



Spring 2020

Volume 17 No 2

State President's Report	3	<p>This edition reports on our progress with Revitalisation, some very successful chapter meetings, and some very poignant memories of our beloved Gloria Redston.</p> <p>Thanks as always to our contributors.</p> <p>Our next GB State Conference will take place at the Holiday Inn, Wrotham on April 24-26 2020. Our State President's report, on the opposite page, gives details, and the registration form is enclosed. Please do come and join us – always an enjoyable experience.</p>
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3 Days in Fez	20	<p>Contributions for the Summer Edition should be with me by 7 May please, in Word, attached to an email, with any accompanying photos (always welcome!) in jpg format. Chapter presidents will organise reports on meetings and outings – reports on other activities are a welcome addition.</p>
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Photos by members unless otherwise stated.

The photo on the front cover shows a beaded handbag made for her wedding by Becs Dean-Skinner who spoke to Gamma Chapter about beading

Evelyn Goodsell

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT 2019—2021



Greetings to you all for a very much happier 2020. Sadly, 2019 did not end on a happy note. Our dear friend, and stalwart member, Gloria Redston, after a long illness bravely born, died and will be greatly missed by us all. Gamma member, Elizabeth Malik, suffered another sad blow. Having lost her daughter at the end of last year, her husband died at the end of November. Although not great in numbers, I am proud of the way members care and support each other, not only in very sad times but when any need arises. This concept has been much in evidence these past months

Having mentioned earlier that we are not great in numbers and the terrific support we give each other, I am so pleased to report how enthusiastically our 'Revitalisation Project' has been adopted by both Chapters. This Project has taken several years to evolve and the first seed was sown by dear Gloria. As our membership started to decline she was always encouraging us to spend money on Expansion. We eventually took her advice and had a special meeting in London to which our International State President came. Together with suggestions, and advice, from her and Phyllis Hickey, a Revitalisation Committee was formed with, Sheila Roberts as Chair and with members of both Chapters on the Committee. We are making progress with membership increasing slowly. Thank you, Gloria and Sheila!

Both Chapters have had busy years with interesting Speakers and visits. Members of both Chapters have taken advantage of visiting each others Chapter when time, and opportunity, allows. Several members attended the International Regional Conference in Iceland this year and enjoyed the hospitality and friendship of our Icelandic sisters.

Looking forward to the coming year our next big event when we can come together is our annual State Conference. This year it will be a weekend conference, April 24th-26th. and we are returning to a former venue near Sevenoaks, Kent. It is to be held at the Holiday Inn, Wrotham Heath. It is adjacent to the A20, M20 and M26. The nearest station is Sevenoaks. If you decide to arrive by train, please let me know and I will arrange for you to be met and transported to the hotel. The overall theme is 'Wellbeing', taking in mindfulness, mental health, and climate change. I hope to be able to announce the Speakers early in the New Year. We are planning a visit to Hever Castle on the Sunday morning, the home of Anne Boleyn. At that time of the year the garden will be beautiful with masses of daffodils and blossom. I do hope you will set these dates aside and attend as it is the one time of the year we can meet together and enjoy each others' company.

MEMORIES OF GLORIA REDSTON FROM HER DKG FRIENDS

Sandra Bull – DKG, Austin, Texas:

Eddie and I always enjoyed, respected and appreciated her take on political issues. And my, what head-shaking we could share over our own quagmire. She was one of the best and most authentic people I have ever known. And now I can say one of the bravest. For all the sadness I am feeling now, the overwhelming emotion is the gratitude I have that she was my friend.

Marian Bowles – DKG Gamma Chapter

She changed my life forever! After sitting opposite her for breakfast at the Kingston conference, I now often eat marmalade with my bacon and have recommended that taste combination to many other friends.

I still have some of the chocolate bar left that she kindly gave me for taking her to Sheila's for our summer outing at the end of August: Lindt Excellent dark chocolate, with a touch of sea salt. It is making me smile thinking about how much those words describe her.... of the highest quality, deep, smooth, rich, deliciously intense, with a unique and unexpected twist! I now feel even more privileged to have spent that journey time with her. I hope she understood fully the huge impact she had on so many people that she knew throughout her life.

Sheila Roberts – DKG Gamma Chapter

I always think of Gloria as the sanest member of DKG I know! She was calm, knowledgeable, caring and always so very supportive.

