



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA

GREAT BRITAIN NEWS



Spring 2016

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It has been a busy time for DKG GB!
3 This edition includes reports on chapter
4 activities, including a joint Alpha/
Gamma meeting at the Soroptimists,
5 London, which is a very central venue
6 easily accessible from whichever
7 direction we come.

8
8 The Spring edition each year does not
9 report on a conference, but does flag
up the exciting conferences to come.
10 The first is our own GB State
Conference in Eastbourne in April, as
detailed by Kathy Hodgson in her
11 report which follows. Then we have
12 the excitement of the 2016
13 International in Nashville, Tennessee in
14 July (see page 4 for details).

15
16 Please let me have any contributions
17 for the Summer 2016 edition of GB
18 News, preferably by attachment to an
19 email, by 23 April, with the text in Word,
20 and any photos attached separately
21 and not part of the text, as they do not
22 always transfer properly. This date
23 should be easy to remember: England
for St George and Shakespeare!
Copy coming in late, as it has this time,
causes problems with the timetable.
Many thanks also to everyone who
contributed to this edition.

**Di-
ane Billam: dbillam@hotmail.com**

Cover photograph and all in the EF Report,
by Dagmar Ullmann, European Forum
Member for Germany.

Kathy Hodgson

STATE ORGANISATION PRESIDENT 2015—2017



As I wish each of you a very happy 2016, I reflect on the number of activities that have taken place since my last president's report, not least the organisation of a weekend long conference. The conference committee (Evelyn, Joan, Dorcas, Penny, Sandra and – recently co-opted - Liz Stopani) continue to work hard on your behalf, preparing for the State Conference. The conference theme: **Education for Everyone: Expanding Minds**, encompasses the wide range of speakers and topics planned.

- We are delighted to welcome our International President, Lyn Babb Schmid, who will give us the latest information from headquarters in Austin, and tell us more about plans for the International Convention in Nashville.
- Liz Stopani has two contacts who have both worked with displaced and very vulnerable young migrants; they will speak of their language work with recent arrivals, and the experiences these young people have had to deal with, in their own countries and in the attempt to reach a place of safety.
- Students from the Pestalozzi Village in nearby Sedlescombe will tell us of their education, their hopes for the future – many returning to their own countries to improve the lives of children there – and hopefully entertain with music or dance.
- Many of you will know that Dorcas and Ray Rogers spent nine weeks touring the Mississippi basin; Dorcas will speak about the effects of slavery and civil rights on children and women, using information gained from her travels.
- Since we have a published author in our midst, it would be impossible not to hear about Bettina's experiences of researching, writing and then publishing her book: *Norman's Bay – A Fragment*. I have read it – truly a fascinating look into the history of Norman's Bay, including many old photographs and anecdotal stories. (*Ed: see page 9 for more*)

Add to the mix, a hotel looking out to sea (**The Hydro Hotel, Eastbourne**), friendly staff, tasty and plentiful food – who could resist? The dates for the conference are **Friday 8th – Sunday 10th April 2016**. Since the hotel needs deposits by the end of January, we will not be sending out printed registration forms – these have already been emailed to you and need to be returned by **15th January 2016**. You can also find the registration form via a link from the homepage on the GB website at www.dkggb.org.uk.

There will also be stalls of members arts and crafts – some available for purchase, so plenty for those shopaholics amongst you! I do hope you are able to attend what promises to be an interesting and thought-provoking conference. Please encourage friends and colleagues to attend – we may even acquire a new member or two. Speaking of which, if you have recently visited our excellent GB website, you will have seen Gamma chapter has another new member – Pat Johnson. Welcome, Pat!

Since this is an even numbered year in the DKG calendar, we need new chapter officers – presidents and treasurers. These important posts are the lifeblood of our Society; it is vital that we encourage new people to take on these responsibilities. Who may be hiding their light under a bushel? Whom do you know who would love to take on one of these roles given support? Please seek out members of your chapter who would bring new ideas and fresh enthusiasm. Remember – none of us knows how to do this job until we try it!

The biggest event in the biennium is the International Convention, this year in Nashville, Tennessee. My first Regional Conference in 2001 was a real eye opener, revealing so many new possibilities; hopefully my first International Conventional in 2016 will be even more amazing. I hope some of you will be able to join me in the home of country music.

For those of you who have not experienced life 'beyond the chapter' there are many opportunities besides conferences and conventions: professional development courses, membership of international committees, to mention but two. If you are interested, you can find out much more about our organisation and its possibilities for development at www.dkg.org. We also have our own Scholarships and Awards Committee; Mary Wardrop, the committee chair, will always be ready to give advice on international awards. In the words of our conference, are you ready to expand your minds?

