



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

## **GREAT BRITAIN NEWS**



**Great Britain State Conference**

**Summer 2015**

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| State President's Report  | 3  | <p>Thanks as always to everyone who has contributed to this edition, which concentrates as you would expect on our excellent GB State Conference, 2015, which took place in London at the end of March. There are reports on all the speakers' contributions, and on the Canterbury and GB Awards. There is an interesting report by Zoe Newman of Beta Chapter on her work following the Canterbury Award which she received in 2012. Good to know the Awards are being put to such good use!</p> <p>A repeat of Diana's invitation to all to attend the forthcoming European Regional Conference in Sweden in August is followed by the Chapter Reports, with news of recent and forthcoming activities in each chapter.</p> <p>Our next edition will report on the European Regional Conference - I shall as usual be seeking 'volunteers' to contribute! Other reports of chapter and member activity are of course also welcome. All contributions by mid-August please, preferably in Word. Photos are especially welcome, as attachments to emails for ease of transfer. <a href="mailto:dbillam@hotmail.com">dbillam@hotmail.com</a></p> |
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| <p>Most photographs in this edition are courtesy of Barbara Kern of Alpha Chapter, except where otherwise indicated. Pictures on the front cover show Joan Carroll, who organised the excellent lunch, checking that everything is in order, our wonderful venue the Columbia Hotel, and Kathy Hodgson, State President elect, at the Registration desk. Carole Stirling is working with her.</p> |    |  |



The sun is shining, summer is on its way. I have booked and am now looking forward to our European Regional Conference in Borås, Sweden, the 'City of Sculptures'. If you have never been to a Regional Conference before then do consider going. Why not join the contingent of GB members who have already booked? We promise this will be a really enjoyable experience.

Our State Conference is well reported in this issue of GB News. It was good to see so many members there - and we were very privileged to enjoy such first class speakers. Pat

Walker told us, in her wonderful way, about *Southside* and how the boys respond to learning to be leaders. Dr Tim Wreghitt OBE, explained his reasoning behind the gardens he has built at Chelsea on behalf of the Royal Society of Pathologists. He manages to get so much done in his day!

Not everything went to plan, Sonia Birch-Woodcock was unwell and unable to join us. Fortunately Sandra Blacker introduced us to Nita Nicholson, the most wonderful author of *Chameleon in my Garden*, who gave us a powerful insight into her life in Gaddafi's Libya. I have just finished reading Nita's book and can recommend it.

My conference report allowed me to say thank you to everyone who has offered their support and guidance during my biennium. It also gave me the opportunity to report what the chapter presidents said makes them most proud of their members, as Gamma Chapter put it 'the genuine spirit of friendship and support and the ongoing commitment of its members'.

Chapters have been supportive to others' education with Gamma helping Pestalozzi and Beta supporting university education student experience in working with a literacy group. Our conference collection for *Schools for Africa* raised £80.

Increasing our membership is always at the front of our minds. We need to go out and ask friends and colleagues to join us. Do please invite potential members to meetings and tell them about the benefits and tremendous opportunities there are in our society for personal growth, developing interests, travel and making friendships. If you had a good time then tell people about the visits, events, interesting speakers, conferences etc, and promote DKG. We have GB News and our website which are excellent tools - friends and

colleagues can read about all the events and meetings taking place. Editor Di Billam, and webmaster Gloria Redston, are both constantly on the look-out for good DKG stories and pictures.

The survey on recruitment and retention of teachers, drawn up by members in Estonia and circulated here by Joan Carroll, has provided us (and the European Regional Conference) with food for thought. Joan was also responsible for organising our delicious conference food. I have to say it was a pleasure to watch her keeping the minutes and writing down all that the Achievement Award recipient had done – only for it to dawn on her that she was the award recipient!

It has been a great honour, and a priceless experience, to be your State President for a second biennium. I am delighted that Kathy Hodgson has agreed to be our New State President with Evelyn Goodsell as Vice-President. I know from my own experience no-one can do this job alone. I hope many of you will put your name forward for jobs or committees.

***Diana Bell***

That time of year was fast approaching, when the days start to get longer and

## **GB STATE CONFERENCE 2015, LONDON**

the first flowers of the year start to appear. Yes, it's State Conference time! The venue looked very different to others we have been to and the speakers varied and of great interest – I couldn't wait. I love the opportunity to spend time with friends from other chapters and to meet new people.