Maud Thompson – DKG Gamma Chapter

Gloria always appeared to overcome everything - and she did so with positivity and calmness. It seems that even in her final days her attitude did not change. She was so brave. I remember Gloria from over 40 years ago when we shared lifts to Bromley where we were studying towards a B.Ed. I was impressed by her intelligence and her knowledge of the world - indeed she had not just travelled extensively, but she had lived in a variety of settings and had made the most of her experiences. I was so privileged to have such an interesting travelling companion, and as she has such an engaging personality, I was blessed. What impressed me the most about her was the fact that, at the same time as being extremely talented, she was so much down to earth. She was one of these people who could be at ease everywhere. She did not judge people, she just

empathised with them. She always made one feel comfortable. I hope the children she taught realise how lucky they have been to have had such a gifted, understanding and dedicated teacher. I feel confident they all do, as I feel confident that she never left any of them behind.

Dorcas Rogers – DKG Alpha Chapter

Gloria will be always remembered as being a gentle and welcoming member at all DKG events. I particularly remember her words of wisdom and guidance when she ran a training session for newly elected chapter presidents. I can't ever remember Gloria having a bad word to say about anyone. She was the epitome of what being a member of DKG is about.

Liz Day – DKG Alpha Chapter

I remember Gloria's energy and enthusiasm for life. She was very welcoming to me when I first joined DKG and made me feel included. I remember her fortitude in her wheel chair at the Tallinn conference, I think. She was determined to live life to the full and overcome her health difficulties.

Sandra Blacker – DKG Gamma Chapter

I remember when she handed over the State presidency to me in Iceland. One of my talents was to have an impressive collection of dangly earrings - I've tried to maintain this 'skill' over the years!

Carole Stirling – DKG Gamma Chapter and Brenchley & Matfield School

I was lucky enough to work alongside Gloria for many years and to share many experiences with her. Over the years we developed a very special friendship, so I have lots of happy memories of her. However, there is one that always makes me laugh!

Kathy and I were attending our first DKG regional conference in Malmo, Sweden. We had a day when we were free because we didn't have to go to any training workshops – Gloria did! We decided to catch a bus and set off on an adventure. We were returning to the hotel when the heavens opened. We tried to dodge from shop doorway to shop doorway, even so we were soaked through by the time we got back to the hotel room.



Kathy and Gloria

Gloria and I were sharing a room and Kathy was staying at a different hotel, about ten minutes away. We were going out for dinner and time was passing; it was also still pouring with rain. Gloria and I decided that, to save Kathy going back to her hotel, we would lend her some of our clothes. If you consider how small and petite Kathy is compared to Gloria and me, you will already be smiling, I'm sure. Kathy ended up wearing one of my nightdresses, which was like a full length dress on her and a very smart blazer belonging to Gloria. We laughed all the way to the restaurant wondering if anyone would notice that Kathy was out for dinner wearing my nightdress.

Jane Boyd – Brenchley & Matfield School

After Gloria had retired, when she was working in school as a supply teacher, she would come in and we would have our early morning chats. They were pretty broad in depth too – theology, education, a whole range of topics – and were always enjoyable.

Richard Rene – Headteacher Brenchley & Matfield School mid 80s – early 90s

Gloria was always a very positive and happy work friend and colleague, as well as being a gifted, well liked, respected and very caring teacher. I shall cherish fond memories of her championing Kent Maths and her early adoption of IT to enhance her pupils' learning, as well as always challenging them to achieve and be the very best they could be. Gloria certainly contributed greatly to Brenchley & Matfield's success during her time at the school.

Kathy Hodgson – DKG Gamma Chapter and Brenchley & Matfield School

There was the serious Gloria and the irreverent alter ego. On my first European trip with DKG, to Malmo in Sweden, Gloria was expected to carry the flag for Great Britain at the opening ceremony. Carole and I were under strict instruction not to look at her, as it was quite a serious occasion. Needless to say, we were fully occupied in trying to catch her eye – and we did. Hopefully, only we noticed the twitching of the lips and her concentrated attempt not to succumb to the giggles.

Gloria with Gamma Chapter members Mary, Anne and Sandra



Some people are lucky enough to have people in their lives who truly inspire them – and I have Gloria. Through her encouragement – and occasional pushes – I found the whole course of my life changing. Tonbridge School for my son, Alex; teaching for so many years at Brenchley & Matfield School; and following unexpected roads to Europe and the US as a member of DKG.

Thank you for being a wonderful chum (Glo's word). We will always remember you.

REVITALISATION

Both Alpha and Gamma Chapters spent time to evaluate the GB project of donating books to schools

Gamma Chapter had a very positive meeting on 14th September. All present agreed that we have seen some very positive results from the book donations and the publicity generated.