Do think about attending the 2016 DKG International Convention, which will be held at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Centre, Nashville, Tennessee, from 5-9 July, 2016. More information at www.dkg.org.

THE EUROPEAN FORUM COMMITTEE MEETING IN STOCKHOLM

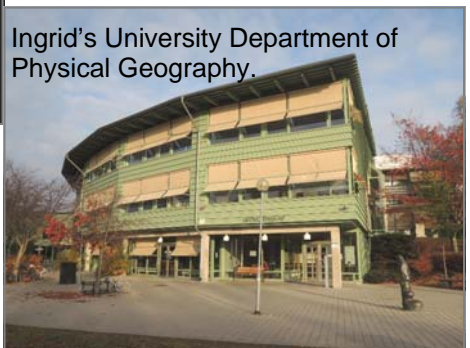
The European Forum Committee gathered in Stockholm on the last weekend in October for their meeting. Present were: Estonia: Liilia Oberg, Finland: Heli Piikkilä (Treasurer), Germany: Dagmar Ullmann, Great Britain: Diana Bell, Iceland: Kristrún Ísaksdóttir, Norway: Ingrid Christiansen, Sweden: Ingrid Stjernquist (chair), The Netherlands: Riet Smits. European Regional Director (ex officio) Marianne Skardéus.

My flight from Heathrow was good, and with no hold luggage and no queues at passport control my journey to the hotel took less than an hour. The train from the airport to Stockholm Central Station was fast, travelling at speeds of up to 200kph. I was the only person buying a ticket for the local train which took me to the hotel station in three minutes. I then spent ten minutes finding the hotel – 'Google' places look different in real life, especially at night! Everyone was waiting at the hotel where most of us were staying. I threw my bag into the small bedroom (well fitted with all that was needed), and we dined at a nearby Swedish Restaurant.



Enjoying the Swedish Restaurant, from left: Liilia Oberg, Ingrid Christiansen, Marianne Skardéus, Heli Piikkilä, Diana Bell, Riet Smits, Ingrid Stjernquist, Kristrún Ísaksdóttir and Dagmar Ullmann.

On Saturday morning we set off to meet at Stockholm University where Ingrid, our Committee Chair, works. We took the Metro and found that the stations have some interesting décor: mosaics, paintings, installations, plus some informative wall frescos. Several stations have been left with the bedrock exposed giving a cave-like feel, occasionally there was even an added painted rainbow! The metro station is on the campus, which is a very pleasant large open area with trees which were just turning into their autumnal tints.



Ingrid's University Department of Physical Geography.

Ingrid welcomed us and the meeting began with us agreeing the minutes of the EF meeting in Borås. Heli, our treasurer, then gave her Financial Report and provided a breakdown of monies paid by each country towards the Regional Directors' travel costs. Marianne told us which countries she had visited. It is hoped that our proposed amendment to the International Standing Rules regarding HQ paying towards the Regional Directors' travel costs, will lead to some discussion at the meeting in Nashville. It was agreed to see if it was possible to find someone to make a simplified design, within our budget, for the European Achievement Award 2017.

Members' then gave their Vision for DKG Europe, covering a great many areas including: The EF representing an important connection and information source for the member countries, recruiting more young members, organizing of education in other countries, establishing sister chapters across the borders and attention to women's and children's rights and equalities. Possible EU finance, visiting others and checking out the website were also discussed. We looked at a new interesting leaflet *Opportunities Through DKG*. Concern was expressed that we are still not well known and find it difficult to say who we are and what we do. We revised the European Forum Strategic Action Plan and agreed a fusion of EuForia with the website with Riet offering to be editor. We hope to update the European website.

After planning the European Forum Meeting for the 2016 Convention in Nashville, we made one EF membership proposal: *The European Forum Committee recommends to The State Executive Boards that at least three members are re-elected to the committee so there is continuity of membership in 2016-2018*. Ingrid closed the meeting by thanking all for their contribution and for developing the network in Europe.

Later that evening a friend of Ingrid's, who works in the main Art Gallery, met us at the Central Railway Station. (Interesting to note that there were social workers wearing high visibility vests waiting in the station to help refugees as they arrived). The art gallery is being refurbished and so she took us on a guided tour around the Central Station area of the amazing display of billboard-sized photographs of pictures from the art gallery, explaining what was going on in the pictures and why they were chosen. It was a fascinating tour; the pictures seemed to be chosen to impress, make people



think and, in a couple of cases, we thought shock. Later we went to a Spanish Tapas restaurant, a favourite of Ingrid's and a lively place with musicians, singing and 'locals' getting up to dance. A great way to finish the weekend.

