 'make up' of the State: forests, lakes, industry, cultural, recreation and population.

It was all very interesting and it helped us to know each other much better. Most of the States had the same problems regarding low numbers of members because of the aging population, but they were keen to keep going.

The States alternated. Here is some of what was said.

Firstly Estonia, 45,000 square kilometers with 1,3 million population. DKG founded in 2008. They have 33 members in 3 Chapters. Their students are the best in Europe.

New Brunswick. The only officially bi-lingual state in Canada. They give scholarships to New Brunswick University.

Finland has four Chapters and said it had lost the crown of being the best educated country to Estonia. It has long borders with Russia. Each Chapter has its own project to do with girls and women. They have contacts with schools. The members vary from church members and younger members. They meet 8 times a year.

Quebec is a large, mainly French speaking State now holding welcoming events for new members. Connections have been made with Chapters in the USA.

Germany is now down to one Chapter, but continues to meet, often together with the Netherlands. They work with migrants. We were invited to their Annual Conference in Darmstadt on April 19th—23rd.

Ontario, the largest Canadian province with 15 million population, keeps in contact with their members by sending 'nice notes' if they have not attended or if they are unwell.

Diana GB, reported that we have 2 Chapters, both reasonably close to London. Members come from a variety of professional backgrounds. Monthly meeting are either Zoom presentations - started during Covid - or visits to places of interest. GB have taken books into schools and offer support for projects and members attending their first Convention. More can be seen on their website and in the newsletter.

Manitoba, a central region has mainly a forestry industry. It has 15,000 teachers, 3 Chapters and 50 members. They use virtual meetings in remote areas.

Iceland, a very successful DKG country has 13 Chapters and 387 members. Sigrun Klara Hannesdottir was the first non-American member to be elected 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and was awarded the DKG Achievement Award.

Saskatchewan is a land-locked State and members live in the South around Regina. It can get to minus 40 in some areas. The first treaty with Europeans was in 1690. It is the first Social Democratic state in the county and has 31 members.

The Netherlands have two Chapters and plan to stay focused. They are having a 'new recruit revision' and have gained a few new members.

Alberta is land-locked, mainly Rocky Mountains. There is thriving film industry. They have 147 members and 4 Chapters. Their success is due to inviting Collegiate members to join. They have been successful with World Fellowship.

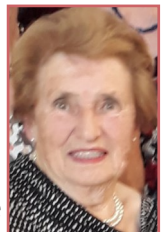
Norway. The first European state, 1971. Fishing and forestry are important. 75 members and an ageing population. They have a joint project with Sweden that supports women, this is in an area of Egypt.

British Columbia. Bounded by the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, the weather can get very cold. Many people move to the area, many languages are spoken. They have a large indigenous population. There are plans to put forward a request for a name change for the Society.

Sweden has 140/150 members in 5 or 6 chapters.

Alaska, the largest American state has 5 million people. There are 138 members and 6 Chapters. Its main focus is membership. It has plans to start virtual Chapters.

We were left with the impression that, apart from a few states, we were all struggling with membership but trying our best to cope. There were similar ideas for raising funds to help our poorer sisters in other parts of the world - not forgetting one of our aims is to educate the girls and women of the world.



Lorna thanked everyone for their input.

**Evelyn Goodsell**, Gamma Chapter.

### **A Brief Whose Who in DKG**

In the article Evelyn mentions many DKG people. It occurs to me that not everyone knows just who everyone is.

DKG is quite hierarchical with an International President at the top. At the moment this is Debbie LeBlanc, but in June 2024 at the international Conference in National Harbor, near Washington, the new International President will be chosen and 'installed'. Dr Beverly Hall-Maughan and Connie Rensink are both nominated for this job.

All the nominations for the 'top' jobs: International President, First Vice-President and Second Vice-President may be found in DKG News. if you don't have a paper copy sent then go online to [www.dkg.org](http://www.dkg.org).

The next tier are the Regional Directors: NE, NW, SE, SW and Europe and 2 area representatives for Canada and Latin America. Our Regional Director, Marie-Antoinette Hubers de Wolfe is nominated to stand again and she will be at the Regional Conference here in July 2025, but I am expecting her to visit before then to check the venue.

After that come the State Presidents, 78 or so representing all the American States, Canada, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, Japan and the 8 European countries. Diana Bell is our State President and Kathy Hodgson our State Vice President. Each state is divided into Chapters. In Great Britain we have two Chapters, Alpha and Gamma, each with a Chapter President and Vice President.

Editor.

### TD = Thompson Dock = Titanic Distillery

In the heart of Belfast in the Titanic Quarter, you will find a new distillery, the first in over 80 years on the site of the birthplace of the Titanic.

Thompson Graving Dock is located on the west-side of Queen's Island in Belfast, within sight of Harland and Wolff shipyard. The dock was constructed by the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, opened in 1911 and named after the Chairman of the Commission, Robert Thompson. It was designed to accommodate the new mammoth White Star liners, Olympic and Titanic. Irish Whiskey production is now under way in Belfast for the first time since prohibition in the 1930s at Titanic Distillers.

On 18th May 1996, Peter Lavery, a former bus driver from Belfast, won £10,248,233 in the National Lottery. As well as setting up various charities he invested his money in establishing Titanic Distillers.



