



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English

NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

DECEMBER 2004

News & Announcements

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ARMAGEDDON: THE BATTLE FOR GERMANY 1944-45 *A Presentation and Book-Signing by British Journalist SIR MAX HASTINGS*

The ESU is delighted to join forces with THE EISENHOWER INSTITUTE for a gathering with one of today's most eminent historians. After completing a degree at Oxford, MAX HASTINGS



became a foreign correspondent, reporting from more than sixty countries and covering eleven wars for BBC-TV and for London's *Evening Standard*. One of his many best-selling volumes, *Bomber Command*, won the Somerset Maugham Prize, and two of his titles, *Overlord* and *The Battle for the Falklands*, earned the *Yorkshire Post's* citation for Book of the Year. Following a ten-year stint as Editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, Hastings became Editor of the *Evening Standard* in 1996, a position from which he retired in 2001, a short time before he received a knight-

hood from Her Majesty the Queen. Sir Max will talk about and inscribe copies of his latest work, a vividly illustrated narrative about the horrifyingly bloody, climactic months of the Second World War in Europe.



THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2

Luncheon 12:00 noon
Program 12:30 p.m.

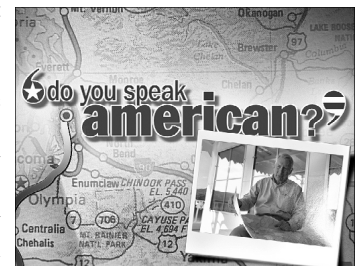
EISENHOWER INSTITUTE
915 15th Street NW, 8th Floor

Admission \$15

ROBERT MACNEIL ASKS "DO YOU SPEAK AMERICAN?" *An Esteemed Television News Host Introduces a New PBS Documentary*



On Wednesday, January 5, PBS stations around the country will telecast a three-hour sequel to ROBERT MACNEIL's award-winning 1986 series on *The Story of English*. That nine-part survey has established itself as a classic on both sides of the Atlantic, and it continues to enlighten audiences around the globe both in print and on video. Mr. MacNeil now offers a fascinating new look at our ever-evolving language. Along the way he explores the many connections between how we talk and how we live. The ESU is honored to



team up with MACNEIL/LEHRER PRODUCTIONS, WETA TELEVISION, the NATIONAL PRESS CLUB, the NEWSEUM, and the BRITISH-AMERICAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION for a presentation that will include some evocative excerpts from *Do You Speak American?* Mr. MacNeil will comment upon the vibrancy and diversity of our discourse. He will then respond to questions about how an increasingly multicultural nation's complex patterns of communication relate to such volatile topics as race, gender, religion, social standing, regional difference, and political power.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Reception 6:15 p.m.
Program 7:00 p.m.

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB
529 14th Street NW

No Admission Charge,
But Reservations Required

Recent Events

ESU'S AUTUMN CALENDAR OFFERS A RICHLY VARIED MENU OF INTRIGUING PRESENTATIONS

The first half of the 2004-5 cultural season has provided a number of highlights for ESU constituents in the National Capital region.

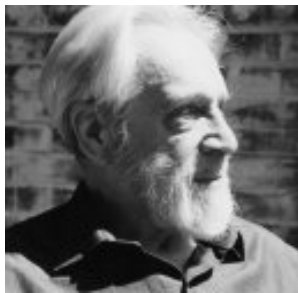


We began with a program in collaboration with the **BRITISH-AMERICAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**: a September 17 luncheon with **PRINCESS MICHAEL OF KENT** (here pictured with ESU Treasurer **BRAXTON MONCURE** and **BABA** Chairman **DONALD NEESE** in a photograph by our

branch's own **Charles Stevenson**), who told us about Catherine de' Medici and Diane de Poitiers and their rivalry for the affections of Henri II of France. A few days later, on September 20, we joined hands with **BABA** and the **BRITISH COUNCIL** for a dinner with **ROBERT AUBRY DAVIS**, **MARTIN GOLDSMITH**, and **LARRY KANE**, who helped us recall two 1964 tours that brought the **BEATLES** to America for the first time. Those events were followed by **MINNIE CHURCHILL**'s October 5 presentation about the connections between **SIR WINSTON**'s paintings and his in-comparable career as a statesman. Next on our roster was British scholar **MARK NEWMAN**'s October 19 discussion of the role that archaeology plays in the efforts of the **NATIONAL TRUST** of Great Britain and its American arm, the **ROYAL OAK FOUNDATION**, not to mention the United States' **NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION**, which hosted the session. We then moved to the **CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART** for two dialogues: one on October 20 with *New Yorker* journalist **ADAM GOPNIK** about *Americans in Paris*, the other on November 9 with *Washington Post* drama critic **PETER MARKS**, who explored what makes our city a magnet for gifted actors and directors. Equally appealing programs are on tap for the weeks ahead, and we hope you'll be with us for them.