Getting home was a story in itself, fog meant a very late flight and much hanging around in the airport. Getting the tube home from Heathrow late at night was an experience - who knew that the District and Circle lines closed so early? Thank goodness black cabs work all night!

Full Minutes of the meeting can be found on the website at: www.dkgeurope.org

Diana Bell (*Alpha Chapter, EF Committee member*), with thanks to Dagmar Ullmann for her photographs.

DEBUT OF THE COLLEGIAL EXCHANGE

The first edition of the new DKG publication, **Collegial Exchange**, was published in late 2015. More than 40 submissions were received for the inaugural issue. The *Collegial Exchange* complements the familiar *DKG Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators*. While the *Journal* focuses on academic, scholarly, research-based articles, the *Exchange* features practice-based articles and creative work. Categories for submissions to the *Exchange* include classroom and DKG practices and programmes; viewpoints on current issues; personal reflections or anecdotes; inspirational pieces; biographies and interviews; book and technology reviews; and poetry or other creative expressions.

The deadline for the first edition was in December, but information about submitting to the *Journal* and the *Exchange* may be found on the Editorial Board page of dkg.org at <https://www.dkg.org/editorial-board>. All submissions should be sent to bulletin@dkg.org. The mission for both publications is to 'promote the professional and personal growth of members through publication of their writings'. A PowerPoint presentation, *Writing for Publication*, is posted as a resource on the editorial board page. For additional information or assistance, members should contact *Bulletin* editor and Communications and Publicity liaison, Judy Merz, also at bulletin@dkg.org.

Come on, all you creative members of DKG GB – go for it! The PowerPoint presentation mentioned above might be interesting as part of a chapter meeting?

Diane Billam (*Gamma Chapter*)

FINE ARTS GALLERY

The latest edition of *DKG News* featured the autumn exhibition of the DKG Gallery of Fine Arts. The exhibition includes crafts (an art quilt and a hooked rug), essays, mixed media, paintings (oil and watercolour), photographs and poems. Twenty-nine artists from 15 state organizations are featured.

As more members become acquainted with the DKG online gallery, more and more submissions are being received. The Arts and Humanities Jury members are thrilled with the gallery's success in the short time it has been in existence, giving member artists a very visible and colourful way to be published.

DKG Great Britain State has shown a range of artistic endeavour, whenever we have held exhibitions at our conferences. Go to dkg.org – fine arts gallery to view members' creative efforts, and to be inspired to submit your own! The next submission period is 1 January – 1 February 2016, but if you miss that deadline, there will always be another!

Diane Billam (*Editor*)

Winter's Promise

Oh, the weather's dull and drear,
Now that Winter's approaching near,
Frost is bright, but fog is dull,
Snow is light, but may be chill.

It's the air taken in, quickened with cold
It's the glow of the fingers when taken on hold,
White are the knuckles, red glow the cheeks,
The fire's so warm, Winter's so bleak.

Yet, within this world of white
Blackened with twigs and branches on high;
The seed of life that lies dormant now
Will emerge come the Spring,
Triumphant banners to unfurl.

Rosalind Price (*Gamma Chapter*)

THE BENEFITS OF THE CANTERBURY AWARD

Normans Bay, A Fragment: The success of this book has come as a pleasant surprise. Its beginnings were the result of my own fascination with this little hamlet where I live. In the country, by the sea, a road that runs out at the beach and stories from residents of parties in the old hotel, military occupation during the wars and smuggling through the ages. The more I heard, the more I wanted to know. Then I was given a disc containing more than 200 photographs and the idea of a book was formed.

But how to go about it? At our AGM of the residents' association in 2012 we had a visit from a representative of a community project, Caroline Huey, from Bexhill. I asked if a book about this unique community would be a candidate for a grant. It would, but the money ran out before we got started. However, Caroline was able to find another source and we received a cheque from the Sussex Police. It seems they use the money from the sale of unclaimed lost articles to support community projects.

So began research through stories from residents, old documents kept by residents, Pevensey Court House, Bexhill Museum and lots of reading. I collected so much random information over the course of the first year which was all "somewhere" on my computer. I scanned in newspaper articles, old documents, postcards and photographs. I wrote little pieces taken from information I was gleaning. But my IT skills were lacking, big time! I was fine with the hard copy, but useless with the laptop. I printed a lot, organised it and then tried doing the same with the material in the electronic files. My grandson organised the files into one main file and then I created the final document. In the end I could not use it all. We were limited to how much we could afford to have printed and I began to flag in energy and motivation.