When we arrived at the front entrance to the hotel we were impressed with its position, opposite Hyde Park. It seemed light and spacious. We soon found the conference room and were delighted to find it had a balcony which actually overlooked the park. The room was large and airy and coffee was soon served – an ideal start to the day.

The speakers lived up to expectation and more. Lunch was served in the dining room. The three courses made quite a difference to our usual buffet style meal, I think most people appreciated it. The afternoon whizzed past and soon the day was over. With everything safely packed away we were soon on our way home. The Conference was over for another year. I wonder what next year will hold.

***Carole Stirling (Gamma Chapter)***

## **SOUTHSIDE: INSPIRING YOUNG BLACK BOYS TO BE LEADERS OF TOMORROW**



Pat Walker started her talk with some music, playing 'Something Inside So Strong'. She explained how she and her husband started a journey 10 years ago. It took 2 years to get their initiative started, and it has now been running for 8 years. The name Southside was inspired by an existing Academy in Newham called Eastside. She had been a primary school head, and as part of her research visited the Children's University in Birmingham, and found it inspiring that young people had chosen what they were doing. Ray Lewis, of Eastside, talked about his Academy. He had been a minister and a prison chaplain, where he

saw too many young black men, who had seen education as an imposition irrelevant to them. Pat went to see him 3 times, and took to heart his maxim to his students: 'Aim for the top – the bottom is overcrowded'.

They decided to work with families and schools, with students showing potential for leadership. They started with a Saturday Academy, now on its third venue and third Head. Their current Head is excellent, but they cannot afford to pay for a deputy as is desperately needed. They aim to reverse the downward spiral. Funding is always a problem, although some schools pay the Academy for the Saturday sessions. The main problem is low aspiration, with the boys seeing themselves as inevitably ending up in low level jobs. To combat this they changed their interaction with the boys. They gained an excellent drill instructor, who throughout the discipline of drill routines talks to them about a range of different subjects. The students are encouraged to talk as well as to read, both equally important, they are taken places so that they have something to talk about. They went sailing on the Isle of Wight: one student is now training to be a sailing instructor. Food is always involved, to help with bonding. The boys are encouraged to help and to volunteer so that they feel part of their community. A local sponsoring law firm runs an annual competition: the students make a presentation, and are judged by a panel. The winner, who had previously been the most skilled disruptor of his class, shadowed a senior partner of the law firm. Another had won a bursary to Whitgift School, which paid the fees but offered nothing towards uniform, etc. They therefore set up a fund for uniform, kit, etc. via the Academy.

Joan Carroll thanked Pat for an interesting and inspiring talk, backed by slides of an enthusiastic collection of young black students.

*Joan Carroll thanks Pat, who holds the traditional red rose, which Liz Malik, also in the picture, had organised for each presentation..*





## **MAKING A STAND FOR CHELSEA: DR TIM WREGHITT OBE**

**Q.** What do horseradish, logwood, agar agar, primula and snowdrops have in common? **A.** Plants with diagnostic properties.

**Q.** What do foxglove, willow, tea tree, yew, periwinkle and artemesia have in common? **A.** Plants with therapeutic properties.

**Q.** What do cranberries and tomatoes have in common other than being red? **A.** Plants with prophylactic properties.

For those of us privileged enough to listen to Dr Tim Wreghitt at the 2015 DKG GB conference we could answer those questions. I had listened to Tim speak at a previous DKG conferences and so knew that I was in for a treat with this year's talk on 'Making a stand for Chelsea'. I was not disappointed. Tim has the enviable skill of keeping his audience captivated. He brings a passion to his presentation that draws the listener into his world of science using a wealth of knowledge gained as an eminent virologist and microbiologist woven with the expertise of an excellent after-dinner speaker; a heady mix and one not to be missed. Tim's presentation shared with us his journey of exhibiting at the Royal Horticultural Society Chelsea Flower Show on behalf of the Royal College of Pathologists since 2003. This display is part of their mission to improve the public understanding of the crucial work of Pathologists. Pathologists are vital to the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The exhibits between 2003 and 2009 aimed to educate people about the role and value of pathologists, using plants as a theme. It takes 10 days from setting up to taking down an exhibit for Chelsea. What follows are snippets of information to whet your appetite from the 6 years of the Royal College of Pathologists's Chelsea Flower show exhibits.

