



INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KEY WOMEN EDUCATORS
DELTA KAPPA GAMMA™

GB News in Brief

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The European Forum Conference Edition

DKG EUROPEAN FORUM CONFERENCE



Brighton 2025



After all the months of hard work, worry, effort and masses of meetings, we did it and it was a great success. The weather was fine, it only rained in the night or early morning. The location was lovely, perhaps a bit too hilly for some of us older ones, but the extra exercise counter balanced the effect of the generous and tempting food provided by the caterers.

The speakers were all so good and the workshops were excellent. It was difficult to choose among the wide range of topics available. And then there was the entertain-

ment! Friday night was a hoot. A warm sunny evening, a very good barbeque and a bar while we watched the colourful and lively team of female Morris dancers perform old English folk



dances and sing folk songs. They were followed by a kilted Scotsman who persuaded so many of us to work off the

effects of burgers, hot dogs and wine as he taught us

Scottish dancing. He was very effective as he called out the steps but inevitably not everything went according to plan and sometimes some of the dancers lost track of their partners. When this happened to the caller himself, an enthusiastic member of the audience called out "Wait, I'm coming!" and rushed to partner him. A charming kilted Scotsman can



always attract females. The evening ended with music from the Cajón drums and other instruments while we all joined in singing well known folk and pop songs.



On Saturday evening the Grand Dinner was held. This also had excellent musical accompaniment from the first class Blue Café Jazz trio who played and sang throughout the meal. Later there was a challenging general knowledge quiz via Zoom and finally a raffle with an enormous number of prizes. Throughout the whole weekend we held fundraising sales of handbags, scarves, greeting cards etc. and many members took a turn at manning the stalls and testing their salesmanship skills. We succeeded in selling not only to DKG members but to students attending other courses at Sussex that weekend.

Personally, what I think I enjoyed most was meeting so many old friends, some of whom I hadn't met for a very long time. The whole weekend was stimulating and buzzing with so much choice and variety of subjects on the conference theme of "Education and Wellbeing". The atmosphere was summed up by a new member of DKG who, when asked if she was enjoying the conference, said "Everyone is so friendly, and not judgemental!". Yes, a great conference and a lot of fun. Thank you to all of those who worked so hard to produce it.

Joan Carroll. Joan is pictured right of Eija Liisa Sokka Meaney.



Cajón drums and workshop

Despite having only a small band of dedicated workers to organise it, the 2025 DKG European Forum Conference went very well. Everyone on the team fulfilled their roles effectively and with good humour.



Among the many activities, my particular highlight was the drumming workshop. Participants sat on a decorated cuboid Cajón (Peruvian) drum. The workshop leader, Peter Derksen, led us into a range of rhythms accompanied by a mix of music from Michael Jackson to Brazil 66. He kept us alert by varying the direction of his conducting.

I think we probably overran our room time because we wanted to keep going. That session was a delight especially for those of us who can't keep time or sing in tune. I didn't disgrace myself!

Sandra Blacker



For me, one of the highlights of our Brighton conference was a lively percussion workshop led by Peter Derksen and Chris de Jong from the Netherlands - husbands of two of our DKG members. Participants had the opportunity to learn to play the Cajón (box drum) and other street percussion instruments in a most enjoyable way.

Each Cajón was handmade by Peter, who also regularly takes his Ritmeworkshop into Dutch schools.

After learning basic techniques, we performed together to recorded music, transforming our group into a wonderful, rhythmic ensemble.

Thanks to Peter and Chris for sharing their talents - and their rhythms—with us.

Aileen Dickson



Joining DKG and attending the first EF Conference

I was delighted to meet up again with Eija Liisa Sokka Meaney, whom I met through a mutual friend. I was staying in Finland over Christmas last year and we were invited to Eija Liisa and Ken's for Christmas Eve dinner. It was there that she told me about DKG. She was so enthusiastic about the organisation, that I thought I should find out some more. The women all seemed extremely high-powered, but I contacted Diana anyway (who I believe had been alerted by Eija Liisa). Diana reassured me that DKG welcomes people from all branches of education, so I asked if I may join and am so glad that I did. I met some wonderful and extraordinary people at the conference. It was truly uplifting and inspiring. Now, I'm looking forward to taking part in activities and helping where I can. It is just a little puzzling that I have not heard of DKG before!