In addition to the book donations we have advertised our meetings and speakers by displaying colourful posters. One of our members has been posting them on a local community website. This has helped bring guests to meetings. We have been privileged to have some amazing speakers. The most recent was Graeme Lothian, a very well-known and talented war artist, whose work featuring Afghanistan was simply wonderful. It was noteworthy that like the Picasso presentation previously, guests were attracted to the meeting. The combination of good speakers and wide advertising have had very good results

Since embarking on the project members' morale has received a boost. By working together on the project, we feel much more enthusiastic and optimistic about the society. The future looks promising.

We have initiated two new members recently, and I personally know of two, who have attended a meeting and are interested to become members.

We consider the money for the book donations was well spent and we recognise the need to keep up the momentum.

Follow up

Using Gloria's spreadsheet where members had described their visits to eleven schools, we identified the seven most receptive schools. We now plan to visit

these schools again during the last week of November and will take in a box of chocolates and a large tin of fancy biscuits as a gesture to keeping up the morale of busy teachers during the lead up to the hectic pre-Christmas period. The aim is also to keep up interest in DKG.

Also, thanks to Anne Goldstein, Gamma now has its own facebook page. We hope this will help publicise DKG, as well as giving members a forum to exchange views and news.

Alpha Chapter had their Business Meeting on 12th October.

To date, eighteen of the twenty packs for distribution to schools have been delivered. Members discussed the report chart on the book project allocation and the evaluation questions about the project before giving their own individual views on the experience.

Barbara commented that she believed it had focused members. Penny found it difficult to go back to schools she no longer had direct involvement with. Diana had enjoyed lovely visits but felt the link would be difficult to maintain and that Headteachers would be unlikely to follow up on the donations with staff. Claire had introduced the project at a Headteachers' meeting and Dorcas had visited a couple of schools. Liz thought there was an issue of going to a private area such as a school for a meeting for a potential member. Barbara is now researching the London School Board's history to follow up on a family connection. The question arose of the age group we aim to attract with any future project. Claire suggested we may need to look at week day afternoon events for retirees and weekend ones for working teachers. Liz thought we needed to look at how other organisations organise and perhaps visit organisations who have an education department to see them in situ and make links.

As Alpha members' geographic spread of schools is so diverse it has not been possible to have a central focus point as Gamma does for "local community" advertising/publicity. We also have the lack of a permanent venue for meetings which could be an issue for attracting potential new members. To date we have yet to receive any response to our visits to the schools. The chapter has gained no new members as yet.

Follow up

Generally, it was felt that although Headteachers were appreciative of the gifts, there was little scope to follow up. We need to have another discussion as to

how we take this forward.

Sheila Roberts (*Chair Revitalisation Committee*) and **Penny Kinnear**
(*President Alpha Chapter*)

BRIXTON CHOCOLATE DELIGHT



Joan gets stuck in!

Alpha's first visit of the new year on Saturday 14th September was to a little chocolate paradise in the heart of Brixton. We decided to explore the Chocolate Museum just a few minutes away from the station and to take part in a Chocolate Making Workshop. The Museum is open to the public Wednesday to Sunday and includes Exhibitions detailing the history of chocolate production, tools, packaging and advertising. You can just turn up and make your own chocolates following instructions – no booking! There is also a range of delicious chocolate from British, worldwide artisans and Melange Chocolate to buy.

On arrival we were greeted by Katherine who would guide us through the chocolate making process. We were provided with an instruction sheet but it soon became obvious that we needed some hands-on support from Katherine. Having decided which kind of filling we preferred (dark/milk – ganache/fudge) and choice of final chocolate coating – dark/milk, we then had to shape our fillings by rolling into little balls or using a variety of small cutters. Next we had to temper the chocolate – bringing the temperature of the melted chocolate down to that required for dark (33 degrees) and for milk (32 degrees). 3 chocolate buttons were added to help with this cooling process.



Shaping the chocolate filling



When ready, dipping forks were used to dip the shaped fillings into the tempered chocolate before decorating each piece

with sprinkles of chocolate shavings. Surplus tempered chocolate was poured into moulds to create additional chocolates. Finally, when all were set, the crafted chocolates were packaged in cellophane bags tied with ribbon for us to take home (if they lasted that long!).



Alpha enjoying the fun

By this time we decided we were ready for lunch and a short stroll into Brixton Market found us in ADULIS, an Eritrean restaurant. Never having tried Eritrean food before, we all agreed it was delicious. We even learned how to say “Cheers” in Eritrean - “ntena!”

Penny Kinnear (Alpha Chapter)



The Eritrean Restaurant

INSPIRATIONAL STORIES

Anne Goldstein’s presentation ranged far more widely than I think any of us expected, involving active participation from us answering questions, discussion and self-examination when we were asked to make lists of statements about ourselves, true, false and impossible. I think a psychiatrist listening to our responses and explanations about our statements would have found them very interesting and revealing.