POSTHUMOUS PRESENTATION OF THE NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS TO POET ANTHONY HECHT

On behalf of her recently deceased husband, a luminary whose many honors included the **ESU'S AMBASSADOR BOOK AWARD** in 2002, **HELEN D'ALESSANDRO HECHT** took part in an **OVAL**



OFFICE ceremony on Wednesday, November 17, at which she accepted a **NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS** in his name. This was only the latest in an impressive series of tributes to a poet, scholar, essayist, and teacher who died in his home at the age of 81 on Friday, October 20.

ANTHONY HECHT earned the 1968 **Pulitzer Prize for Poetry** with *The Hard Hours*, the second of his seven collections of distinguished verse. A regular contributor to *The New York Review of Books*, Mr. Hecht also enhanced our lives with such ruminations as his **MELLON LECTURES** *On the Laws of Poetic Art*. Among his

prestigious laurels were the **Bollingen Prize**, the **Eugenio Montale Award**, the **Ruth Lilly Prize**, the **Dorothea Tanning Award**, the **Robert Frost Medal**, and fellowships from such agencies as the **National Endowment for the Humanities** and the **Ford, Guggenheim, and Rockefeller** foundations.

A few months ago, on Thursday evening, April 1, at the **WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB**, **ESU** members and their guests enjoyed a soiree at which one of **ANTHONY HECHT**'s most ardent admirers, *Washington Post* writer **MICHAEL DIRDA**, another holder of the Pulitzer Prize, praised his friend's "generosity of spirit," his strong belief in "criticism as the correction of taste," and his remarkable ability to adapt his skills with equal facility to the most elevated of genres and the most whimsical, among them the double-dactyl, a humorous lyric form that Mr. Hecht invented in the 1950s, and one that led in due course to a charming compendium, *Jiggery Pokery*, that he co-edited in 1966 with Yale professor John Hollander.

On **TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30**, during a **7:30 p.m.** gathering in the **FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY**, Mr. Dirda will join several other literary figures in a special homage to Tony Hecht and his legacy. One of the speakers at that salute will be **DANA GIOIA**, Chairman of the **NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS**, who has said that in Mr. Hecht's most profoundly moving work, much of which deals with somber themes that arise from what he witnessed in Germany during World War II, he "exemplifies the paradox of great art," finding "a way to take his tragic sense of life and make it so beautiful that we have to pay attention to its painful truth." Several weeks later, on **MONDAY, JANUARY 10**, a memorial service to be headed by poet **J. D. MCCLATCHY** will occur at **6:00 p.m.** in New York's **GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**. Both occasions are free and are open to the public, and both will provide opportunities to celebrate the life of a great man and extend sympathy to his dear wife of 33 years and their son Evan.

Coming Attractions

DESSERT WITH DICKENS: A DESCENDANT OF THE NOVELIST PERFORMS *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

Thanks to the good offices of **ESU** member **Caroline Jackson**, the great-great grandson of author **CHARLES DICKENS** will brighten our holidays with a one-man presentation of *A Christmas Carol*. During a lively 75-minute show that has become a much-relished tradition in our metropolis, British actor **GERALD CHARLES DICKENS** will recreate Bob Cratchit, Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, and the 23 other characters who have become familiar to us through a narrative that has been stirring audiences since it first appeared in London in 1843.



A sparkling afternoon at **HILTON ARLINGTON HOTEL**, near the Ballston station on Metro's Orange Line, will begin at **3:00** on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 12**, with tea, champagne, and assorted pastries in a ballroom that will be redolent with seasonal melodies from a chamber-music ensemble especially arranged by the **ARLINGTON SYMPHONY**. To obtain further details about, and to order **\$80** tickets for, this popular entertainment, call **(703) 528-1817** or e-mail arlington-symphony@yahoo.com. You may also wish to pay a visit to www.arlingtonsymphony.org.