The receipt of the Canterbury Award was a great help. I returned to the writing with renewed energy, more paper and ink, membership of the museum so that I could come and go and something more towards the printing. This year I decided I would stop the research and collecting and publish. What an unexpected result! We had 200 copies printed which were gone within a month. We have subsequently had a further 200 printed, of which 120 have been sold. Our outlets are the shop on the Normans Bay Caravan Site, the Bexhill Museum, the Information Centre in Pevensey Bay and the Camping and Caravan Site at Normans Bay. Next year we hope that the Court House in Pevensey will take some.

Since its publication I have received so many compliments and even been asked to sign copies! I am aware there are great gaps and more stories and photographs which could be used. I have been asked to write Fragment Two, but declined. It has been an exciting result.

Bettina Kulsdom (*Gamma Chapter*)

A WALK AROUND NORMANS BAY

Asked why I wanted to write ***Normans Bay - A Fragment***, I set out on a circular walk to illustrate the village's appeal.

Down the village street towards the sea, St James cottages are on the left, named after the chapel which was there before, which in its turn was named after the chapel which stood in Chapel Field a mile north of the Star Inn. Now only fields, Northeye was a medieval village on an eye (island) in the middle of salt flats.



A Winter Scene



Seaview Cottages

The next set of cottages are old fishermen's cottages, next door to the old hotel, now a private residence and the road runs out on to the beach. Turning West, I walk across the concrete base which held a gun in the Second World War and I pass the house with a searchlight tower. From here I have a view along the beach of the Martello tower, built as a defence against Napoleon. The beach is fringed now with a

miscellaneous collection of permanent and holiday homes until I reach the private section belonging to the caravan park. Turning North I walk down the public footpath towards the new automatic level crossing at Normans Bay station and continue along the lane to the Star Inn. Here I read the board explaining the smuggling history of the Inn and river. Still picturesque with its ancient, narrow bridge, I can't resist a photo stop.



The Star Inn

I retrace my steps a short way to the public footpath which crosses two fields and stiles and the pedestrian crossing of the railway. And now I am within a short stretch back home.

I have been back in history, walked on the beach, had a drink in a fifteenth century inn and returned home across fields to my cosy Coastguard Cottage dating from the nineteenth century.

Bettina Kulsdom (*Gamma Chapter*)



SUCCESSING AGAINST THE ODDS WITH DYSLEXIA

A STUDENT'S SUCCESS STORY

The subject of this study is an adult female – “Mary” – who is dyslexic. She left school with no qualifications and very low self-esteem, thinking of herself as ‘thick’. Having tried a variety of jobs she felt she could try to become a fully qualified mental health care worker as the NVQ required was termed vocational learning rather than academic. Few tertiary level colleges or universities offer such courses but Mary found she was able to take the level 2 NVQ she needed at South Bank University.

Most students take between 18 months to 2 years to complete this particular course, which is based on research and recorded in portfolio of evidence throughout the course. The criteria for the research are worded very academically and the organisation and recording evidence from research in the portfolio requires numerical and alphabetical sequencing of sheets to be completed. When Dorcas became the assessor for this course, most of Mary's group were well on their way to completing their portfolios. Mary, however, had barely completed a third of the required assignments and her portfolio had no logical organisation. Students are supposed to keep control of their portfolios, but as Dorcas could not go to Mary's place of work, because some of it was carried out on locked wards, or visit her at home, the only way she could try to solve Mary's problems was to take away the portfolio to study. Dorcas then spent time talking with Mary to discover her learning strategies.

Dyslexia takes a variety of forms, a combination of abilities and difficulties, in some cases involving literacy skills or visual difficulties, in others organisational and sequencing skills. Short term memory is often a problem and this makes organising and sequencing events in a logical, structured way difficult. This is because visual memory is needed to sequence effectively. There are two forms of visual memory, visual static memory, which can be likened to a snapshot and visual dynamic memory, which is more like a narrative/story of an event, situation etc. Many dyslexics do not have a good visual dynamic memory and while they do have visual static memory and are able to memorise their “snapshots” if they are in the right order, problems arise if the sequence of “snapshots” is disturbed. A dyslexic person would have great difficulty putting the sequence back in the right order.

The NVQ course involves organising a detailed portfolio of evidence documents using numerical and alphabetical sequencing and this was causing Mary extreme difficulty. Although she had been diagnosed as dyslexic at school her statement did not explain her specific problems so school had been a very frustrating experience for her and this was being repeated in her NVQ course. One concession made for students with dyslexia is to extend their coursework and /or exam time but this is useless if the student has no idea what works for him/her.

Having spent time examining Mary’s portfolio and talking with her, Dorcas developed three coping strategies. First she broke down the chunks of evidence required into tiny portions that Mary would find manageable. Then she took away the numbers and letters from the portfolio documents and replaced them with differently shaped bullet points. Thirdly she used tape recordings of Mary’s verbal answers to questions and it was clear to us as we listened to the fluent responses Mary gave that this was an intelligent and articulate student who knew the material she had been studying.