Anne began by explaining that her interest in the importance of stories and story-telling in human cultures had been triggered by finding a book of Old Testament stories that had belonged to her mother and had inspired her during the time she was evacuated to Hassocks in Sussex during World War Two. What had been inspirational were not the facts or the events in the tales but the emotions and the values that were expressed.

As evidence of her argument Anne read us a story from the Islamic tradition “The Rusty Plate” on the subject of giving. The moral of the story was that it is not the monetary value of a gift that is important but the thought and emotion of the giver that is a gift’s greatest value. All human faiths and cultures have similar stories, “The Widow’s Mite” in the New Testament” is an example. It is the thought that counts, giving is better than receiving and giving without any expectation of praise or gain are the sentiments expressed in these stories.

Anne certainly demonstrated her skills of engaging an audience in her subject and involving us actively. I think it made us all consider our own family histories and life experiences, even perhaps some personal inspirational stories. One such touching story that Anne told was of a branch of her own family that emigrated to America and set up a business in New Orleans. One of their employees was a young boy who in his spare moments loved to play music on a little tin horn. They discovered that he longed to buy a proper instrument on sale in a local music store but could not afford it. The family bought the instrument for him and he gradually repaid them from his wages. Dorcas then told Anne how a few years' ago she and husband Ray had taken a holiday trip following the course of the Mississippi from its source near the Canadian border to the mouth at New Orleans. While in that city they visited a museum where one exhibit had a card explaining that it was the first instrument owned by a young musician who had later become world famous and that he had been helped to buy it by the local family who employed him. That musician was Louis Armstrong. Truly inspirational stories.

What a thought provoking and entertaining afternoon – thank you Anne.

Joan Carroll (Alpha Chapter)



True? False? Impossible? Alpha members deep in thought



Penny and Dorcas present Anne with a thank-you gift

Working on the surprise origami cross

GREAT BRITAIN STATE CONFERENCE 2020

Will be held at the Holiday Inn, Wrotham, on the 24th to 26th April.

The theme will be **Wellbeing**.

Taking in mindfulness, mental health, and climate change.

Please refer to our State President's report on page 3 for further details.

A registration form is enclosed with all the information you need to take part. Do come—we always have a great time, combining educational topics with some great socialising with friends.

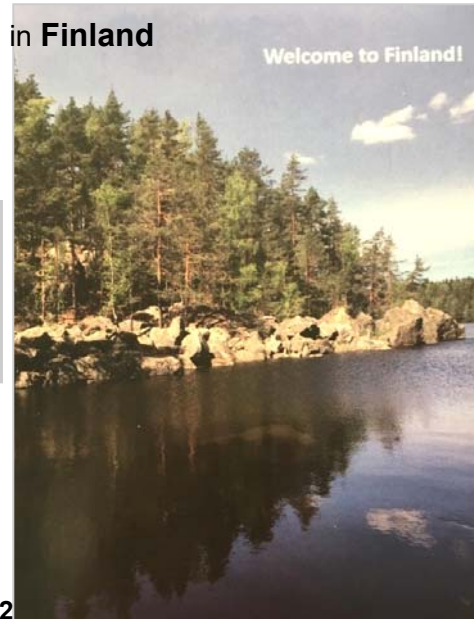
THE DKG INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Will be held in Philadelphia between July 7 and 11 in 2020 at the Downtown Marriott Hotel. A great experience - do think about attending.

DKG EUROPEAN CONFERENCE 2021

Will be held in **Finland**

On page 23 of GB News Autumn 2019 there is a photo of our Finish sisters dressed in their beautiful national costume, offering us a warm welcome to the forthcoming DKG European Conference 2021



ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT

Alpha Chapter continues to enjoy a range of visits and speakers, covering a variety of topics. Our Summer Outing in June was an interesting visit to Pitzhanger Manor in Ealing exploring the newly renovated Manor house as well as the thought-provoking Anish Kapoor Exhibition. The annual visit to the Royal Society Summer Science Exhibition in July proved as fascinating as ever with amazing and impressive exhibits – many “hands-on”. Our Business meeting at the end of the year in July centered around planning for the year ahead, as well as discussing options for next year's State Conference.

In September, a group of Alpha members enjoyed a “finger-licking” workshop experience at the Chocolate Museum in Brixton, where we got to make our own chocolates. Recommended!! (*Ed: see report on page 9*).

Revitalisation was the main topic of our first Business meeting of the year in October, where we discussed how well our various visits to schools with our Book Donations had gone. We have still to attract any potential new members and need to look at how best we can follow up our original school visits.

