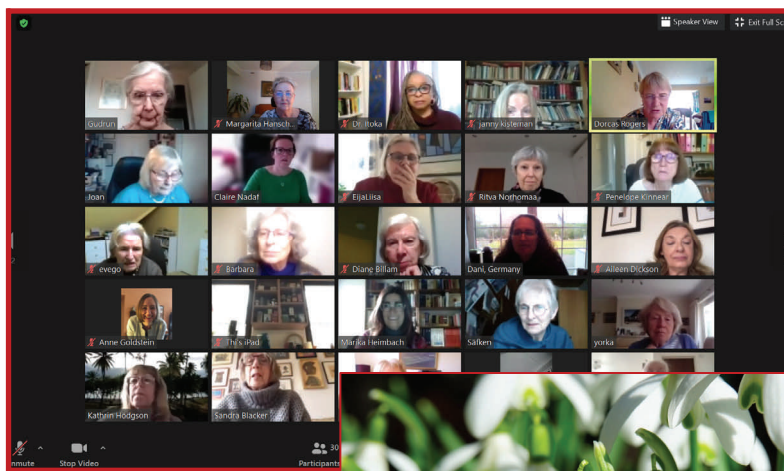


INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS  
**DELTA KAPPA GAMMA**



**Spring 2021**

***Volume 17 No 5***

CONTENTS		From the Editor
State President's Report	3	Looking at the Spring 2020 edition of GB News, we would never have believed what the next year would bring. Our State Conference had to be postponed from April, and was held very successfully in October. Our Alpha and Gamma Chapter meetings were held not separately in different venues, but together on Zoom, often accompanied by members from other European states. What an achievement this has been can be seen from the reports you will find here, from Christmas to the March meeting. The feeling of togetherness is extraordinary – well done to everyone involved in arranging these meetings.
Festival of light	4	
Women Making a Difference	6	
B.A.M.E. Teachers' Experience of UK Education.	8	
Education in the Time of Covid	11	
How I became a teacher	13	
Who do you think you are?	15	
My trip up the Amazon	17	
Further Amazon pictures	20	
Alpha & Gamma Presidents' Reports spring 2021.	22	
		A personal vote of thanks from me to Diana Bell, who saved this edition when my computer refused to play the game! I have now been editing GB News three times a year for ten years – but suddenly I couldn't! Yet here it is, thanks to Diana.
		Contributions for the Summer edition to me by 30 September please, as usual in Word, attached to an email, with any photos (always welcome) in jpg format. As our meetings are joint for the foreseeable future, I will seek 'volunteers' for the reports on meetings. If any outings become possible, I will be relying on chapter presidents to do the same. Reports on other activities are always welcome, as are the more anecdotal contributions to be found in this edition.
Front cover: The snowdrop and 20th March Zoom meeting pictures with members from Europe are by Margarita Hanschmidt, our Regional Director.		
Apologies that some of the other pictures were taken from the Zoom screen and are not always of good quality. D Bell		

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## STATE PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Sadly we have not been able to meet 'face to face' since our Conference but, thanks to the energy and initiative shown by members of both Chapters, we have had some very enjoyable, and thought provoking, meetings on Zoom.

These meetings have been on a wide range of subjects from fun 'Festive Food' to more serious subjects. The more serious meetings included

Diversity, Ethnic teachers in a predominantly 'white' school, and teaching during the Covid pandemic.

The meetings have been well attended and we have been able to welcome our European sisters to join us. This has pleased our European Director, Margarita Handschmitt, as her aim is to encourage greater connection between the countries of our Region. Great Britain has certainly taken up this challenge and is leading the way.

A special 'thank you' must go to Penny, Dorcas, Joan, Anne and Carole for this, and all the members who have supported them.

Thankfully there is beginning to be an easing of the present situation and, hopefully, we will be able to meet together once again. But it hasn't all been bad because, although we haven't met personally, Zoom has enabled us to meet with Speakers who would not have been able to travel to the meetings, because of time and expense, and members who live at a distance for the same reason.

Our main aim once we are back to 'normal' is to continue with our Revitalisation programme and increase our membership. We have extremely interesting meetings and great opportunities to meet teachers from different countries and enjoy their friendship. Let us not keep it a secret, let us tell people at every opportunity we get!

***Evelyn Goodsell*** (State President)

## FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

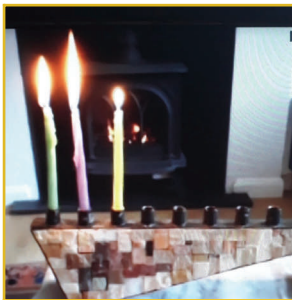
Anne Goldstein organised and hosted a very well attended seasonal meeting. Everyone had tried to enter into the spirit of the occasion by dressing appropriately, and by having food and drink on hand to celebrate. Our German guest Marika had an imaginative headdress of lights!