Having begun her NVQ level 2 course in 2011, Mary finally completed and passed it successfully in 2014. She then immediately started the level 3 course and completed that in one year. She has now enrolled for the level 4 course in September of this year. Not only has Mary’s self-esteem improved but she has also been promoted at work. Her message to educators is that it is a misconception to think that dyslexia is chiefly a problem of literacy. The main problem dyslexics experience is the difficulty in storing, sequencing and processing information. This article was written following a talk to Alpha Chapter by Dorcas Rogers about her study of a dyslexic student, a shortened version of which she presented at the Regional Conference in Boras.

HOW TO BE READY FOR OFSTED

Our planned joint Alpha/Gamma meeting on 21st November at the Soroptimist headquarters in Lancaster Gate was plagued with last minute problems and disappointments. Our advertised speaker was unable to attend and several members, for a variety of reasons, were unable to join us. Fortunately we were able to find two excellent speakers and everyone who attended agreed it was a stimulating, informative and very enjoyable occasion.

Joan welcomed the first speaker of the meeting, Claire Purcell, and thanked her for agreeing at very short notice to talk on the same topic as our originally advertised speaker.

OFSTED Ready Every Day

Claire began by explaining that her educational experience had always seemed to be as a 'first'. At school she had been in the first year group to take the GCSE exam. Having graduated and taken up her first teaching post, her school was one of the first to go through an OFSTED inspection in 1996 and from then on she has grown up with OFSTED in all its changing forms throughout her teaching career. To date she has experienced 5 OFSTEDs, plus a subject OFSTED and a 'MOCKSTED'.

That first OFSTED in February 1996 was very different from the kind of inspection that schools experience today. The school was given at least two weeks' notice of the event and she remembers spending the whole of half term in school preparing displays and making sure all aspects of marking, recording and other paperwork were up to date. During the week-long inspection the inspectors spent a great deal of time observing teaching and Claire's lessons were observed on numerous occasions. There was not the heavy emphasis on analysis and data that occurs now but the personal effect of the in depth inspection was certainly an important issue and Claire remembers that after that OFSTED one teacher left.

In September 1996 Claire joined Dulwich Hamlet Juniors only to find that an OFSTED inspection was taking place there in October, her second within the space of a year!

When Claire's third OFSTED took place in 2000 the categories 'outstanding, good, satisfactory and notice to improve' had been introduced and notice of an impending inspection was reduced to just two days. To their delight Dulwich Hamlet was accorded an 'outstanding' grade. For this reason five years went by before the next inspection, Claire's 4th, took place. The school was aware another inspection was due, the pressure to maintain their grade was intense and they had been working towards it for some time. When they learned they had again achieved 'outstanding', this time with all grade 1 levels it was a very exciting, happy and emotional time for everyone.

By the time the next OFSTED took place at the school in 2008 there was a very different atmosphere. A new head had been appointed in 2007, there was a different senior leadership team and the changes in the structure of an OFSTED itself gave the inspection time and process a very different feel. Only two inspectors arrived, and only for two days. All the school's online documents were locked down when notice of the inspection was given and Raise Online did not allow access to the evidence of their level 6 teacher assessments, although they were able to use their internal documentation. Now, rather than an emphasis on observing lessons, the inspectors concentrated on studying data and the online self-evaluation form with the senior management team, an approach which left some of the staff feeling excluded from the process. They did, however, receive an 'outstanding' grade for the third consecutive time.

The school then also volunteered to undergo a subject inspection for Music when the local authority was being inspected. Although it was felt that maybe the inspector had a specific agenda about music provision at Key Stage 2 which Dulwich Hamlet did not necessarily fit, nevertheless they received positive feedback that was encouraging, and the process itself was useful as an opportunity for self-reflection and continual improvement.

The demands of OFSTED continued to change, and as time continued to pass from the 2008 inspection, the school wondered how they would fare, so a 'Mocksted' was commissioned, to support the ongoing process of school improvement. They allowed preparation time so a whole school audit could take place to enable them to focus on getting things done. The Core Leadership Team concentrated on:

- What were the questions that needed to be asked?
- Could they be answered satisfactorily?
- Where could the information required be found?

A team of three local authority inspectors carried out the inspection with one joining a member of the school's leadership team at each observation. For Claire the first day of that inspection was the worst day in school she has ever spent, with all three of the emergency services being called for three different reasons! An overall grade was not specifically given, but it was clear that there were key areas of work that the school needed to focus on, for example, children's books not giving sufficient evidence, therefore not always reflecting the excellent progress that was clearly being made.