### **2003 – 'The use of plants in medicine' – SILVER medal**

Logwood was used for a long time as a natural source of dye, and still remains an important source of haematoxylin, which is used in histology for staining.

Agar is a polysaccharide derived from red seaweeds and is still used as a culture medium for microbiology testing.

## **2004 – ‘The role of plants in allergies’ – SILVER GILT medal**

The main purpose of this exhibit was to educate the public about the plants which cause allergy, those plants to avoid, how allergies can be diagnosed and treated and to demonstrate the role pathologists play. They also offered a useful pollen calendar. March and April are the worst for tree pollens (hazel, yew, elm, alder, willow, ash, poplar and birch) although birch also runs into May, when it is joined by oak and pine. The plane tree season is longest (from March through to the end of June) but its high release period is the beginning of May. Lime trees are worst in June and July. Grass runs from April to September (worst in June), oil seed rape is worst in May. For gardeners there was a list of low allergen plants: examples included bleeding heart, bizzzy lizzie, columbine, cranesbill, hebe, periwinkle and poppies.

## **2005 – ‘Drugs and disease’ – SILVER GILT medal**

This year’s exhibit used patient stories to demonstrate the value of plants in treating modern day illnesses. A 54 year old man who gets a hospital acquired infection MRSA. The microbiological testing for this used an agar plate. MRSA can be treated with tea tree oil or manuka honey. A 57 year old women suffering from ovarian cancer was treated with the Pacific Yew (*taxus brevifolia*). An 18 year old who contracted malaria was treated with Artemesia (Chinese Worm Wood). Periwinkle was used to treat a young sports therapist who presented with a myeloma.

## **2006 - ‘healthy eating’ – SILVER GILT medal**

In this exhibit the health benefits of certain foods were shown. For example consuming cranberries lowers the risk of urinary tract infections, helps to prevent certain types of cancer, improves immune function, decreases blood pressure and helps reduce the risk of becoming diabetic. For the men visiting the exhibit they would have learnt that eating tomatoes (containing lycopene) helps to reduce the risk of prostate cancer.

## **2007 – ‘How can plants make you ill’ – GOLD medal**

This exhibit focused on foods that most often trigger allergic reactions and explains the pathology and links between these foods that can result in unexpected symptoms such as scalded mouth syndrome. However at this point in his presentation, Tim also shared his chance at the Chelsea Flower show to chat with the” good and the great” including The Queen and Joanna Lumley.



## **2008 – ‘Repelling mosquitoes’ – GOLD medal**

**Q.** When and where was the last malaria outbreak in the UK? **A.** Kent during WW1 when soldiers brought the disease back from Thessalonica.

This exhibit was a joint display with the National Health Protection agency with the aim to raise the public's awareness of the potential risk of malaria outbreaks especially with global warming. Visitors to the stand learnt about natural protection from plants such as feverfew, artemesia and chincona (natural quinine). Once again Tim used humour to keep his audience captivated as he described the challenges of making mosquitoes used for the display active (May 2008 was cold and the mosquitoes were not cooperating in looking lively).

## **2009 – ‘Urban greening – not to be sneezed at’ – SILVER GILT medal**

This display of a low allergen garden provided information for the public on which plants can cause respiratory allergies (such as hay fever and asthma) through breathing in wind-borne pollen, and which plants are not a cause of allergies. The display was a mock up of an apartment roof garden in central London.

Tim told us that after 2009 the Royal College of Pathologists had decided to take a break from the flower show but this year they are to return to Chelsea. I could let you know about the stand but I won't. A visit to the 2015 Chelsea Flower Show and a drop into the Royal College of Pathologist's stand is one not to be missed.... Maybe the topic of 'tobacco friend or foe' will bring them their 3<sup>rd</sup> gold medal. I truly hope so.

I have a nursing background and a love of gardening so for me the content of Tim's talk was fascinating but listening to the silence during the presentation and the buzz of interest at the end I am sure that everyone in the room went away with some snippet of information wanting to learn more.