Thank you again, Diana.

Sarah Saward.

Sarah is pictured centre right.



Attending the EF Conference



I was so disappointed I could not take part in the Conference - first time in 36 years, but so pleased Mandy (my daughter) was able to bring me down on the Saturday and I was able to catch up with all the friends (far and wide) I have known all the years.

The talks were inspiring - especially the 'Five Chairs'. The whole day was a perfect example of how efficiently you organise and run events!! We are very proud of you and I feel sure the rest of the Conference went just as well.

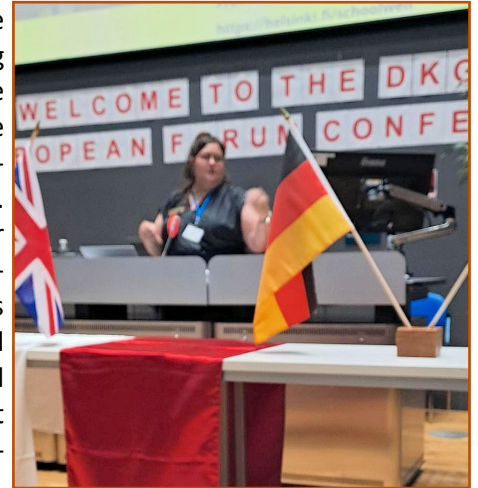
I enjoyed being served with my dinner!!!! It was good to meet the new International President - we had quite a chat.

Hope to see you all soon.

Evie Goodsell

Jenni Korte : Are we creators of happiness or unhappiness in School?

Jenni Korte's presentation on (un)happiness in the classroom must have struck a chord with many who heard her. The focus on students' well-being while in school is obvious but so often apparently neglected. Whilst she talked about developing entrepreneurial skills and giving her students the opportunity and encouragement to experiment and possibly fail in a supportive environment, this model is appropriate across the whole curriculum. Sadly, in the environments where I have worked, the overwhelming driver has been achieving results and pressure from SLT. We couldn't give our students the space or time they would have benefited from; they felt the stress we were under. Stepping back and demonstrating our belief in them would help students no end and when I moved from classroom teaching to Special needs, we tried to foster this in the young people we worked with. It might create a virtuous circle if we could only follow or adapt some of this and possibly stem the growing mental health crisis in educational establishments.



Sarah Saward

DKG European Forum Conference – University of Sussex Campus. Trapped!

Let me set the scene. Our sleeping accommodation was organised into several separate blocks. The front entrance to each was activated by a key card, which also allowed access to the main door of the 'flat' and to each individual en-suite room. Only people with a key card could enter through these various doors.

Against my better judgement, at the end of two, very long days, I was persuaded to join Ronnie and Carole for coffee in the 'common room' of Carole's 'flat'. For those of you of a certain vintage, your brain may be combining these two names to create a 1960s singer... anyway, I digress.

On the second of these two nights, I finally made my escape, knowing that I had at least an hour's work on the conference finance before I could go to bed; I was keen to report on the following morning, the fabulous amount of money we had made on three enterprises.

Ronnie and I left Carole's flat, Ronnie walked up the stairs to her flat, and I was left in the lobby area to let myself out of the block. Now, although it isn't possible to enter a block that isn't one's own – no key card, you see – getting out isn't a problem ... at least, it hadn't been on the previous night.

As before, I pressed the release button beside the door; as before a green light flashed, followed by a click; unlike before, the door refused to budge. Oh, I thought, I couldn't have pulled hard enough, so I tried again. And again. And again!

Simple, I thought – I'll just ring Carole, and she will come back out and assist me – no reply. Oh well, I will ring Ronnie – she'll have to come down several flights of stairs late at night, but I'm sure she won't mind helping me out of my predicament – straight to voicemail. All this time, I was continuing to press the button, receiving a green flashing light and a satisfying click, but the door was still obstinately refusing to submit.

Every other door within the university had a sign on the adjacent wall, listing a myriad of people and numbers to contact in an emergency – not this one. Just a number for the fire brigade – 3333, weirdly. Unfortunately, having just attended the final banquet, dressed suitably for this prestigious event, I had taken my newest and smallest handbag containing phone, glasses and not much else – so no helpful booklet, lovingly created by Diana, listing all sorts of helpful information, most importantly at this moment being that of the number of the 24 hour reception.