Moving forward, The School Development Plan is now planned according to the four areas on which an OFSTED inspection concentrates:

- Effectiveness of Leadership and Management
- Quality of Teaching, Learning and Assessment
- Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare
- Outcomes for Children and Learners.

The creation of this document is a thorough collaborative process and appraisal is linked closely to the targets/areas for development set for the year ahead.

Safeguarding continues to be absolutely paramount as part of an OFSTED, with the school environment and curriculum demonstrating values such as respect, tolerance, democracy etc... following the National Agenda.

The Common Inspection Framework which was new this September applies to all schools including academies and free schools and Claire recommended the following to any school preparing for or reviewing their readiness for an inspection:

- The School Inspection Handbook, section 5, published August 2015 which deals with full inspections.
- The importance of the role of School Governors, poor governance can fail a school now so all governors need to have up to date training for their responsibilities. The emphases are Progress, Impact, Culture of Ambition and Safeguarding.
- Although there is no longer a self-evaluation form, Claire's school finds it valuable to have their own version of a SEF.
- Assessments have changed from "levels" so, although there is limited information yet, be confident with your own assessment systems, trust your judgements and be prepared to deal with these changes as soon as they are known.

By involving everyone and breaking down the review of all aspects of school performance into manageable areas that can be reviewed and updated at regular intervals Claire said that the school feels confident that they will be ready if and when the OFSTED phone call comes.

Diana thanked Claire for her very clear and comprehensive presentation, managing to make a difficult and potentially dry subject fascinating and enjoyable and presented her with a bouquet from members.

Joan Carroll (Alpha Chapter)

*Photo by Lavinia
Soul*



ALPHA CHAPTER REPORT SPRING 2016

Alpha Chapter had enjoyed a varied programme. In September member Dorcas Rogers spoke on 'Succeeding against the odds with dyslexia – a student's success story' about her experience working with a student who was taking an NVQ 'vocational' course in mental health care. Her form of dyslexia meant she had major problems with her 'visual memory' and so creating the sequenced portfolio of her work was a major problem. Dorcas worked with her on specific strategies and she is now making excellent progress taking further NVQ. Thanks to Dorcas for hosting the meeting in her house. (*Ed: see full report on Page 11*)

In October we had continued our Art and Craft themed outings with a visit to the Red House, Bexleyheath, the home of William Morris which was designed for him by Philip Webb. A fascinating tour of the house and grounds was given by an excellent guide who described the history of the house and the development of the Art and Craft movement. After the extensive tour we enjoyed a lunch in the NT cafe.

In November we enjoyed a joint meeting with Gamma Chapter at the Soroptimists HQ in London. In the event, as the advertised speaker was unable to come, chapter members Claire Purcell and Liz Day both stepped in. Claire spoke about her Ofsted experiences - see the piece by Joan Carroll (*Ed: see Page 13*). I never thought that a talk about Ofsted would be so interesting.

After a light lunch Liz followed on a lighter note telling us about the University of the Third Age, for the retired and semi-retired. She showed a short film about the U3A. It is a way of being social and stimulated, keeping the mind and body active as we get older. In some cases U3A has links to help with university research. Several of our DKG members enjoy a variety of U3A activities and courses.

For our Christmas meeting this year some members visited the Guildhall in London which is an iconic City of London venue showing the heritage of the City of London Corporation and art collection. The Guildhall, the powerhouse of the City of London, is the City's only secular mediaeval building, and there has been a guildhall or tax office on the site since the 13th century. This one was built between 1411 and 1440, designed to reflect the importance of London's ruling elite. In the twenty-first century its splendour is still awe-inspiring. The centrepiece is the Great Hall, with mediaeval crypts below. Further below that are the remains underneath, of the Roman amphitheatre which you can go and visit. Afterwards we enjoyed a festive pub lunch!

Future meetings

23 January	Dulwich Hamlet Junior School
20 February	Visit to Leighton House
19 March	DHJS Symposium – Teaching Today
08-10 April	Annual Conference at Eastbourne
21 May	Visit to Bletchley Park or Olympic park walk + lunch/tea
18 June	Speaker/Visit to Nordoff Robbins (Music Therapy) + business meeting?
1st Week July	Visit to Royal Society Science Exhibition
16 July	Visit to historic Harwich

Barbara Kern (Alpha Chapter President)

BETA CHAPTER REPORT SPRING 2016

As a Chapter, we have been both shaken and stirred this year: Loetitia's death has hit us all hard. The closure of the Shout It Out Learning Project and the consequent effect of relationship with the University has us treading water until (and if) another pathway can be discovered.