Anne introduced Evie Goodsell, our State President, who gave us some good news. She wanted to share with us that before our conference she had written to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to tell them about our organisation and our conference, and that the theme of our conference had been Wellbeing. She was thrilled to receive a reply, saying how this supported their work with 'Heads Together', to keep the subject of mental health in the public eye. They also sent their very best wishes. Anne congratulated Evie on her initiative, and thanked her again on everyone's behalf for persevering to make the conference happen, and to be such a great success.

Anne welcomed everyone, and introduced Sandra Blacker, who talked about the Jewish festival of Hanukkah, which began this year on the night of 10 December. It is a widely celebrated Jewish festival. It is a Festival of Light, with emphasis on candles, food, family and friends. It celebrates the victory of the



Sandra Blacker



Set with stone from  
Jerusalem

Maccabees over the Syrian army in 165 BCE, when they were able to take back the temple of Jerusalem and re-sanctify it. There is always singing, and special food such as doughnuts, and latkas (grated potatoes, onion and flour, fried in oil). The festival covers 8 days, and is signified by a Hanukkah candelabra holding 9 candles, the 9<sup>th</sup> being a servant to light the others (Shamash). Sandra's is unusual in that the candles are in a row, set into a piece of stone from Jerusalem, whereas most are curved with 4 each side and a larger one in the middle.

Anne thanked Sandra. They both explained how the festival commemorates the time when Jewish people fought to keep their identity against the odds, and how they rededicated their temple for prayer. The word 'Hanukkah' means dedication. The festival also emphasises charitable giving.

Anne introduced Meena Chauhan to give the Hindu perspective on the festival of Diwali. The first part of the celebration is to wash the front step, and to use red powder to paint a symbol on it. There are always sparkles – either fireworks or sparklers – with a traditional feast celebrated all together. Meena's grandparents were born in Gujarat, but her father was born in East Africa, and her mother in the Fiji Islands, where there is a big Hindu community. Meena herself was born in Birmingham, but now lives in Wolverhampton. The message of Diwali is to celebrate the triumph of light over dark, good over evil, and hope over despair, a message we need this year even more than ever.

Anne then introduced Manni Kaur, with her were her sons Amrit and Deen - for whom it was his first Zoom meeting. She explained that the Sikhs also celebrate Diwali. The story is that their 6<sup>th</sup> guru, imprisoned for creating a Sikh army at the time of the Moguls, had been told he could be released. However, he asked that the 52 Hindu kings also imprisoned with him, who were being badly treated in captivity, could be released as well. As he had 52 tassels on his robe, all were released with him. She also emphasised that Diwali celebrates the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness. Her son Deen chanted and played the drums for us.



Manni and Anne

Both the ladies emphasised that compassion for others is central to Diwali. Although they do not celebrate together, there are great similarities in the festivities. Manni had also started an initiative in a care home, where residents were mostly isolated from their families, and some had no family. She responded to a Facebook request for children to write in and send artwork, and suggested that children could write letters to residents of one home. This has now expanded to 5 homes with a total of 177 residents, symbolically sending pots of kindness, and emphasising that someone is thinking of them. Anne thanked all the speakers on our behalf.

Dorcas Rogers then took us through a very entertaining quiz, on Christmas General Knowledge, Christmas music, and Christmas food, with varying degrees of success for most of us. Anne thanked Dorcas, and reminded everyone about the first 2 talks planned for next year, the first on 16 January being by Ella Chalk, who has initiated Ella's House, for trafficked women, and work with other refugees. Our February talk is on Black and Ethnic Minority teachers. Diana Bell thanked Anne on our behalf to end a most successful meeting.

***Diane Billam (Gamma Chapter)***

## WOMEN MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our combined DKG groups are making the most of the freedom offered by video conferencing. The first meeting of 2021 began with 26 participants attending our Inspiring Women In the Community session. We were delighted to greet our German friends Gitta, Monika, Thi, Marika and Jeanie.

Carole introduced her remarkable friend Emily Chalke, who runs 'Ella's' – safe houses for trafficked women and women who are victims of sexual exploitation. Ella was a sex worker Emily originally met from Bangkok's red light district. She helped her when she came to London to work in a brothel and became seriously ill. Emily became aware of the lack of resources to support women in her position.