*Peter Lavery reflected on what he claims is 'a momentous occasion'. "We opened our doors to tourists in April this year (2023) to allow visitors to explore the distillery and the site where Titanic last rested on dry ground, It's been quite a journey over the past five years but we are thrilled to get our licence and to start producing our own spirits on site. Whiskey has played an important part in the history of our city but there hasn't been a working distillery here since the 1930s, so, as a Belfast boy, it really means a lot to me to revive this great distilling tradition – and help bring Belfast back to the forefront of Irish Whiskey production. Once, we led the way globally - not just in ship-building but across many areas of industry, manufacturing and innovation. With our Titanic Distillers Premium Irish Whiskey, now produced on this most historic of sites, we hope to do so again."*

My brother Bill and I visited the Titanic Distillery thanks to a Christmas present from my brother's wife. So the day before New Year's Eve we set off to enjoy a two hour tour of the new distillery which included an hour long outside tour learning about the history of the dock etc, followed by a tour of the original 'Pump House' now converted into the working distillery, then a tasting and finishing with a cocktail – choice of whiskey or vodka (which they also produce) base.

The outside tour, led by our very knowledgeable guide Michael, was fascinating. It would have been amazing to - *"descend 67 steps into the historic Thompson Graving Dock to experience the conditions and scale of the engineering project, that once produced the largest ship the world had ever seen"*. However, rain, sleet and driving wind ensured that we had to abandon the outside tour after 45 minutes. So, I never did get to appreciate what it would have been like for those brave dock workers who built the most famous ship in history. And unfortunately, due to the weather, it wasn't even worth considering trying to take any photos as we battled our way around.



Once inside, we abandoned our thoroughly saturated outer garments and enjoyed a tour of the new distillery with its three beautiful shiny copper stills. After this we headed up to the bar where we were told about the production of Irish Whiskey and sampled both the Titanic Whiskey and the Titanic Vodka. Finally, downstairs we got to enjoy our Titanic Whiskey Cocktails. As a souvenir of our visit we were presented with a Whiskey tumbler each, with the Distillery logo.



NB If you look closely at the logo for the Titanic Distillers you will see that it is shaped like a ship – made up with the initials T & D (Titanic Distillers) for the bow and the mast, and at the top of the mast you will see a star – symbolising 'The White Star Line' the owners of the Titanic and its two sister ships, The Olympic (the oldest) and The Britannic (the youngest).

PS It took almost 24 hours for our clothing to dry out!

Penny Kinnear, Alpha Chapter.



## Have Our Schools seen Better Days?



Alpha Chapter's Liz Day, gave us an interesting and thought provoking presentation.

She led us from thinking about our own school days to the challenges faced by schools today. The public's high expectations, social media (think what the school parents' WhatsApp group might say!) 'ghost' children and more children being home schooled since covid, childcare, very disadvantaged children, gender identity issues and the different expectations of different groups of people in behaviour and cultural development. The list was long.

There are also 21st Century challenges such as teachers having technical expertise, Artificial Intelligence, meeting the mental welfare and physical, as well as the intellectual needs of children in mixed ability settings, high expectations of teachers and, of course, money.

Liz covered concerns in the news such as the Raac concrete problem and Ofsted Inspections and 14% of primary schools having no libraries, councils going broke and schools taking on SEN and disabilities for pupils up to the age of 21, with no extra funding.

She gave some good examples of how schools are coping by grouping together to provide economies of scale, some having 'people' resources such as HR, legal and IT that can support others. She also asked what happens to schools that are left out of these groups.

There is hope. The National Schooling Framework Commission has ideas for the future and there is a '39 Steps' to make the system fairer. Both main political parties have ideas for improvement. Liz finished with some good ways that our schools are thriving today. There is certainly hope for the future.

Liz had 'done her homework' and she packed a great deal into 50 minutes. We appreciated hearing about so many different aspects of modern education, the talk was really well thought out.

There were some interesting comments and questions before Anne brought the session to a close.

**Diana Bell**, Alpha Chapter.

## The Glass Heart



The exhibition 'The Glass Heart' at Two Temple Place was a feast of intricacy and colour, showing the history of glassmaking, and highlighting glass through art, industry and collaboration.

A small DKG group thoroughly enjoyed their visit (and may well go again) looking at the fascinating works from major public collections in the UK.



The exhibition was fairly busy – a range of ages visiting, including a young school party, enjoying (quietly) learning about the history and the art.

There was a wide variety of glass – from stained glass windows, both ancient and modern, goblets, ships in bottles (tiny to large) and modern pieces which had been treated to give different textures. There was also an intricate construction of hearts, pulsing in reds.

The building itself, built for William Waldorf Astor, has some beautiful stained glass windows, and was the perfect foil for this display of glass.

The exhibition continues until 21<sup>st</sup> April, so you still have the chance to visit, and it's free. There are also various events linked to the exhibition, so look at their website [www.twotempleplace.org](http://www.twotempleplace.org)

**Barbara Kern**, Alpha Chapter.



The glass chair is half the normal chair size. Heaton's Reynard the Fox panel was commissioned by the Duke of Westminster.