### ***Dorcas Rogers (Alpha Chapter)***

*Jess Curtis thanks Tim Wreghitt for his entertaining and enlightening talk*



## NITA NICHOLSON, ARTIST AND AUTHOR



Nita Nicholson has just published her first book, 'Chameleon in My Garden', which is based on her life in Libya in the 70s. Nita met her husband-to-be when she was an art student at Leeds University and he was studying medicine. Nita came from a small village in The Wirral, Cheshire, whilst her husband was from Libya. After their marriage they went to live in Benghazi, in what was then the Kingdom of Libya. She discovered that she was not a welcome addition to the Libyan family scene as her husband had already been betrothed by his family to a cousin. However, she became more accepted after the birth of their first (male) child.

She described her life in Libya with calmness and clarity. In 1969 King Idris, Libya's first and only king, was suddenly overthrown in a so called 'bloodless coup' and Gaddafi took over the country. Her husband had been appointed Principal Medical Officer for Cyrenaica (Eastern Libya) and the family was moved from Benghazi to Bayda. The ancient town of Bayda was going through a huge building programme with cheap apartments, schools and government offices being constructed, but something was not right. There was no sewage system and waste ran through the streets and down hills. Her husband publicly criticised the poor sanitation when an epidemic broke out in the town. He observed that the sheep were grazing in the sewage, the people ate the sheep meat, contracting the disease Brucellosis. Warned by a friend that he was about to be arrested for being critical of the government, they fled with their two small children to England. However, whilst there, he received an invitation to return to Benghazi in order to advise on the founding of a new heart hospital. He returned, was arrested at the airport and became one of the 'disappeared'. He remained 'disappeared' for a year in solitary confinement before being sentenced to life imprisonment which ended up as an 11 year jail sentence.

In the meantime Gaddafi passed a law making it illegal for a Libyan to marry a westerner. Their marriage was deemed illegal. Back in England however, Nita campaigned constantly for her husband's release throughout the eleven years he was imprisoned, including awareness-raising via Amnesty International. Unfortunately, as Nita and the children were in England and communications were almost impossible, it was thought that she had left her husband. She eventually discovered that the family had arranged another marriage and her husband was now married to someone else. What a very sad situation.

Throughout the imprisonment period Nita had found it therapeutic to write down observations which eventually formed the basis of her novel. With the recent

Throughout the imprisonment period Nita had found it therapeutic to write down observations which eventually formed the basis of her novel. With the recent downfall of the regime it became possible to publish her writing. Nita Nicholson is a very courageous lady and although hating the regime which caused her such personal distress, she shows only compassion and understanding of the family and the impossible situation they all endured. Gaddafi's tyrannical rule continued for forty-two years until 2011. Anyone disagreeing with him was imprisoned with public hangings reinforcing the reign of terror. He was a vindictive and capricious ruler.

My own personal observations were that even before Gaddafi life in oil rich Libya was not easy. The wealth of the country was held by the king and royal hangers-on and about five 'important' families. The majority of Libyans were very poor indeed, Many lived in cardboard or plywood shacks with old biscuit tins hammered flat to provide a roof. There were insufficient schools and hospitals. It was a harsh life moulding a harsh people. In 1966 and '67 I lived alone with a six month old baby, first in Benghazi and then Tripoli, while my husband, Harry, lived and worked in the desert, returning for three days leave a month. My house was an isolated villa without close neighbours and a few hundred yards away was a village consisting of said shacks and youths. It was frightening - a young woman and baby alone. As protection I had a very old patriarch, Sayeed who stayed in a guard house at my gates all night. Sayeed was blind so if anyone had decided to attack us or the house, he couldn't have done anything to stop it, but, the fact that he was employed to protect us was sufficient to ensure we remained safe. A job even as lowly as guard duty at least brought some needed income to the village. However, when the Arab/Israeli war broke out in '67 everyone, guards included, left their jobs, the cities were ablaze, shops ransacked, the cinema set alight and riots everywhere, and that's when I left with one baby and another on the way. That was two years before Gaddafi hit the scene and things became even worse.