I began to consider the option of bedding down for the night, but soft surfaces were unavailable – it was a university campus, after all. All of this time, the bell pushing, light flashing and door clicking continued – and panic began to set in. I rang Carole one more time and was just losing heart when she finally replied with the immortal words: "I'll just put my nightdress on and come out"!

True to her word, Carole arrived – fortunately covered up – and lent her wisdom to the problem. Inexplicably, after only a further half dozen attempts, the door released me into the fresh, early morning air – very relieved and extremely tired. Thank you, Carole!

Kathrin Hodgson

Kathy being thanked for all her hard work by Diana Bell; Carola van Zanen-van Rijn, Chair of the EF, looks on from behind.



How (and Why) to Train Your Doctor

Dr. Diane Bell's topic of how to train your doctor brought to my mind the title of the recently re-released film "How to Train Your Dragon". Sometimes an appointment with a doctor, whether at a G.P.'s surgery or a hospital, can leave one daunted and frustrated, feeling the consultation has been impersonal, you have not been understood and still have unanswered questions.

Dr. Bell explained that this dissatisfaction can be overcome by understanding 3 key factors:

WHY it happens.

HOW the experience can be improved.

WHAT the patient needs to do to achieve this improvement.

HEALTHCARE involves Diagnosis, Prescription and Procedure from the doctor's point of view.

From the patient's standpoint though there are also the **WELLBEING** aspects, the Purpose of asking for help with a health problem and the Energy and Emotion involved in the process of trying to get that help.

A consultation with a doctor is often a brief experience, sometimes as little as 10 minutes, unlikely to be more than 30 minutes. Under such time pressure, although the doctor may be **LISTENING** to the patient, he/she may not be **HEARING** what is being said. This can result in a prescription being given without consideration of what else is affecting the patient, the Wellbeing aspects of Healthcare.

The outcome can be improved for the patient by developing what Dr. Bell termed "Health Literacy", that is speaking the doctor's language.

1. In response to a doctor's opening question, "What's the problem?" the patient's best answer would be "I am not functioning as well as I should be." "**Function/Functioning**" are trigger words in the medical vocabulary and would gain attention.
2. When a doctor is giving advice a good patient question is "What should I be focusing on?"
3. If a doctor uses a lot of medical terminology when discussing the patient's treatment, a good request would be "Can you explain that in everyday terms?"
4. Before the end of the consultation, to clarify what is being advised, it may be helpful for the patient to ask, "What is the most important thing I can do now?"

Dr. Bell recommended that what any patient needs to do is what she termed "**Patient Activation**".

This involves:

1. Building their knowledge about their health issues.
2. Building their skills for self-management.
3. Improved knowledge and skills would boost a patient's confidence. This would help the patient ensure decisions made about treatment would be the best for the patient, not just the doctor. A doctor needs to know how the symptoms of a health issue make a patient feel and what the effects and the effectiveness of a prescribed medication have been.
4. A recommendation was for a patient to make a Wellbeing snapshot for the doctor. This involves a patient collecting data on a daily basis of the top 3 concerns about his/her health and the effect they have. It may perhaps be their blood pressure, their circulation, their blood sugar levels. This information would form a 1 minute summary of how these issues affect the patient on a daily basis.

Dr. Bell believes that these actions would help patients understand what they can actually do to help themselves, what they should aim for and if those goals are realistic. With this knowledge and confidence, patients can hope for a better outcome from consultations. We are all individuals, there is no one answer that suits everybody.

Dr. Bell ended her talk with this quotation:

"The good physician treats the disease. The great physician treats the patient who has the disease."

I think that is something for everyone to remember next time they enter a doctor's consulting room.

Joan Carroll

Joan is pictured right with **Marika Heimbach**, who was presented during the Grand Dinner with the **European Achievement Award**.



Take Care of your Body and Soul

This fun workshop was led by Jacqueline van Meeteren from the Netherlands. We were first asked to think about "How we care for our body" and write it on a post-it note which was stuck on a board. Then we shared what we had written – exercising, eating well, getting enough sleep, relaxing, gardening, walking, etc. Then we were asked to think about "How we care for our soul" and this we also wrote down and stuck on the board. Contributions ranged from socialising with friends, being with family, holidays, taking up new hobbies, reading, etc. Interestingly, there were overlaps with some of the contributions in both categories and many of us came up with the same or similar suggestions.