Emily Chalke

We were touched to hear the story of Halimot, who was trafficked from Africa when she was just nine years old. She was made to work on the streets of a busy European city. When she was trafficked to London, when she got to Kings Cross she just ran. When she eventually was referred to Ella's by a GP, her life began to change. You can read her story here <https://www.ellas.org.uk/stories-and-news/heard-and-strong>



Pip Doran

We also met Pip Doran, an enthusiastic volunteer for Tunbridge Wells Welcomes Refugees, who spoke about her support for Syrian local refugees. Many of these have been traumatised or physically injured by war. For those who have experienced war zones in Aleppo, Damascus and chemical warfare in Homs, lockdown has had a darker meaning.

The charity does a great job in befriending, supporting with housing, fundraising and educating. Pip made us smile when she said she was about to have an English conversation class with a refugee who loved the Queen and that would be their theme for the session.

We were also pleased to hear our German friends' experience of supporting refugees, whether it was bike repairs, sorting out internet connections for home-schooling and holding monthly supportive meetings.

Our session left us feeling warm and hopeful. Both these British women and our German chapter members were doing powerful work in creating a positive future for vulnerable and damaged people. Also Emily and Pip expressed such joy at what they do. “What they give me is more than I give them,” said Pip about the refugee families she works with.

***Anne Goldstein (Gamma Chapter)***

Here are some helpful links

**Ella's**

<https://www.ellas.org.uk/>

<https://justiceandcoffeepodcast.podbean.com/e/trafficked-at-19-a-survivors-story-part-1/> s

**Tunbridge Wells Welcomes Refugees**

<https://www.tw-welcomesrefugees.org/>

Some charming cards can be bought here

<https://www.tonbridgewelcomesrefugees.co.uk/shop/>

The cookbook Pip mentioned – A Taste of Home – can be obtained here

<https://www.sevenoakswelcomesrefugees.org/our-cookbook>

## B.A.M.E. TEACHERS' EXPERIENCE IN U.K. EDUCATION

Anne introduced Marva Rollins O.B.E. and her son Adrian whom she had first met when she taught Adrian at secondary school and had followed their careers and experiences in education over the years.



Marva received her OBE

Marva came from Barbados as part of the second Windrush generation. Her parents had arrived with the first Windrush generation leaving their children with family while they established themselves with jobs and accommodation as did so many of those first emigrants. When Marva and her siblings arrived in 1964 she went straight into secondary school in Ilford where she was only the second black child in the school. At that time expectations for black children were low and they tended to be put into lower ability streams or special needs classes.

By the time she left school Marva was categorised as “bright enough to work in an office”, which is what she did but she also involved herself in community work in Newham where she lived. Community work is something Marva has continued to do throughout her life as an advisor on council committees, an advisor on sickle cell and other roles. It is work she has found rewarding and valuable throughout her teaching career, providing wider community experience and a network of support and contacts.

Marva married young and had three sons, but by the time she was 31 she was a single parent and decided she really wanted to teach so took a B.Ed degree course. After graduating she taught in two Newham primary schools before being seconded to a borough advisory group. Marva then took a post as Deputy Head of a newly opened Newham primary school which had a large intake of special needs pupils, good experience but a challenging role. In 1995 Marva was appointed Head Teacher of a junior school in Forest Gate, where she was not only the first black Head Teacher but the only black member of staff. In those days there was no formal training for headship and it was here her community work experience and contacts were very helpful as she rapidly learned the school management skills, how to run a school budget etc., that are essential for the post. She was fortunate to have an excellent mentor in Marie Wilson who was an invaluable source of support.

After so many years in Newham Marva's next move was to be Head of a primary school in Edmonton, a borough identified as one of the poorest in the country. This was a very demanding school where over a period of 19 years the pupil intake changed from one where 50% of children were white to one where there were only 10 white pupils in the whole school.

Throughout her teaching career Marva has coped with a wide range of challenges but her focus has always been meeting the challenges of equality, equity and diversity in education. Having retired from teaching in schools, she continues to have this focus. Marva now has a consultancy teaching leadership skills to B.A.M.E teachers. She pointed out that there is still only 3% of teachers from this community in senior management posts in education in this country. Although working more after her official retirement than she had planned, Marva is proud that she is helping a new generation of young teachers to leadership.



Adrian then gave an account of his experiences in the U.K. education system. As a young child he attended three primary schools in Newham before transferring to a secondary school in Ilford where it was common to see NF on street walls and scrawled by pupils on school books. By the time he reached the sixth form he was the only black male pupil taking A levels.