THE CHOIR OF KING'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, AT WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

For those who've come to cherish the recordings and broadcasts of **KING'S COLLEGE CHOIR**, particularly its *Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols* (a Christmas Eve program that always opens with the hauntingly beautiful *Once in Royal David's City*), this event will provide an opportunity to see and hear what is widely regarded as the most resonant choral group in the world. Under the leadership of their extraordinary director, **STEPHEN CLEOBURY**, these charming singers will be here on **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, at 7:30 p.m.** to perform *A*



Ceremony of Carols by Benjamin Britten, a *Fantasia on Christmas Carols* by Ralph Vaughan Williams, and an exquisite selection of other evocative hymns. The **ESU** has reserved a limited number of choice seats in the North Transept of **WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL** for what promises to be a special concert.

Tickets for these seats, which are available at **\$45** each, are likely to go quickly, so those who wish to obtain them will be well advised to respond without delay.

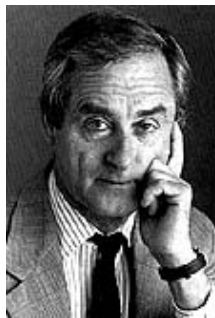
YULETIDE REVELRY: AN EVENING OF HOLIDAY MERRIMENT AT THE MONCURE RESIDENCE

Thanks to the kind hospitality of our branch Treasurer, **BRAXTON MONCURE**, we're pleased to invite you to a festive get-together on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.** in Mr. and Mrs. Moncure's lovely home at **1614 FOXHALL ROAD NW**. We hope you'll join us for a delicious buffet, topped off by **DIANA AND PETER NICHOLSON's** traditional Christmas punch, and come prepared to sing Noel favorites around the piano. You'll have a chance to exchange greetings with your friends in the **ESU**, and you'll meet volunteer tutors from the branch and newcomers from other countries who are engaged in the **ESU's** indispensable **ENGLISH IN ACTION** program. There is no charge for this reception, but tax-deductible donations to help defray expenses (which we expect to be around **\$30** per attendee) and support our organization's educational and cultural initiatives will be gratefully received. We also encourage those who can do so to bring small unwrapped gifts to be bestowed on needy children in our region.

SIR HAROLD EVANS DISCUSSES A BOOK THAT IS BEING FEATURED IN A PBS TELEVISION SERIES

We're pleased to inaugurate a new year with the noted authority behind a handsome volume that is now the centerpiece for a superb **PBS** series. *They Made America* is **SIR HAROLD EVANS'** penetrating sequel to *The American Century*, a best-seller that was dubbed Book of the Year both by the *New York Times* and by *Publishers Weekly*. Sir Harold will talk and answer questions about his latest blockbuster, a paean to "Two Centuries of Innovation," on **TUESDAY, JANUARY 4**, in a midday event that the **ESU** will co-host with the **WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB** at **1526 New Hampshire Avenue NW**. A two-course luncheon will be served at **12:30 p.m.**, following an optional cash bar at **11:30**; Sir Harold's presentation will begin at **1:00 p.m.** The price for attendees who register for this gathering through the **ESU** is **\$25**.

Before he and his wife, **Tina Brown**, moved to the United States, Sir Harold presided over the venerable *Times* of London. His was a reign of excellence that lasted for a decade and a half (1967-82), and it prompted his fellow journalists to honor



him as Britain's greatest-ever newspaper editor. From 1990 to 1997 Sir Harold served as President and Publisher of the **RANDOM HOUSE** trade group in New York. Between 1997 and 1999 he guided the editorial fortunes of several leading magazines, including *Atlantic Monthly* and *U.S. News & World Report*.

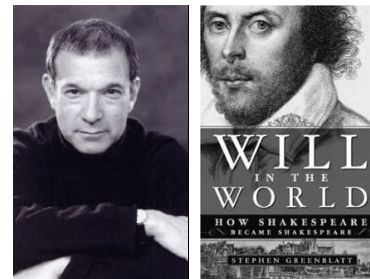
Sir Harold will supply vignettes from an overview that carries readers "From the Steam Engine to the Search Engine."

He'll profile such vivid personalities as Gary Kildall, who gave us the operating system that facilitated the personal computer, Estee Lauder, who founded a legendary cosmetics empire, and Ted Turner, who invented the 24-hour news channel. Copies of *They Made America* will be available for purchase and for inscription by the distinguished thinker who produced them.

NATIONAL BOOK AWARD NOMINEE INQUIRES HOW SHAKESPEARE BECAME SHAKESPEARE

On **TUESDAY, JANUARY 11**, one week after our program with Sir Harold Evans, we'll be back in the **WNDC** clubhouse at **1526 New Hampshire Avenue NW** for another memorable event, this time with **STEPHEN GREENBLATT**, a renowned scholar who seeks to account for our continuing preoccupation with the most enigmatic of literary figures. Once again a two-course luncheon will be served at **12:30 p.m.**, following a cash bar at **11:30**; the one-hour program will begin at **1:00**. **ESU** attendees and their guests will pay **\$25**.