Our November meeting had Anne Goldstein (Gamma Chapter) giving us a presentation and her theme was "Inspirational Stories". She shared some favourite stories from the different world faiths as well as some from her own Jewish family. There were interactive parts to the presentation. (*Ed: see report and photos on page 10*)

Forthcoming Alpha Chapter meetings :

18 January 2020: 2.00pm Nuala Garvey - 'Apprenticeships', Q & A Session to follow. Venue: Dulwich Hamlet Junior School, "Bring & Share" lunch, raffle. Nuala is passionate about raising potential through apprenticeship delivery.

15 February: Main Business Meeting 2:00pm. Agenda to be circulated. Venue: Holy Trinity Church Hall - 'Bring & Share' Lunch 12:30pm.

14 March: Speaker and topic tbc, 2:00pm, Q&A session to follow. Venue: Dulwich Hamlet Junior School. 'Bring & Share' Lunch 12:45pm.

24 - 25 April: Annual Conference: Theme Wellbeing, Holiday Inn, Wrotham.

16 May: 2.00pm. Angela Calvert, speaking about 'Digital Literacies' tbc. 2:00pm Q&A session to follow. Venue: DHJS - 'Bring & Share' Lunch 12:45pm.

20 June: Alpha Outing tbc.

1st week July: Royal Society Exhibition Visit.

18 July: Main Business Meeting: Agenda to be circulated

Note: 3 Main Business Meetings per year (October, February and July).
Timed Agenda (further responses to be sent by email). Members are asked to email in advance if they wish a topic to be on the agenda. Important elements to be added where necessary - short/timed.

Penny Kinnear: (*Alpha Chapter President*)

MALAWI

Liz Goddard spoke to Gamma Chapter about her interesting times in Africa. She and her husband taught chemistry in Nigeria for several years, and on returning to the UK, found that they could not settle, and sought jobs in Africa. They both taught chemistry in University in Malawi.

Malawi is a land-locked country, of high plateaux, with the Great Rift Valley running through it. Lake Malawi is the 3rd largest and 2nd deepest lake in Africa. David Livingstone visited in 1859. Its 2016 population was 18 million. Tropical fish from Malawi are sold here in the UK.

Liz found them to be lovely people. In 1953 Malawi became a Protectorate, in 1966 a republic, then a dictatorship under President Banda. It is now a multi-party democracy, but the results of a recent election are being disputed.

Liz spoke of her experience lecturing in university, where she found that students did not disagree or dispute, whereas she felt that at university level questions and debate are essential. This made 2-way discussions difficult. Supplies of water and electricity are erratic, and meaningful research is challenging. Many graduates seek higher degrees in the UK or US. Virtually all University staff are now Malawian. Liz's first introduction to primary schools in Malawi was through a Wildlife society set up by expats which took local children to a game park, which

Liz shows Sandra and Di the map of Malawi, with Lake Malawi forming the eastern border



needed permission from the Ministry of Education.

Liz went back recently with her daughter and 2 granddaughters. Liz's daughter had a friend, Gilbert, who had to leave school as his family could not afford the fees or uniform. Her family paid his fees. However, many have to work, or walk long distances to collect water or wood. Woodcutters are trying to get together to plant trees to replace those cut down for fuel. There is no electricity in many villages, and it is erratic in towns. The Chinese have revamped distribution, but production is struggling. Bike owners sometimes charge to give lifts into town. Gilbert's village had been devastated by floods and houses destroyed. They received a warm welcome in the village – many of the children had never seen a vehicle and ridden in one.

Their buildings are made from bricks, which need firing for 3 days, so there is a fuel problem. The nearest pump to the school is miles away. Liz's family have paid school fees for Gilbert's son, Goddard, and daughter Ellen (16) who wants to be a nurse.

The local primary school has 2,490 pupils, 35 teachers, 8 year groups and 6 classrooms. The oldest pupil is 20 and trying to catch up. They need 60 more desks at least. Mary's Meals provides a basic porridge meal in the morning, which at least ensures children get one meal a day. Attendance has now gone up. The next challenge is to get the ground ready for planting by October, the rainy season. Gilbert has started keeping bees, and has 2 hives so far.

Liz emphasised the beauty of the countryside and the lake. There are very few visitors, not even to the wild life parks, and Liz and her family saw no other tourists in 3 weeks.

Carole thanked Liz for her talk, which we had all found interesting and thought provoking.

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)



Liz with her opening slide, entitled 'Malawi: the Warm Heart of Africa'

LIFE AS A WAR ARTIST

Graeme Lothian came to speak to us in October about his life as a war artist. He did 5 tours altogether, and has written 3 books about his experiences, 'An Artist in London', 'The Thames', and 'Afghanistan'. He was a war artist for 18 months altogether, although nowadays he mainly paints landscapes.