Jacqueline then introduced us to **CAPOEIRA**

Capoeira is a unique Afro-Brazilian art form that combines elements of martial arts, dance, music, and acrobatics, originating from the struggles of enslaved Africans in Brazil. Though often said to be a martial art disguised as a dance, capoeira served not only as a form of self defence, but also as a way to maintain spirituality and culture. It is known for its acrobatic and complex manoeuvres, often involving hands on the ground and inverted kicks. It emphasizes flowing movements rather than fixed stances; the ginga, a rocking step, is usually the focal point of the technique.

Capoeira traces its roots back to the 16th century during Brazil's colonial era. It was developed by enslaved Africans as a means of resistance against oppression. Disguised as a dance, capoeira allowed practitioners to prepare physically and mentally for confrontations while appearing to engage in harmless activity.

Participants, known as capoeiristas, engage in a game called "jogo," where they perform these movements in a circle, accompanied by traditional music played on instruments like the berimbau. The practice emphasises agility, flexibility, and strategy over brute strength, making it accessible to individuals of all ages and fitness levels.

Jacqueline demonstrated the *ginga* -pronounced *jeen-gah* (literally rocking back and forth - to swing) which is the fundamental footwork of capoeira. Then we all had a go at practising the move. Great fun, some achieving better moves than others but producing lots of laughter. Two more moves were demonstrated and we had to try and combine them into the dance. Mayhem almost ensued.

Capoeira is definitely good for both body and soul!

Penny Kinnear. Penny is pictured adding white roses during the Celebration of Life Ceremony.



Some thoughts on the days of the EF Conference

Getting to know people better and making new contacts was an unexpectedly positive part of the weekend for me.

Travelling down with Kathy and Carole, finding our way around the campus (why did that seem so difficult at first), THE STEPS!!, scarves, bags, raffles, talks and 5 chairs.

Giraffe? - working towards. (The giraffe is on the fifth chair that we are aiming to be like).

Fortunately, we managed to find the lifts which negated the use of the steps.

Kathy and I became a bit OCD about neatly folding the scarves and arranging them in size and texture. An unexpected bonus was that the DKG ladies took them out to buy and if not, folded them up again and replaced as found - so well trained!



Didn't everyone go home with a handbag? I know that I did.

Carole and I shared a table and laughter during the quiz with American, Dutch and Estonian members. The quiz was fun - Well done Kathy's table. My raffle tickets didn't come up, but the draw pleased a lot of people.

At the end of the day Kathy, Carole and I went back for tea or wine and then to bed by midnight.

I'm so glad that I gave them such joy as they imagined me lying on my bed with my legs in the air, trying to stop my ankles swelling. Lord knows what they would have been like without the movement sessions and dancing. Those paper plates proved to be a godsend Diana.

Ronnie Wagstaff. Ronnie is pictured with Sandra Blacker left, on the right are Carole Stirling and Kathy Hodgson.

The Conference Campus at Brighton

It was quite an adventure finding the University of Sussex Site from Brighton Station as the bus stop was so far away, but I did see some non-tourist parts of the town.

The route became green around the university and luckily the bus stopped adjacent to our hall of residence. The university is designed for disabled people; the buildings and associated outside activity areas on the campus stand on the slope amongst trees, shrubs and grassy areas which incorporate access steps, slopes and even nearby lifts where necessary.

A very friendly receptionist showed me to a flat with a large kitchen, a study room and 6 small ensuite bedrooms plus two larger ones for disabled people. I had one of these. All connecting doors in the campus are push button fire doors, with only one or two main ones being automatic. They are so slow and tried my patience, especially the one to and from my bathroom.

I do not think the university has had a disabled person like me before – I am very deaf without my hearing aids and must not get water in my ears. The hand basin was miniscule with a central tap and a tiny shelf directly above it. Luckily I did not need to wash my hair – there was no surface for a bowl but I could have used the kitchen sink. The shower control did not show which way to turn for the flexible hose or tiny over-head spout in the wall. My head got wet but I retreated in time... (I find a bath with hand rails better than a shower)- flexible hoses having a will of their own.)