Adrian had enjoyed sports at school and was a good cricketer as was his younger brother who encouraged him to join a cricket academy after leaving school. Adrian became a professional cricketer and played county cricket for Derby for ten years. Following an injury at age 30 he took a degree in Childhood and Youth Studies and became a school sports coordinator. However, Adrian wanted to move on from sports instruction and took an OU degree in Maths. After graduation he secured a post at a very aspirational secondary school in Newham where at least 40% of their 6<sup>th</sup> formers gained University places. Later Adrian went back to Derby to support his own children after his ex-partner moved there and for some years held posts in secondary schools, first as an Assistant Head then as a Deputy Head as well as taking on mentoring roles before changing direction to take on his present post as an Ofsted Inspector.

Like his mother, Adrian has had to face challenges as a member of the B.A.M.E. community in this country both as a pupil and as a teacher. He has found that he was always the only black senior member of staff and this made it difficult to

explain the problems he encountered in this situation. He always encourages black male students in particular to gain a good education and not just aspire to sporting achievement.

Both Marva and Adrian agreed they have found teaching, particularly in poorer communities, brings many challenges. One common problem is how to involve parents. Often this is not easy, these parents may not value education because their own school was so negative they don't want, or don't know how, to become involved. They explained that this is where their own experience has helped them empathise with reluctant parents. They feel that the problem with teaching as a career at present is that it lacks high status. Teacher experience, particularly in challenging areas, is intense and time consuming so retention is difficult. Making teaching more attractive must include explaining that the role of senior teachers gives power, plus the emotional pay off of supporting children to develop their potential.

This was an extremely insightful presentation by two first class speakers and was well attended by members from Great Britain, Germany and one of our former speakers from the U.S.A. I think many of those who attended found they still wanted to know more and had many questions still to ask long after this meeting closed.

**Joan Carroll** (*Alpha Chapter*)



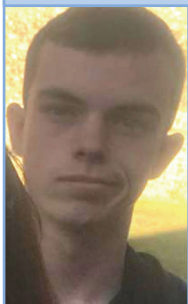
## Education in the time of Covid

On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March we enjoyed a presentation hosted by Alpha Chapter discussing how the Covid pandemic has affected education. It is now a year since UK members were last able to see each other face to face, so it is wonderful that we are able to continue to meet 'virtually' via Zoom with the added bonus of being joined by friends from Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Germany, and the Netherlands. - a very international event!

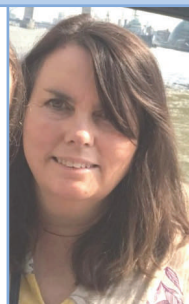
The arrival of the Covid pandemic created challenges throughout all levels of education and many of the changes made during this time will be here to stay. It has been a steep learning curve for many people. In a short space of time those working in education have had to increase their knowledge of technology in order to prepare and deliver lessons and training. Many extra costs have been incurred by schools and much re-organisation and creative thinking has been required. Our speakers gave us wonderful snapshots of the pros and cons at each level of education.

Students have missed the daily contact and interaction with their friends, and it has been an especially worrying time for those with exams looming, because it has not been the normal experience they would have expected, with the usual support from their teachers and tutors. Several Zoom lessons daily is tiring and being constantly at home can make it difficult to maintain concentration. There have been frustrations for students of practical subjects such as Sport, Drama and Music which cannot be experienced online, while some other subjects may lend themselves better to this way of learning. Despite DFE support, many children have also been hampered by a lack of devices to access their lessons at home. On a more positive note, the experience will have helped many students to develop skills of a more independent learning style.

Speakers from the Garvey Family. From left, Patrick, Anna, Nuala and Denis.



11



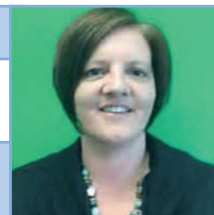
Universities and Further Education Colleges were also forced to teach online meaning that the experience was not as students had anticipated. Again, courses, where practical work and observations form part of the assessment have been unable to be take place, sadly causing a delay for some students in the completion of their qualifications. Teachers, Lecturers and Further Education Providers have had to, very quickly, become competent in delivering lessons using a new set of technology skills, such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Share Screen etc.

Many have, however, welcomed the increase in personal time that this allows and individuals delivering training have had more 'work – life balance', by working from home. This has allowed for several online courses to be delivered daily without the need to travel from one place to another. Lack of daily contact and support from colleagues has still, however, been much missed.

For our final speaker, Covid brought a life changing opportunity! On finding herself without a job, she decided to make a career change and was able to enter an online course, along with many students much younger than herself. and many from other countries e.g., Mexico and Ukraine. She greatly enjoyed this new experience and having 'lost everything' she has now transitioned to a completely new career and loving every minute.