However, despite individuals struggling with health issues, we had an outing to Cotehele, with its magnificent winter garland and historic oak panels.



Items on our Agenda have included membership and recruitment issues, and interest arising from the report that the DKG song had *not* been sung at the end of a formal occasion – the start of a 'bottom-up' initiative?

Jess Curtis (*Beta Chapter President*)

GAMMA CHAPTER REPORT SPRING 2016

Lively and informative talks have been well received by our group. Unity Harvey, a member of Alpha Chapter, imparted so much knowledge to us with her personal biography of living with bees. I think we all went away with a greater awareness of their enormous importance to us. Unity's concerns for the future really made us think and we were very grateful for the dialogue with her.

Anna Astin's well researched talks on Women in the First and Second World Wars gave us a real insight into the power of women in adversity and the enormous contribution they made to keep everything going throughout the Wars. We can be very proud and inspired by their efforts and determination to make changes for the future.

Jean Brushfield wove her personal journey into her talk "Darcy's Story" and kept us spellbound with interest. She was generous with her anecdotes and interpretation of the story and would have made an excellent teacher! Anna's second talk, looking at the role of women in the First World War, was as fascinating as her first.

We look forward to 2016, starting with Sue Ashworth, a well known cookery writer. She was delighted to be asked to speak as she has written and demonstrated for many years but has never given a talk about her experiences before. Visitors have all mentioned the friendly welcome they have received and the warm atmosphere created in the study room at Beechwood School. We hope that at some point one or two of them will join us. With regard to membership Sheila and Marian have come up with some good ideas including an advertisement in a local paper. Personally I have been very grateful for the team work approach of DKG. I always feel that our meetings are too short as we do so enjoy being together and have so much to talk about!

Liz Malik (*Gamma Chapter President*)

(Reports on the talks mentioned above by Liz follow: Editor)

IT'S YOUR DUTY TO BE BEAUTIFUL!

On 12 September, Gamma Chapter had a follow-up to our earlier visit to the Imperial War Museum entitled 'Fashion on the Ration', with a talk by Anna Astin. Anna reflected on the strength of the wonderful women who were encouraged to inspire 'Morale, Health and Beauty' whilst their men were away during the Second World War. Anna demonstrated how the women were working hard in factories, crawling inside filthy machines, working on the railways, cutting pit props, and climbing inside planes. 80,000 women joined the Land Army to provide for our country short of food and blocked from supplies overseas. Special green uniforms were designed by Lady Reading, badges displayed, and when the war was over Land Girls were rewarded with medals. Valuable work continued with the WVS, WRP, WI and the Ambulance Service, covering the absence of their menfolk. Mothers were very concerned about their children, many had been evacuated far away from their own homes, but the Government of the day considered women's war work vital.

Anna displayed pictures of famous actresses, by which the Government wanted role models to demonstrate how **every** woman could 'Display her beauty' and 'Show the lift of a chin'. Posters displayed Betty Grable, Greer Garson, Vera Lynn who had songs to lift the spirit, and Veronica Lake (even though her long hair would obviously entail a fire risk!). In spite of this encouragement about how to remember famous faces, our members were reminded of the difficulties of keeping one's hair washed frequently, relying on Home Perms, Vaseline and Turtle Soap which were not quite the same. Women were constantly urged to remember that 'Driving through blitzes will not spoil your beauty!' Anna had assembled a vast collection of magazines, posters and pamphlets, some even advertising products still used today: Ponds, Yardley, Elizabeth Arden, Eau de Cologne, Clarks, Lotus, Barratt and Berlei, but remember you could draw a fake tan and hope lisle or silk stockings from the American soldiers would cheer you up. Women were required to keep positive: 'Keep fit for a wartime job', and asked, 'Do your nerves stay up when you go to sleep?' and then 'Whistle a happy song'. Many of us remembered the sacrifices of our mothers and grandmothers who unpicked their own woollen jumpers to clothe their youngsters. In 1941 Utility Standard materials were only available to mix and match certain coloured clothes; everyone had to carry a bag with a gas mask. The Black Market helped some to make clothes with military material, and styles were repeated over and over again.

Ros Price thanked Anna for a most interesting morning and presented her with a gift.

Mary Wardrop (*Gamma Chapter*)



In the first picture, Chapter President, Liz, welcomes Pat Johnson as a new member of Gamma Chapter, presenting her with a red rose.

In the second, Ros thanks Anna, and presents her with a gift.