I fared better with the deafness problem as I was immediately given a device with a vibrator to go under the pillow which tuned into the university fire-alarm system. Unfortunately the tiny flashing green light on the base prevented me from sleeping. Maybe I would have got used to it. Vibrators have not woken me in the past. Normally I sleep through alarm clocks, even those with large flashing lights. Light and deep sleep have different effects. Next morning I slept through six telephone calls and much hammering on my door. Then from the university staff genuine efforts to help and after some negotiation, what I wanted became available - a spare key to my room for a friend to wake me when necessary. (At home I try to keep to a wake-time routine and on occasions, opening my curtains wide all night for the day light can help, but is not guaranteed to work ...)

The walking distances between the residential, conference and catering buildings was manageable even though I use a walking stick. I found the interior of the conference building excellent. There was plenty of space in the entrance hall where our stalls were erected, even a sizable adjacent area which we used for light refreshments – ample toilets were discretely situated. The close-by corridors and lecture/workshop rooms were large and well equipped.

The large lecture theatre on the opposite side of the hall-way was a treat; the many rows of seats a surprise, and for me, a little formidable with no handrails. Fortunately I found a lift from the hallway which went down to an entrance door by the stage. There was plenty of room here for guests, speakers and/or timekeepers. (I did not notice a communal clock; seemingly everyone relies on mobile phones for the time now.)

The building for main meals had a restaurant, a shop for self-catering and a banqueting suite. The food for the conference was good, certainly sufficient, but the banquet food was obviously tempered by the need to keep costs as low as possible. I found the acoustics in the banqueting hall the best I have ever found. In fact they were good everywhere.

In all, I found the University of Sussex an excellent place for a conference and would certainly recommend it.

Unity Harvey.

Unity, with her red card, is pictured with her fellow time-keeper Lavinia Soul.



Music at our Grand Banquet



We were delighted to be entertained by the 'Brighton based' Blue Café Jazz Trio, during the evening.

Singer and harpist, Magdalena Reising, guitarist, Shane Hill, and pianist Terry Seabrook, provided a beautiful background of jazz, enjoyed by all.

Aileen Dickson

Aileen is pictured right with Magdalena, a former pupil of hers.



Writing for the DKG Bulletin

I want to thank you for a marvellous conference last month in Brighton. I can honestly say it was the best DKG event I have ever been to. The combination of solid presentations, getting to present a workshop on a topic quite dear to my heart and having such fun at the Scottish country dancing just made it all so special. For me as a foreign language teacher, it was thrilling to hear so many other languages going on around me, and I so appreciate the kind ladies from Germany who "let" me practice my German and Spanish!

I returned recently from the European Forum Conference at the University of Sussex in Brighton, UK. I would like to repeat my thanks to the (DKG Washington State) Stipend & Scholarship Committee for their generous financial help. Guest speakers, workshops and general sessions were very well planned and presented. Most participants stayed in university accommodation, and ate in the excellent Eat Central. The social activities showcased "the Best of British": a performance of Morris Dancing, a folk-music sing-along, a pub-style quiz and participatory Scottish dancing!



Ladies: as requested in Brighton, I am providing some general guidelines and suggested topics for possible submissions by you to the *DKG Bulletin*.

The time frames. The *DKG Bulletin* is produced five times a year, as follows:

Publication type:	Issue number:	Submission deadline:	Publication date:
<i>Journal</i>	Volume ## -1	May 15	September
<i>Magazine</i>	Volume ## -2	August 1	November
<i>Journal</i>	Volume ## -3	October 1	February
<i>Magazine</i>	Volume ## -4	December 15	April
<i>Journal</i>	Volume ## -5	March 1	mid-summer

The time lag between submission deadline and publication date is due to the following considerations:

1. 3 - 4 weeks for the editor and her board to review and evaluate all submissions.
2. 3 - 4 weeks for authors to make any needed revisions.
3. One month for layout and graphic design by HQ staff, and printing/posting on-line.

Possible extra delays due to public holidays.