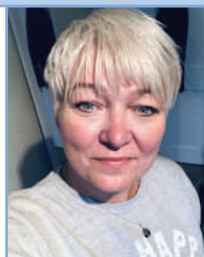
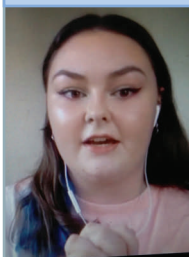
When this pandemic finally ends, returning to a 'different world' will be a long awaited and very positive challenge for both students and staff. As a result of the many new skills and creative ways of teaching that have been explored during this time, I'm sure that 'blended teaching' (where some traditional face-to-face instruction may replace web-based online learning) will continue to the great benefit of all.

Speaker Claire Nadaf

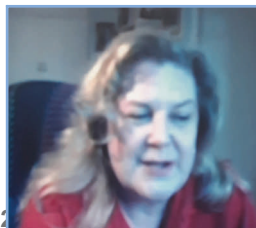


**Aileen Dickson** (Gamma Chapter)

Speakers from the Carroll family. From left, Eirinn and Janet Carroll and Alison and Joseph Ajayi.



12



## HOW I BECAME A TEACHER

I was one of the 1945 Direct Grant scholarship girls who, because of an accident of birth, took my scholarship at the very end of the Second World War. I say, accident of birth, because the 1944 Education Act said that all children should have the opportunity of a secondary education. Born a year earlier, and I would not have had that opportunity and left school at the age of 14 as my parents had done before me. But, in spite of a very enlightened six years at a Girls Public Day School Trust (GPDST), I did not take Higher Schools Certificate. That was a step too far for my Father who thought I should leave school and start to earn a living. I began my working life after a six months stint at the Institut Francais, as a shorthand typist at the British Standards Institution in Victoria and later Mayfair. From there I emigrated to New Zealand in 1953, married and went to Canada with my Dutch husband to join his family in Ontario. Throughout those years I thrived, working for a variety of professions including an accountant who wanted me to become his apprentice. But somewhere in me, I felt I had missed out on not going to University. It was more a fantasy than anything that would actually happen. I had two children, returned to Britain, had another child and devoted about nine years to family life.

Then I began an evening class in creative writing. I had an inspiring teacher called Paul Sheridan who encouraged me to write more honestly. He was constantly referring to authors whom I had never read, so the following year I changed my study to an A level in English Literature. This was followed by a year studying French A level and, because now I had my eye on university, an O level in Latin. All this time my children were growing up and becoming more independent but my main focus was still on them and the home. When I look back now it is difficult to understand how I made it. Of course, throughout this time, I was meeting people – teachers – who encouraged me.

Finally, I applied to London University and was offered a place at Queen Mary College in the English Department led by Professor Callan. In 1971, at the age of 37, with three children aged 12, 10 and 7, I embarked on a three year degree course. I will gloss over the next three years. They were gruelling, many times I nearly gave up, and I still do not know how I survived – or how my children survived a mother who rushed off to Mile End four days a week. I would read on bus and train and underground, sometimes finding on arrival that my tutor had not turned up that day and I had to do the whole journey in reverse to be home in time for the children coming home from school. I took Old Icelandic as an

option because it was a morning seminar and not American Literature, which I would have loved, but was at five pm. However, I made it, with a congratulatory letter from the Professor who said that he was so pleased that I had not given up.

I was forty with no forward planning. I went back to part time office work until one day I had to go to see my younger son's headmaster. During that interview, I expressed an interest in teaching and offered to go in to help with reading. He listened to my story and rang a school which was advertising for a support instructor. In 1974 I needed a teaching certificate to be employed as a teacher. Again, an accident of time, because that requirement had only come into force in January 1974 and my degree was July 1974. I was interviewed the following morning and offered four mornings a week to support the girls arriving from East Africa who were due to take their A levels. I was over the moon but at the end of that year, the principal called me into her office and said the money for that initiative had stopped and she could not offer me another year. She suggested I do my PGCE. I didn't think my husband would think much of yet another year of study, but she worked out the financial gain. He agreed, and I began a teaching year at Southlands College, Roehampton Institute, University of London.



I don't need to relate my experiences that year to an audience of teachers who have all been through teaching practice. I had two six week teaching practices in large mixed 11 to 16 comprehensives in Croydon, the first a disaster and the second a triumph. I began teaching at the second the following September, 1976.