The most amazing experience, in 2009-2010, was probably working in an Emergency Department, where there were 30 doctors, all consultants. At this stage he was described as a 'medical artist', and was allowed to visit the operating theatres and wards, a rather harrowing experience, because they were carrying out cutting-edge trauma operations. These sometimes involved patients who had lost 2 or 3 limbs, who would almost certainly have died if not for the advances made over the course of the conflict. For instance, soldiers carried with them tourniquets, which they often wore on their arm, ready for use if it became necessary. The first few minutes after wounding are vital, and can make all the difference. Because of his army experience, he was also allowed to go out on patrol. He was sometimes joined by Matt Cook, an illustrator and another ex-Para, who was a Times War Artist.

Graeme explained how he had come to be doing this work. He had previously been in the army, first in the Paras, then in the SAS, which gave him the credentials to be so closely involved during the conflict. He comes from a military family, and when he was refused entry to art college, decided to enlist. He took his great-grandfather's buttons from his First World War army tunic with him at all times, and his grandfather's Ceylonese wooden elephant. He had been a tea-planter in Ceylon. He had commanded the 4th Dorset Battalion at the battle of Arnhem, was captured and ended up in Colditz.

Graeme shows us his Ceylonese wooden elephant, which he carried as a good luck charm, and belonged to his grandfather who ended up in Colditz in the Second World War.



The padres in Afghanistan each gave Graham 'dog-tags' with psalms written on them, which he kept in his breast pocket. These seem to have protected

Graeme from harm, except when he was shot through the arm. This has unfortunately left him with some loss of movement in his left hand – and he is left-handed!

While working as an artist with the special forces he painted 84 pieces of work. He learned the techniques of moving over minefields, set by men with years of experience of how to make them more effective, and how to make detection more difficult. In the Camp Bastion hospital there were 4 machines to clot blood (the whole of the NHS in England has two such machines). He was allowed access to all areas. NHS Medics were offered a 3 month tour, which gave them an advantage on their return home in seeking promotion in trauma treatment. In the ward and theatre he would sketch for up to half an hour, making absolutely sure not to be a nuisance. After initial treatment patients would be flown home to the specialist facilities in Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham.

Did our presence in Afghanistan make a difference? The British lived much rougher lives than the Americans, who built highly fortified camps, and expected the same kind of service and facilities as they have at home. Our troops are more used to `roughing it`.



One interesting thing happened when they watched women walking 2 miles to fetch water from a well. Thinking they were doing them a favour they built wells much nearer the camp – and were surprised when the women trashed them. Thinking about it, they realised that if the wells were some distance away, this gave precious time when the women from the surrounding villages could walk and talk together to the well and back, with no men around. They could `gossip` about things that were impossible when in their own houses or compounds. So they rebuilt the wells 2 miles away.

The SAS went on patrol with dogs wearing cameras, images from which were transmitted back to them and to helicopters above who could also see what was going on. One colonel insisted on having a pennant on his vehicle to show his status – a bomb was placed ready for his return, which blew the wheels off the

vehicle. Foot patrols would walk in line, rather than abreast, the front man using a minesweeper, the next having an X-ray machine if anything suspicious was detected.



'Three Afghan Farmers', my own favourite from the many pictures Graeme brought in to show us to illustrate his talk

We were so enthralled by Graeme's paintings, examples of which are printed here with his very kind permission. My own favourite was the 3 Afghan farmers. Hopefully the pictures will give you some idea of how many wonderful paintings he had put on display. He also had some illustrated cards, and very kindly said we could take them. I thanked him on our behalf for an enthralling morning, and gave him a bottle of wine (only to discover on enquiry that he is teetotal!).

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)

Carole leads the discussion session. Graeme had brought many of his pictures, and displayed them round the room, some of which you can see from this photo



BEADING

In November Gamma Chapter was pleased to welcome Rebecca Dean-Skinner – more usually known as Becs! Carole introduced Becs' impressive CV, including a PhD in Chemistry, and work in the pharmaceutical industry. Becs showed us a range of her amazing beading work, and some photos are attached, although they hardly do justice to the objects themselves. Probably the most stunning was the handbag she made for her wedding, for which she also made buttonholes, and her husband embroidered in cross-stitch the cushion on which their rings rested. The handbag (see photograph on front cover) took 9 months to make. It was interesting to hear that there is a beading community, including a Facebook group, a recent beading holiday in Liverpool, and national competitions, one of which Becs recently won. Her winning entry was this amazing stellated dodecahedron (I did work out that stellated means star shaped!). These complicated shapes can be made up of as many as 60 triangles.