**Sheila Roberts** (*Gamma Chapter*)

*Picture of Nita reading from her book by Barbara Kern. Picture of Sheila and her son, Paul—taken some time ago! - by Harry Roberts*



## MARIANNE SKARDEUS: EUROPEAN REGIONAL DIRECTOR

Marianne Skardéus, our European Regional Director, was very happy to be with us as a speaker especially as it was springtime, her favourite season, and that she could be on the 'left side' when driving on the road ....it reminded her of her childhood, before Sweden switched to the right. She came to us with "four hats" each hat being a different aspect of her talk. Wearing her first hat, her American hat, she congratulated GB state for the contributions it had made to the society: For having three chapters that supported each other, for producing EuForia and the work of our European representatives. She went on to highlight the number of International Speakers we had provided and that we had maintained our membership against the background of an ageing society. The European region has shown a decline in membership since 2009 and sadly Denmark State has ceased to be a member of the organization. On the plus side, Iceland is thriving with an increase in membership from 265 to 325 and Estonia is growing. However, it is felt that to continue and grow we must change and think outside the box escaping the "gilded cage" that surrounded us when the society was formed in 1929. To do this we need to market the society both internally and externally, making members knowledgeable of the society's work and be proud to belong to it; and by listening to the 1982 and 1989 Baby Boomers' ambitions, they being our future members.

The Baby Boomers are different from the older generation in that in work they want skills and performance, short-term projects and a career lattice rather than a ladder. They want involvement, and engagement in meaningful relationships or in other words 'emotional commitment': we need to offer this to them in our organization. Also, to market the society, we need to be confident to use modern tools such as Facebook that are available to us today. We should create new honorary members and reach out to heads of schools and even politicians. All of this should get us better known and less hidden as a group.

With a large map and pictures of Cranes- a symbol of the area, Marianne in her second hat, introduced us to the location of the European Regional Conference - Borås. Here a shallow lake/ bird sanctuary provides a home for 13,000 cranes whose arrival heralds the beginning of springtime. We learnt where Borås was in terms of Sweden's geography and even where Marianne lived; although it is going to be difficult for her if we all take up her invitation to visit her home! She explained how it had been very difficult to choose excursions that would give us a taste of the region in such a short time. Personally, I think they have done a very good job from her description of what is on offer: Two whole day visits: One to Gothenburg, Sweden's second largest city, which includes a boat trip in the Bohuslän archipelago. The second visit is a long trip inland to the unique Table Mountain region. Here, we are promised a wonderful mix of ecology, culture and nature, with a visit to an Abbey, and a museum dedicated to the first Noble laureate, Dahlen, the inventor of the lighthouse, and the Aga!! I don't have one but my two daughters-in-law love theirs. There is a half-



day tour of Borås, which includes a visit to the art museum, which amazingly, turned out to belong to the father of a lady sitting next to Marianne on her way to our conference. Is this called serendipity? There is also a walking tour around the city to see the sculptures and murals. On Friday a unique tour of the university's textile fashion department. Although the University will be closed during our conference, they will be opening up the new textile centre for us, where we will learn about the history of the school of textiles. However spaces are limited to 30 persons, so booking early is very important. Finally, Marianne put in a little extra advertising for post-conference cruises around the Bohuslan archipelago, where we will see not just the West Coast of Sweden but also the Best Coast!

We next learned a little of what the conference would include, although Marianne asked us to consult the website for more detailed information. The speakers will reflect the theme of the conference 'Education – A lifelong Dedication'. Thursday will deal with Educational Challenges. On Friday we will hear about 'Excellence in Education', while on Saturday the title 'Education for the Future', deals with games and how we can integrate them in to education. During the conference we can visit the Science Centre, ranked the second best in Sweden and admire the street art and statues. There will also be the market place with its vendors, an Info Fair, a Sweden Night that promises some surprises and a Night on the Town in connection with MiLook. MiLook an enterprise begun only two years ago by two girls who had worked many years in the fashion industry. They will show us their new concept whereby human needs and sensibility is included in their business model. Marianne promised us some new songs and atmosphere of celebration.

Finally Marianne revealed her secret hat. This was her concern that as a society we should be focusing more on education particularly education for girls. She felt that we have had some collaboration with the UN, with the Afghanistan project but this is not enough. Children in poor countries and countries at war have a right to education. Marianne feels that education as a right is important to us but she feels we have stopped talking about it, because it's so obvious to us. Marianne has taken her inspiration from Malala, the girl from the Swat Valley of Pakistan, shot by the Taliban for seeking an education; She has visited the Swat valley so she thinks that is why it clicked with her. A girl just 18 years old has made her focus again on education in this way. Marianne feels that Malala should be the role model for the new DKG and we should make her an honorary member. There was general agreement by members present for her to put this idea forward. Thank you Marianne for being a very informative speaker.