THE WORLD OF BEES

At Gamma Chapter`s meeting on 3 October, we were pleased to welcome Unity Harvey from Alpha Chapter to talk to us about bees. Her expertise and her enthusiasm in following her own father and grandfather as beekeepers led to her observation of a beehive in her bedroom as a child. Collecting books and demonstrating the variety of colours in pollens, keeping the history of the swarms and visiting shows prepared Unity and her father for a lifetime with bees. Unity had brought most interesting material with her, leaflets from the British Beekeepers Association, a wonderful large coloured picture of a bee and boxes she had prepared in advance to demonstrate a frame to keep the bees in separate compartments.

As Unity explained, honey bees are important pollinators and nobody knows when bees start to fly, but beekeepers nurture the bees along, and when the first sunny day in April arrives, he/she will look carefully at the colony. May is a good time to check again. Honey bees generally swarm in the Spring and early Summer although swarms can occur right into the Autumn. A queen works well producing larva but she needs to be replaced after two years. Swarms are nature`s way of colony reproduction. Half the bees and the old queen leave the hive to search for a new home. Thank you, Unity, we have all gone out to find the best honey and wax for polish.

Mary Wardrop (*Gamma Chapter*)

DARCY AND THE ACCIDENTAL AUTHOR

The speaker at Gamma Chapter`s meeting on 7 November was Jean Brushfield. She gave a talk entitled `Darcy and the Accidental Author`, and then explained how she became an `accidental author`. She was a `property professor` and chartered surveyor In Local Government. One day, whilst discussing with her daughter, Rachel, `Pride and Prejudice`, and realising how little information was given about Mr Darcy, she decided to write her own version. She had not written fiction since leaving school. After writing the story and getting it printed (a short run at first just 2,000 copies) Jean faced the difficult task of getting publishers to take it. Her first copies were sold out in six weeks. Following that Pitman Press printed 5,000 copies: it was a great success. Harper Collins then approached her wanting to buy the American Rights. She was asked to write a sequel but was not keen, and suggested she would write a Regency novel about the Maitland family. These sold fairly well, and she continued to write six books on the Regency theme. Jean said that short stories were now more popular, and much easier to get published. She has written two chapters, `Dialogue with Darcy`, which can be accessed on a Kindle.

The vote of thanks was given to Jean by Ros Price.

Evelyn Goodsell (*Gamma Chapter*)



WOMEN OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A previous talk by our guest speaker, Anna Austin, entitled 'It's your duty to look beautiful' explored the role of women in the Second World War. This had been greatly enjoyed by our members, and a number were looking forward to learning more as they took their seats for another illustrated talk – so no pressure then, Anna!

The title of the talk was 'The Women of the First World War', a look at the role of women in this period, which has been described as bringing about the greatest change ever in the status of women! Like any good teacher, Anna prefaced her talk by briefly reminding her audience of the events leading up to the outbreak of the First World War. At the same time, she remained fully cognizant of there being little need to stress, or even mention, some aspects given the recent media coverage during the Centenary Commemoration of the start of the 'Great War'. Following her introduction, Anna presented via PowerPoint, an interesting selection of posters from the period. These vividly illustrated the efforts made by the government to emphasise the strategic importance of the role of women to the war effort. We learnt the posters were specifically designed to encourage women to support their menfolk to fulfil their patriotic duty by enlisting. As the war progressed and losses mounted, the government resorted to more overt forms of what would now be regarded as 'moral blackmail', to recruit more men for the front line. Poster campaigns played on the shame of cowardice with young women urged to ask searching questions of civilian boyfriends: 'Don't you love your country?' 'Wouldn't you fight for me?' Following a similar vein were posters depicting young children asking their father: 'What did you do in the war, Daddy?' It was pointed out that the colour yellow was used in posters such as these to symbolise desirable 'behaviour'.

The techniques were so effective that it resulted in women approaching 'shirkers' in the street and presenting them with white feathers. Young men were also taunted by urchins - 'Afraid to join up, then?' Interestingly, an unintended consequence of this campaign was to demoralise those men working in vital war industries to such an extent that the government was forced to issue them with special 'yellow' badges.

As the war progressed, the country was faced with a huge shortage of labour and employers increasingly turned to women to fill vacancies. It was not long before women were undertaking work previously regarded as the preserve of skilled men. This change brought unexpected benefits. Women's view of themselves underwent a sudden transition as they realised they were neither as fragile or helpless as they thought, or had been led to believe. They acquired a new self confidence and independence of spirit. Clothes became more practical. Some young women, especially those working in factories or on the land, began to wear trousers. Dresses started to be designed by more active wear and skirts became shorter, although still very long by the standards of today. Anna's talk was a tour de force. It was far ranging, interspersed with anecdotes, stimulating and informative with a nicely judged touch of humour. I am sure that had I asked those present to give a single word verdict, it would have been 'brilliant'.

Rosalind Price (*Gamma Chapter*)

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