Bracelets are made in a variety of techniques: bead embroidery coated with artificial suede, for instance. Becs finds that some objects tend to design themselves, evolving as she progresses in a very creative way. She showed a number of pendants, some with a different motif on each side, in different colours. Beaded flowers are a passion, often revealing the geometric shapes of which most flowers are constructed. She sometimes works 'freeform', ie without planning at the beginning where she wants to end up, and the object seems to take shape almost of its own free will.



My own little angel!

Becs then took us through making an angel key ring. She gave us each a complete kit, either in 'gold' or white/silver, each with its own angel. We progressed at very different rates, some more adept than others, but Becs had to help most of us with the final stages which involved several different sets of pliers and a lot of dexterity! We proudly went away with our angel safely stowed, and were happy to make a contribution towards costs.

Becs then displayed a range of beaded objects which she had for sale. I was happy to buy a beaded Christmas tree decoration, which anyone would be glad to receive.

What a fascinating morning we all had – Ros thanked Becs for us and presented her with a plant and basket.

Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)



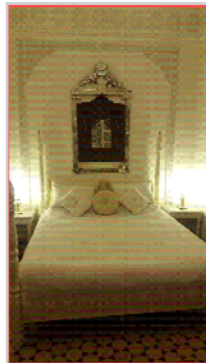
A beading miscellany, examples of the range of things Becs makes. Some were for sale, useful for Christmas!



3 DAYS IN FEZ

Arriving in Fez, Morocco mid-October, we were greeted with a temperature of 36 degrees, having left a rainy 16 degrees in London. Fez is culturally and spiritually the pinnacle of Morocco. It's home to the world's oldest university, Al-Karaouine, founded in 859, attended in 998 by the first French Pope Sylvester II.

Four of us were going to be staying in a Riad in the heart of the Medina. Our taxi driver took us to the Blue Gate where we were met by our hostess Violeta. After an interesting few minutes walk through one of the bustling main streets of the Medina, we finally arrived at our accommodation – Dar Asama - on the edge of the Old Town.



The Riad is comprised of four en-suite rooms. Each room is colour-themed in true Moroccan style. Up to the Blue Room on the first level, then up to the Red Room and the White Room (mine, pictured left) on the second level and finally on up to the Green Room. Climbing up and down the narrow and steep stairs to each level needed careful negotiation, but was definitely worth getting to the terrace on the top of the building for the wonderful panoramic view of Fez with the Atlas mountains in the background.

As we had a couple of hours before dinner, we headed off to explore the Medina with a map provided by our hostess. As expected, we managed to temporarily get lost (not the only time during our stay) – it really is a maze. Once back at the Riad we made our way to one of the dining areas on the roof terrace where our hostess had arranged for a lovely Moroccan meal to be prepared by her cook Ixia (pronounced Aisha) and herself. The star of the 3-course meal was a traditional Moroccan dish called Pastella – a beautifully crafted dome-shaped filo pastry filled with vegetables, fine noodles and herbs. The top of the dome was etched with intricate Moroccan mosaic patterns. This dish takes 2 hours to create and we could see why. To complement the meal we enjoyed some Moroccan wine. It was all delicious and like the pastry dish, we were well and truly stuffed.

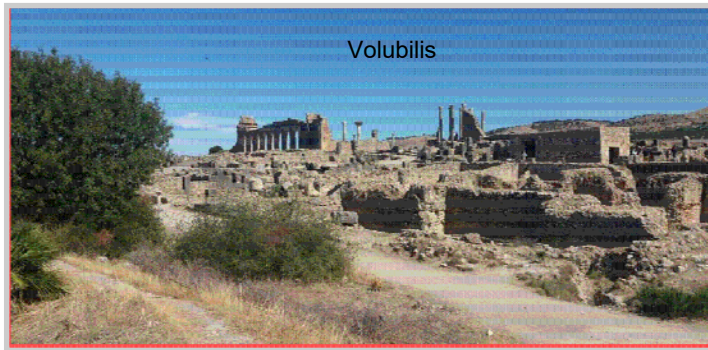
Next day, after a wonderful breakfast spread of several Moroccan delicacies, we were taken on a tour of Fez and its 900 alleyways by Jamal, a charming young native of Fez who it transpires speaks fluent English, Spanish and French as well as Arabic (Darija). Having passed through the Copper Quarter, pictured right, where we listened to the rhythmical sounds of copper vessels of all descriptions being beaten into shape, we ventured into the largest (and best, we were assured) carpet shop in Fez. Some time was spent watching the weaver at work and then haggling for a good price on some carpets, which three of us bought. It is ingenious the way in which the stall holders roll up and seal the rugs in tiny packages that will fit neatly into the suitcase for going home. As we



were only halfway through our tour at this point, our packages were labelled to be delivered to our Riad later. (Safely delivered later that evening!)