**Lavinia Soul** (Alpha Chapter)

*Marianne and Diana share a moment during the conference*



## CANTERBURY AWARD 2015



This year's award went to Sue Blackburn of Beta Chapter, left. She received this award to support her project 'Facilitating Transition in Young People'.

She started this project in February 2014 offering free counselling to 15 – 18 year old students. Now she is offering on-going provision to a vulnerable student from a deprived area through his crucial transition from Year 11 to Year 12.

Sue will also use her experience to enable her to complete a post diploma qualification in Psychotherapeutic Counselling. Her professional growth will be enabled and enhanced using this award. Others in the field of education would benefit as she will be able to commit to the school and student for a year.

Congratulations to Sue for a thoroughly worthy project which will give a positive profile to DKG in Paington.

**Sandra Blacker** (*Gamma Chapter*)



## ZOE NEWMAN'S CANTERBURY TALES

Following on from my report entitled 'DKG member takes 30 gap years!' back in 2012, here are my story and storytelling activities to date.

I received the Canterbury Award in 2012, which helped me towards 'topping up' my Open University degree to honours with a module on one of my long-standing passions of Children's Literature, as well as help towards a laptop computer. Since then things have not gone totally as planned! Some storytelling strands, which began very strongly in two school settings, including sessions planned for 60 children, which actually turned into sessions of 90 plus children in Plymouth's Central Library, have now ceased. This was due mainly to staffing changes. Others which seemingly fizzled out at one point are now beginning to pick up again. These had involved working with the Plymouth Centre for Faiths and Cultural Diversity (PCFCD) and their Bridge of Stories Project with women and their pre-school children from the refugee and asylum seeking community. As well as these there were monthly storytelling evenings at the Culture Café of the University of Plymouth, a storytelling showcase event, in the Storytelling Tent we had constructed with the refugee and asylum seekers for Inter Faith week at Plymouth University and a community outdoor event in July 2012 in the centrally located Drakes Place Gardens. Following this, a period of time elapsed without funding for Bridge of Stories but we continued to meet regularly and practise our storytelling skills under the title 'Simple Storytelling'.



*Zoe and her group re-enact the Last Supper*



From autumn 2014 to spring 2015 a second project has attracted further funding, which I am again part of. This project includes workshops and storytelling sessions led by international storytellers David Heathfield, Abimbola Aloe and Ana Lines and outreach storytelling sessions in schools, parks and at the Christian Storytelling Festival at Buckfast Abbey, Devon. New storytelling strands have also emerged. I have become an 'Open the Box' storyteller with a group from differing Christian backgrounds including Anglican, Baptist, Methodist and Pentecostal and we take assembly in two schools dramatizing bible stories as part of the national 'Open the Book' scheme.

I am also a founder member of a small community arts group, Dramatic Results! Group, who collect and re-present stories in all sorts of formats including dramatic, traditional storytelling, dramatized story reading, and other formats. At the moment we are concentrating on inter-active heritage walks. Two of our members, including myself, are trained walks leaders. In our heritage walks we retell oral history stories that we have collected from books and residents in the local area. We take part in Plymouth's Heritage month in May, having taken part every year since its inception in 2013. Alongside our heritage walks we are investigating the possibility of apps and a documentary. By this we hope to utilise some of the existing IT/AV skills of members updating some and training beginners by attending community video training days.



*Zoe takes the part of Pontius Pilate*

We are also pursuing with a local councillor the possibility of organising a 'Friends' of the local park. This park itself has many stories attached to it, including Beaumont House which held meetings of the Reform group that campaigned for electoral reform especially that prospective MPs should not have to be naval candidates as was the case in the mid-nineteenth century, but could be civilians. As the local area has street names of politicians, one suggestion has been to include boards in the park re-telling some of these stories.