There followed six years of English teaching and then I saw on the Croydon circular for vacancies, an offer for a year's MA study, on secondment at Birmingham University "Language in Education". I couldn't resist. It was always worth applying. That's how I had started in the first place. I applied. Was interviewed, was offered the place, but had to wait for Croydon to release me. 1983, 84 and 85, I waited, refusing to withdraw my application. I lost the Birmingham place because they had to reduce their numbers, but Professor Stratta suggested I try his friend, Andrew Wilkinson, at University of East Anglia. I did, and was offered a place there. My determination was rewarded and I began the M.A. course in October 1985.

As I write this, so many memories come flooding in. This can only be the bare

bones of those years. Life continued, I made life long friends, there were tears and laughter, parties, school journeys, responsibilities as Head of English and finally a Curriculum Area Leader. I retired in 1997 from full time teaching and spent the next four years teaching in a part time capacity at Croydon Further Education College where I continued to enjoy meeting some very interesting students. I finally hung up my teaching shoes in 2004 with a wealth of experiences that have enriched my life.

**Bettina Kulsdom** (*Gamma Chapter*)

### WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

A very good question. However, for me, not one that is going to be answered any time soon by researchers at the BBC. My heritage is mixed - Irish on my mother's side and Scottish/Irish on my father's side.

When my first sister and I were about 10 and 11 years old respectively, we were set up by our mother and aunt with pen pals in Australia – a brother and sister respectively. Our correspondence with these Australians continued from then to the present day and we referred to them as our “cousins” although that had never been openly stated. This was long before mobile phones and social media, so communication was by letter with photos.

I finally met up in person with my “cousin” Pam in London when she and her husband Peter, along with their first two children, were visiting and travelling in the UK. That was in 1980 when I was living in South Kensington. Our next meeting was in 1988 when I first travelled



Pam and Peter in 2019



Don

to Brisbane, Australia – the year of EXPO. By this time Pam and Peter had five children. As they were all at school during the day, I would get a lift to the nearest station at Strathpine and catch the train into central Brisbane spending my days venturing around EXPO.

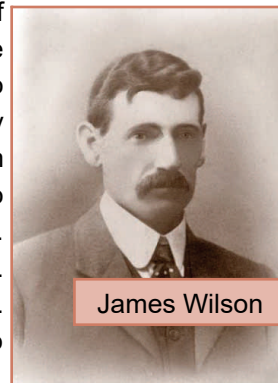
As Pam and Peter (a doctor) were busy running their surgery, I also got to meet up with Pam's brother Don, my sister's pen pal, as he worked in Brisbane Central. I remember, on one occasion, Pam taking me to see an old lady who apparently was keen to see me. At the time I

thought nothing of this. It was only many years later in 2015 when my sister and I were visiting Australia I discovered that this “old lady” was actually my mother and aunt’s cousin! We also were able to confirm that Pam and Don actually were our second cousins and that there was another sibling Stuart.



The discovery of an old photo in a collection belonging to my late mother had posed some questions and sparked investigation. It shows a group of siblings standing with a woman and a teenage girl standing behind the children, and a gentleman in the background. Who were they? We discovered they were the Wilsons. Agnes, James, Jane, Robert and William (twins) and Samuel. Mother Jane is standing with an unknown teenage girl and father James is in the background. Unfortunately, because of the way the photo has been cropped, to be attached to the card backing, my Great Grandmother Agnes is mostly out of shot to the left of the photo.

Our family connection with Australia goes back to the 1880s when four of the six Wilson children from Antrim (now Northern Ireland), emigrated to Australia. James (Pam, Don and Stuart’s Great Grandfather) set off in 1884. He then sent for sisters Agnes and Jane. Jane arrived in Australia in 1885. However, Agnes decided to stay in Belfast as she had met her future husband, my Great Grandfather Henry Auckinson. Their son William Henry Auckinson (my mother’s uncle) emigrated to Australia in 1907 and eventually settled in Toowoomba. His daughter Mary was the “old lady” I had met in 1988. In 1887 twins William and Robert arrived in Brisbane. Youngest son Samuel is believed to have moved to Scotland and never heard from again.



At the time when the siblings emigrated, there was great hardship in Ireland due to successive potato famines. Jane Wilson (mother) had been widowed in 1876 with six children to feed and had married for the second time in 1880 to a much older widower with a son (quite common in those days) and had two more

daughters. As her brother John Gilmour had already established himself in Australia, it made sense for her children once grown, to join him in seeking a new and better life.

I have now also met up with cousins descended from Jane Wilson and from Henry Auckinson as well as their extended families. Since 1988 I have been to Australia three more times to spend time and catch up with various relatives, as well as once to New Zealand for a wedding. Different Australian relations have often visited or spent work visas here in the UK over the years. Unfortunately, travel is now suspended due to Covid.