Responses by the editorial board: There are five possible responses by the editorial board:

Accept as is, no revisions	This is rare!	
Accept with minor revisions	A frequent response	Usually clarifications are needed.
Revise and resubmit	Fairly frequent response	Usually something is missing, such as a conclusion, or a better tie-in to DKG.
Re-direct to another publishing option	May occur, especially with artistic or creative submissions	The <i>Bulletin</i> board works closely with the Arts & Humanities Gallery and the Leadership Resource Centre.
Reject.	This is also rare.	This may be because a submission has violated DKG policy on inclusivity.

Possible topics:

In my presentation at the Brighton Conference, I suggested that our European members consider three areas that are likely to be of interest to the (predominantly American) readership:

1. Education: what is unique in the theory and practice of education in your country?
2. Culture: sharing an aspect of history, art, literature, lifestyle special to your country.
3. Current issues: what aspects of life are currently in the news in your country? Education: what is unique in the theory and practice of education in your country?

Dr Clare Smith

My GB News in Brief Contribution

I am writing about our conference as I travel round Scandinavia by boat and train with stops to explore Amsterdam, pictured right, a long silver sandy Danish beach, Copenhagen, the Stockholm archipelago, up to the Lofoten islands and the stunning Norwegian coastline down to Bergen.



And I'm reminded of all the interesting conversations I've had at this DKG July conference and others before, together with memorable presentations, which have sparked my curiosity about how our different education systems work in western democracies.

At this conference, we all enjoyed hearing about the 5 Chairs Strategy, not only for its global application but also the quality of the presentation. I also enjoyed the two presentations that suggested some therapeutic support might be of value to teachers, much like that on offer to other caring professions, like social work. And my conversations about technology at the Saturday dinner, where I was sat in between two Estonian educators, together with the last presentation about the use of AI in a Dutch teenage setting, all opened my eyes to the way practitioners are meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

These conversations and my reading suggest that all our western democracies are struggling to afford education systems that we have, perhaps, taken for granted in our life-times, so maybe our future conferences should focus broadly on what we see as the essential purpose of an inclusive school and undergraduate system in the 21st century, which will inevitably involve complex political choices.



It was great that so many DKG members came to our well organised conference. I enjoyed meeting many of them and being a student again, this time at Sussex University, where I visited my youngest son 20 years ago.

Liz Day

Liz is pictured above centre, with Claire Smith left and Sandra Blacker.



New Orleans SOLT and International Conference

At the end of July, I was privileged to have the experience of attending two days of DKG State Organisational Leaders Training in New Orleans, (SOLT) followed by a three-day International Conference. This week provided much professional development for my new role.

My room was on the 39th floor of the hotel with an amazing view of Canal Street - a long straight street which runs the length of the city. It was very hot and humid outside, and I was grateful for the air conditioning in the buildings.



During the two-day SOLT training, I had the pleasure of meeting State Organisational Presidents from other countries and made many new friends. We explored our leadership role - its privileges, its responsibilities, and the shared challenges we face. The need to grow our membership was a common goal and we have been set a challenge to increase our European Regional membership by 100 during the biennium.

The International Conference welcomed over 300 additional DKG members, mostly from the United States. The theme was 'Leading with Passion and Purpose'. We listened to inspiring speakers and attended workshops on many interesting topics. One of the speakers particularly stood out: Martyna Valentine, a quadriplegic elementary school headteacher who continues to live life to the full despite her physical challenges. "The hard things stretch us and grow us, so keep falling forward."

Outside of the conference sessions, we explored New Orleans. We travelled by streetcar, hopping on and off to walk in various neighbourhoods, we enjoyed jazz bands and street performances on Bourbon Street, ate local cuisine (including fried alligator!) and spent a wonderful evening aboard the Creole Queen paddle wheeler, eating traditional food, dancing and listening to traditional jazz whilst cruising the Mississippi River.



It was a fantastic experience, and I have returned home with greater understanding of the work of DKG and excited to begin my new role as State Organisational President.

Aileen Dickson

Aileen is pictured above with Fats Domino.



We welcomed our International President, Dr Beverly Hall-Maughan, pictured left in the orange/pink dress at the Grand Dinner. Thanks to our members for all the photographs in this edition. Here we see the many raffle prizes, Star keyrings awarded to the winners of Gordon's Quiz, the Morris Dancers in action and the paper plate energizer.