*Zoe and members of her group  
break bread*

A fourth strand of activity for me has been to attend the three day training with the Reader Organisation to qualify to become one of their shared reading facilitators delivering 'Get into Reading' groups, which are sometimes referred to as 'creative bibliotherapy'. This is a national charitable enterprise seeking to connect people to great literature through the shared reading of prose and poetry. The particular group I am working with is especially geared towards those with dementia and their carers.

Finally, I have discovered Level 0 at the library of Plymouth University. This is a wonderful find. Plymouth residents are able to access this library for research and Level 0 has a wealth of material on storytelling, oral history and telling a story through illustration as in children's picture books. So, I am very often finding myself spending several hours wallowing in Level 0 these days, attending a bricks and mortar university at last!

***Zoe Newman (Canterbury Award Recipient) (Beta Chapter)***

## GB AWARD 2015

Awarded every two years, the GB Achievement amber and silver rose brooch is given to a member who has served Great Britain State in very special ways.

Previous recipients have been Lillian Lynch (Gamma), Phyllis Kern (Alpha), Loetitia Stone (Beta), Pam Irons (Gamma), Gloria Redston (Gamma) and Mary Wardrop (Gamma). This year's recipient was open-mouthed with surprise when I read her citation to delegates at our Great Britain State Conference in London. I was delighted to award the brooch to Joan Carroll.

Joan has been, since 1992, and still is, an enthusiastic and effective member. She has undertaken many roles, in her Chapter, Alpha, as GB State President, in Europe Region as Editor of EuForia (the Europe Region Newsletter), and as a member of European and International Committees since 2001. She has also attended the Leadership Management Seminar in Austin, Texas, having received the Golden Gift Award.

Over the years, Joan has influenced, supported and trained DKG members being caring and utterly dependable. Congratulations, Joan!

***Sandra Blacker (Gamma Chapter)***



*Pictured above. Sandra hands the award to a worthy recipient.*

*Joan, left, wearing the amber rose set in silver.*





*Good to see Dorothy Haley at the State Conference, wearing her weighty European Achievement Award.*

## **EUROPEAN REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2015**

**The conference takes place from 5—8 August 2015 in the beautiful Swedish city of Borås. It is a city with much to offer, a city of stallholders, vibrant trade and sensational shopping venues. Borås is highly regarded as a national centre for fashion and textiles.**

**The city is located in a beautiful natural setting by the Viskan River— city of adventure with its own savannah and magnificent nature right on its doorstep. Borås is home to a modern university with specialised programmes which are unique. Known as the City of Sculptures visitors can view and appreciate a multitude of sculptures by renowned artists as they explore the town.**

**All details to be found on the DKG website. Come and join us!**

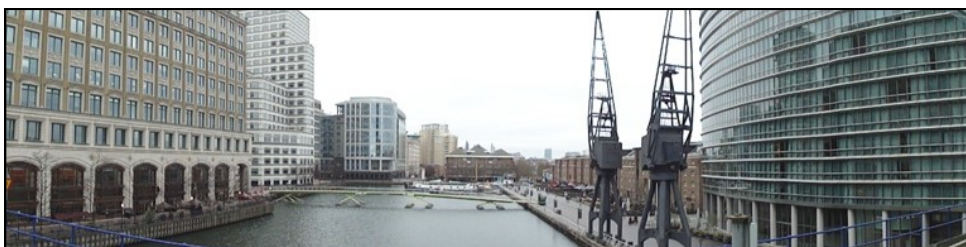
The following is an example of the kind of topic which will be dealt with at the European Regional Conference. Estonian members will take us through the results of their questionnaire survey.



This survey was devised by a group of Estonian educators, members of DKG, who were concerned about an ageing teaching population and increasing difficulties in the recruitment and retention of teachers in all levels of education in their country.

Members of DKG in other European countries, including the U.K., identified problems similar to those described as existing in Estonia and felt it would be a worthwhile study to carry out in their countries also.

This questionnaire aims to identify possible reasons for the current situation, attitudes to a career in education in terms of job satisfaction, status, financial reward, career progression etc., which may affect young students' views about choosing a career in education.