My research continues and to date I have approximately seven or eight files of information which I have unearthed from both sides of my family. The Australian story is just one small strand of the bigger picture on both my mother's and my father's side of the family. I was unable to discover any skeletons in the closet this time but did find something on my father's side....

***Penny Kinnear*** (Alpha Chapter)

## MY TRIP UP THE AMAZON

I have a great interest in river travel, particularly on the major rivers of the world and have been very fortunate to have travelled on quite a few of them. In January 2020 I took a six week cruise, which included a trip on the Amazon, and included all of the places that I wanted to visit in that area of Brazil.

The river Amazon in South America is the longest river in the world. This is open to some dispute as the Amazon is estimated to be 4345 miles long whilst the Nile is estimated to be 4258 miles long. The Amazon varies in width from 1-35 miles (excluding flooding). The mouth is more than 250 miles wide. The wide river delta is littered with islands, the largest is the size of Switzerland - it's the world's largest river bound island.

The river Amazon rises in Peru but it is known by many names until it almost reaches Manaus. This section is known as the Solimoes River and Rio Negro. They form the "The Meeting of the Waters" and from then on, until it



discharges the largest volume of water in the world into the Atlantic Ocean, it is known as The Amazon.

The river Negro is dark and the river Solimoes a pale sandy colour. The colour of the water depends on the type of land that it runs through. The two rivers run side by side for about 5 miles before the waters mix to make a uniform colour. The Rio Negro is warmer than the Solimoes by approx 6 degrees.

There are no bridges across the entire length of the river Amazon because for most of its course the river flows through the Amazon Rainforest where there are very few roads and cities. Most of the time the crossing can be made by ferry, so there is no need to build a bridge. The new Manaus Iranduba bridge links the cities of Manaus and Iranduba. This bridge spans the Rio Negro. Iranduba is a new town built to accommodate the rising population of Manaus.

Our first stop was at **Santarem**. The main source of income in Santarem is from wood and minerals. Santarem is also the world's largest Soya exporting port. In 1920 Henry Ford spent 80 million US dollars on a large rubber plantation for the production of tyres for America. Two cities were created in the middle of the jungle. The project ended in disaster when many of his employees died from malaria and yellow fever and insects destroyed the plantations.



Boca de Valeria

openings for windows and a door and have no glass - just shutters to keep out the rain. There are no roads or motor vehicles. A simple dirt track runs through the village crossed by other paths that lead into the rainforest.

**Manaus** is the capital and the largest city of the Brazilian state of Amazonas. The city lies 994 miles from the Atlantic. Manaus is located in the centre of the world's largest forest and is the home of the National

**Boca de Valeria** is a tiny fishing village in a remote area of the rainforest. The village is on a tributary of the Amazon. I had my first sighting of a pink dolphin in this tributary. The village has approx 75 inhabitants who live by hunting and fishing. The villagers' homes are made of wood with



The Village Church at Boca de Valeria

Institute of Amazonian research. This Institute is the most important centre for scientific studies in the Amazon region and for international sustainability issues. The city is a commercial hub for a vast area including parts of Peru, Bolivia and Colombia. The port area is a constant hive of activity with river boats arriving day and night. It's the world's largest floating dock. This means that shipping is not affected by the difference of the water level which can be 12-18 meters. Manaus thrived on the rubber industry and with it came splendid architectural buildings - the most famous is the Opera House. The collapse of the Brazilian rubber industry in 1914 led to the city's decline.



Manaus Opera House



Blur Coca Cola sign at Parintins

**Parintins** is known for its Folk Festival, one of the largest annual festivals in Brazil - the Boi-Bumba. The stadium where this festival is held holds approx 39,000 spectators. The blue Coca Cola sign on the stadium is the only one in the world.

**Belem** is approx 62 miles up-river from the Atlantic Ocean. It's the gateway to the Amazon river. This city is a tourist hub because of its

port, airport and bus station links. The name Belem is the Portuguese for Bethlehem.

**Anna Evans** (Alpha Chapter)

Floating fuel stations. All of them have a little mini-supermarket on board.



## FURTHER PICTURES FROM ANNA'S ADVENTURES ON THE AMAZON



Public Ferry, Our guide compared this ferry to a sailing beehive.



The tourist police escorted our trips so we always felt safe.