As the man who pioneered "The New Historicism" and enlightened us with such influential studies as *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* (1980), *Shakespearean Negotiations* (1988), *Learning to Curse* (1990), and *Hamlet in Purgatory* (2001), Dr. Greenblatt had already established himself as one of today's most widely recognized experts on the Early Modern period before he compiled his warmly received *Norton Shakespeare* anthology of the complete works in 1997. It was by no means shocking, then, that when he applied his vast learning and acute intelligence to *Will in the World*, a luminous biography of Shakespeare, the result would be a volume that has received enthusiastic notices in all the key media. Nor is it astonishing that a work which has been lauded by such discerning reviewers as Adam Gopnik received a coveted nomination in the Nonfiction category for this year's **National Book Award**.



After many fruitful years in the **University of California at Berkeley**, Dr. Greenblatt is now Cogan University Professor of the Humanities at **Harvard University**. Copies of his latest contribution to our understanding of the globe's most revered poet and dramatist will be on hand for purchase and inscription.



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OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English

NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW Washington, DC 20009-2512

Since 1920, when it originated in response to a parallel organization that had been established two years earlier in Great Britain, the English-Speaking Union of the United States has sought to foster social and cultural cohesion through the resources and traditions of a language that has become increasingly indispensable as a means of international communication. Through a diverse array of offerings, many of which are shared with audiences around the world through radio and TV, the national capital's ESU endeavors to advance a noble mission.

Shakespeare Authority Stanley Wells Analyzes the Artistry of the Sonnets

On TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 30, STANLEY WELLS, who oversees the SHAKESPEARE BIRTHPLACE TRUST in Stratford, will be with us to discuss and sign copies of his latest book, a study of the poet's *Sonnets*. This event will occur at the WOMAN'S NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB, 1526 New Hampshire Avenue NW, with a Cash Bar at 6:00 p.m., a two-course Dinner at 6:30, and a one-hour Dialogue at 7:30. The Member Rate for Dinner and the Program to follow is \$30; the Non-Member Rate is \$35. Those who would prefer to arrive shortly before 7:30 and attend the Program Only may do so for \$10 each.

Spicing Up Your Holidays

As we enter the 2004 holiday season, we encourage you to join THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION or to renew an existing affiliation if you haven't already done so. We also urge you to consider a gift membership for a loved one with whom you'd like to share the pleasures of belonging to the ESU. Our organization now girdles the planet, with a London address at DARTMOUTH HOUSE, and those who take part in any of its local, regional, and national associations are nourished by a vibrant global network.

Through a diverse assortment of edifying events, and through such initiatives as an annual SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION for secondary-school students, a variety of awards to facilitate work in academic and artistic settings, and a tutoring service for those who aspire to better command of a discourse that is not native to them, the ESU's Washington branch is dedicated to extending a precious legacy. To help us preserve this heritage, simply supply the information requested in the Order Form at right and submit it to Executive Director John F. Andrews at 1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009-2512. You can reach Mr. Andrews by telephone at (202) 234-4602, by fax at (202) 234-4639, or by e-mail at esuwdc@msn.com.

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ESU newsletters, and other publications*

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for a regular ESU event (that is, an
event priced at \$40 or less)*

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occasion (that is, one priced at more than \$40)*

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recognition in selected printings*

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to 4 additional guests at all ESU gatherings*

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For Nov. 30, please reserve ___ spaces at the \$30 member rate, ___ spaces at the \$35 non-member rate, ___ spaces at the \$10 Program rate.

For Dec. 2, please reserve ___ spaces at \$15 a person.

For Dec. 8, please reserve ___ spaces at no charge.

For Dec. 18, please reserve ___ spaces at \$45 a person.

For Dec. 19, please reserve ___ spaces at no charge. Please accept a fully deductible donation of \$_____ to help defray costs for this occasion.

For Jan. 4, please reserve ___ spaces at the \$25 member rate.

For Jan. 11, please reserve ___ spaces at the \$25 member rate.

My check for \$_____ to The English-Speaking Union is enclosed.

Please charge ___MC ___Visa _____(____/____).

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone, Fax _____

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*Member rates for these events are available to those who are affiliated with
The American Friends of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, The English-
Speaking Union, RSC America, The Shakespeare Guild, or the WNDC.*

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