So, on to the 1,000-year old Chouara Tannery, pictured left, where most of the leather goods are made, the process having barely changed since medieval times. Some of the tanners work waist-deep in the gargantuan pits, using their bodies to mix the hides of cows, sheep, goats and camels with pigeon poo (a natural leather softener) and vegetable dyes. The sprig of mint offered at the entrance, to be held close to the nose, was indeed very welcome.

Our final day saw us taking a 2-hour taxi ride north of Fez to the Roman ruin of Volubilis, the oldest Roman fort in Africa. Our picnic lunch, provided by our hostess, was enjoyed



in the shade of some of the ancient columns. On the return journey our taxi driver guide Samir took us to Meknes, the old capital and Imperial city of Morocco. Then on to Moulay Idriss, a small but beautiful village at the top of a mountain.

Back in Fez, we made one last venture into the Medina before returning to our Riad for yet another sumptuous evening meal prepared by our hostess. We spent the rest of the evening on the terrace enjoying the view and listening to the sounds of the Medina and the call to prayer from the Mosques.

Penny Kinnear (Alpha Chapter)

GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT

We have had a very busy, interesting and diverse term. The term started with a fascinating talk by Liz Goddard on 'Teaching in Malawi'. Her experience was mostly in University lecturing but she gave an overall view of the education system, very interesting. Our October meeting was really very special as our speaker was Graeme Lothian who is an official war artist for the Ministry of Defence. He brought along some of his amazing canvases for our enjoyment. If you are interested he left a book with me for the chapter, featuring many of his paintings and details of his experiences. What a fantastic meeting!

In November we looked forward to a practical session with Becs Dean-Skinner. She is passionate about beading, which was obvious from her talk. She brought lots of her own beading to show us and then we were able to make a small handbag charm ourselves. A most enjoyable time was had by all.

Our December meeting was due to be at Sheila Robert's house with her husband Harry talking about the life of an oilman in the desert. Unfortunately after

surgery on her back Sheila has had to cancel the meeting and it will be reorganised in the New Year.

Please read more detailed reports of our meetings earlier in this issue of DKG News.

Next term looks very exciting as well.

We start 2020 with a talk by one of our members on 'Artificial Intelligence'. I'm sure this will stimulate much discussion! Come and join us on **18 January** at Beechwood School in Tunbridge Wells.

29 February will be one of our business meetings for the year but the speaker has yet to confirm. Details will follow later.

21 March. Laura Krovina is coming to talk to us about 'Forest Schools'. She works in several of our local schools.

Our State Conference is over the weekend of **24 - 26 April – details elsewhere.**

Our dates for the rest of the summer term are **16 May** and **20 June**, details to follow.

In July we are hoping to have an outing – one excellent suggestion is a croquet lesson and game, sounds like fun. Watch this space!

Gamma Chapter has continued with their push for revitalisation by visiting the schools, which had already been approached with the gift of books, but this time with a gift of chocolates and biscuits for the staff. We wait to see the outcome of this approach. We have welcomed several visitors to our meetings and wait to see if they will become new members. We now have to decide on our next strategy. All ideas gratefully received.

I couldn't write this report for DKG News without mentioning our beloved Gloria Redston. Gamma chapter was very privileged to have Gloria as a founder member. Her warm, welcoming personality encouraged many of us to join the society. She knew so much about the international nature of DKG and had held several important roles within the organisation. She was always ready with help and advice, a kind word of encouragement, a smile which lit up her face and good old fashioned common sense. She was always good fun and loved a joke. She will be sorely missed by all.

Carole Stirling (*Gamma Chapter President*)

DKG Opportunities for all members

- * **Share and learn together in an international society especially for women in education.**
- * **Enjoy annual international conferences with colleagues and friends from many different countries.**
- * **Develop personal and professional skills, including leadership.**
- * **Become an international speaker in North America or Europe with all expenses paid.**
- * **Opportunities include:**
 - * **Regular meetings with great speakers on interesting topics in London and Kent.**
 - * **Scholarships available for individual projects.**
 - * **Outstanding leadership & management training at The University of Texas. (Golden Gift).**

There are many more opportunities available – view the DKG websites for the full list.

International Headquarters: www.dkg.org

Details of GB meetings are on the website

Great Britain: www.dkggb.org.uk

Find out more about DKG in Europe

Europe: www.dkgeurope.org

Mission Statement

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