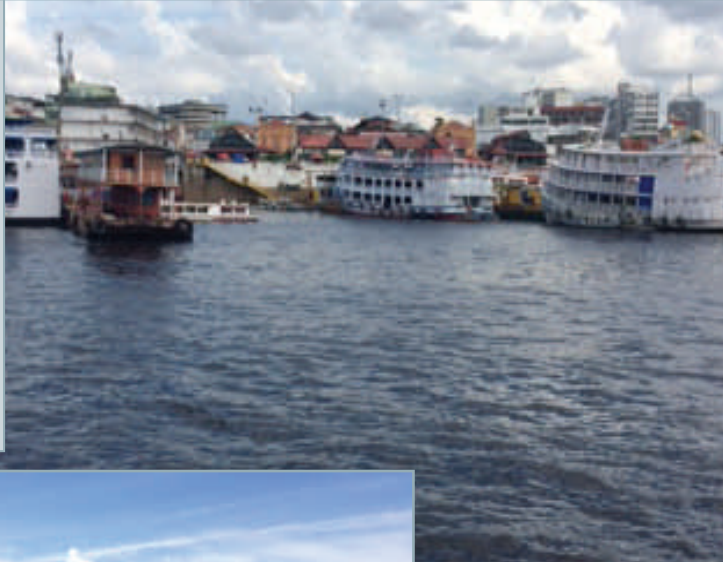


Families live on a floating village. The young children learn to swim fast or jump from one house to another. The river is full of caimans.



Amazonian artwork

Secondary school children attend boarding school in the large cities on a weekly basis. They are transported there on the school boat on a Monday morning and returned on Friday afternoon.



The floating dock at Manaus means ships are not affected by the water levels which can be 12—18 metres difference.



The Amazon Theatre celebrated its centenary in 1996. Caruso, Sarah Bernhardt and Luciano Pavarotti performed there..

The ballet shoes of Dame Margot Fonteyn are on display.

## ALPHA AND GAMMA PRESIDENTS' REPORT SPRING 2021

In **November** we had a fascinating joint Alpha and Gamma zoom meeting on the theme of "Gender". The speaker was Tanya who told us about her journey, from knowing at 8 years old that something was wrong, to accepting who she felt she really was at 65 years old, and the long struggle as transgender. She still sees herself as heterosexual. As a father of three children and married for 29 years, she has been accepted by family and friends. Her son introduces her as "my dad Tanya".

Issy (Isobel) a second year student in York gave us a talk on "The politics of Gender".

**December** saw Alpha and Gamma taking part in a joint zoom meeting "Festivals of Light" learning about Hanukah and Diwali. Sandra told



Manni Kaur

us the history behind the Menorah, games such as the Dreidel and celebratory food,.



Food & lights for Diwali

Meena who is Hindu and Manni who is Sikh both explained how Hindus and Sikhs each celebrate the festival of Diwali. Meena told the story of Diwali and described the importance of fireworks and sparklers as sending the message of "Light over Darkness" and "Hope over Despair". Manni also explained the importance of lighting candles and tea lights around the house for Sikhs and her son Deen treated us to a musical session on drums.

Zoom showing participants getting in the spirit for the Festival of Light.



In the second part of the meeting we all enjoyed a (well researched) Christmas themed Quiz compiled by our Star Quiz Mistress Dorcas Rogers. It proved to be very informative as well as entertaining.



Quiz Mistress



Emily Chalke

Our first joint Alpha and Gamma zoom meeting in **January 2021** was on the theme of “Trafficked Women” and “Refugees”. Emily Chalke told us about her work in setting up “Ella’s” (originally Ella’s Home) as a refuge and support for trafficked women both from home and abroad. She took us through the story of “Halimot” who was trafficked as a 9-year old in Spain and thanks to Ella’s is now happily married with 4 young boys and has set up her own business. Funding for the growing number of houses is an on-going effort as there is no government funding.

Pip Doran described the work she and other volunteers do to support Syrian refugees, individuals and families, such as practical help to find accommodation and psychological needs as a result of trauma. Monthly meetings provide activities for parents and families, as well as older childless women who can be isolated.



Pip Doran

These two organisations are charities and dependent on donations to continue. Both speakers are amazing and inspirational women.

NB It has been great to welcome some of our European DKG members to our virtual meetings and we are hoping that a future meeting will be led by Germany

### **Future Meetings**

24th April 2021: Topic – A Virtual Walk through the East End on Women's History . Virtual Guide - David Rosenberg historian and author.

***Penny Kinnear*** (Alpha Chapter President)

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

**For an update on the latest meetings please go to our website:  
[www.dkggb.org.uk](http://www.dkggb.org.uk)**

## **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](http://www.dkg.org)**

Details of GB meetings are on the website

**Great Britain: [www.dkgyb.org.uk](http://www.dkgyb.org.uk)**

Find out more about DKG in Europe

**Europe: [www.dkgeurope.org](http://www.dkgeurope.org)**

### **Mission Statement**

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