*Diana's picture above, and Barbara's right, show a typical scene in the locality of the London Docklands Museum, (Museum back right in both pictures). Report on the next page.*



## ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT FOR SUMMER 2015

They came from North and East and South, and also from the West! From Cambridge, Essex, Kent, and Middlesex - one group even took a ferry across the Thames. An above-average turnout of 15 enjoyed the latest trip to the Docklands museum,



part of the Museum of London at West India Docks. Set in an old brick-built sugar warehouse minutes from the modern Canary Wharf mega office blocks, this free museum showcases the rise and fall of the London docks and the areas around. The museum has fascinating displays of the rise and fall of the London docklands. These include the Thames Highway from AD43!, trade, the City and the River, the Empire, and much is enhanced by very personal memorabilia from the area, and recorded voices and film from the more recent times, especially the dramatic times of the Blitz. There was also a rather gloomy reconstruction of 'Sailortown' in the mid 19th Century - cleverly squeezed into a small yet atmospheric space. This museum is a very family-friendly one, with plenty of interest and activities for youngsters, including the under-5s - the Mudlarks.

We found there is certainly plenty for another visit, and also a self-guided arts trail around the Canary Wharf area. Afterwards we repaired to the Ledger House - a very good pub at the corner of the former Import Dock, an intriguing building that once housed the ledgers for the West India Dock, and tucked into lunch.

### Forthcoming meetings:

**16 May: 11.30 a.m (time tbc)** – Visit to Sydenham Garden (Sydenham SE London). Speaker Barbara Kern on her volunteering experience for that charity. Bring and Share lunch plus craft activity.

**20 June: 2.00 p.m.** Meeting – speaker Unity Harvey on Bees, + business meeting. Unity's home Barnes, SW London. Opportunity to visit London Wetlands. Final details to be confirmed.



## Summer outings

1st week July: visit to the Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition.

Visit to Standen House, East Grinstead, trip on the Bluebell Railway and picnic in Sheffield Park Gardens (date to be confirmed).

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

## BETA CHAPTER REPORT FOR SUMMER 2015

Throughout the year Beta has been engaged in strengthening links between DKG and Plymouth University via Shout It Out, a strategy that requires patience and timing. An important step in our relationship will be in October, when representatives from Beta have been invited to attend a meeting with University students and tutors involved with the SIO Community Project. We have been looking at the framework, pedagogies, teaching and learning that Beta members have observed at SIO evenings.

If this comes about it will be the first time that DKG will be represented at the University. However, we live in testing times. Our main contact, Dr Melanie Parker, has been diagnosed with Parkinson's and is struggling with reactions to treatment – so I am reluctant to pressurise her over the DKG input we were arranging.

One of our members is coping with recovery from cancer; Loetitia has moved to a care home to be nearer to her girls. We were hoping to add to our membership with the newly appointment *Shout It Out* tutor, but she has been away, looking after ill parents.

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



## GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT FOR SUMMER 2015

It was good to have all three chapters represented at the State Conference and that so many members of Gamma were able to attend. Everyone appeared to enjoy themselves while being informed and highly entertained. The venue was comfortable, the food was delicious and the drinks and biscuits very acceptable. All the speakers had made a great deal of effort with preparation and presentation of their subjects and the day flowed with ease under Diana's leadership.

For the spring and summer meetings we have arranged four outings. The first in April is to see Donkey's Years, which is a riotous up-market farce by Michael Frayn being performed at the Trinity Theatre in Tunbridge Wells. In May we will visit the Ladybird book exhibition in Bexhill, which will remind some of us of our early days in teaching. The July outing is to Broadview Gardens in Hadlow, part of the horticultural college, where we hope to see the latest garden creations of the students as well as enjoying the tea and cake in the café. We shall go to the Imperial War Museum in August to the exhibition "Fashion on the Ration" which explores the impact of wartime austerity on the way people lived and worked. Later we intend to go to the Towner or Jerwood gallery as well.

Beechwood school is celebrating their centenary this summer and we will approach the facilities manager for some dates for next year. We look forward to some great speakers and more enjoyment in the future.

### Summer Outings:

**29 April:** Trinity Theatre, Tunbridge Wells

**6 May:** Ladybird Book Exhibition, Bexhill

**4 July:** Broadview Gardens, Hadlow

**22 August:** 'Fashion on the Ration', Imperial War Museum

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

*Picture of Jasper Kain (right) who spoke to Gamma Chapter in January about his charity, 'Football beyond Boundaries', by Di Billam.*





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### **Mission Statement**

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