



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English

NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

MARCH 2004

News & Announcements

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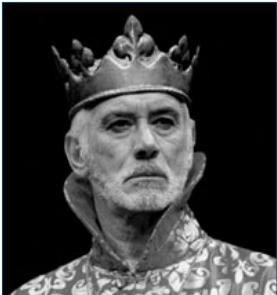
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THE ESU's 15TH ANNUAL SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION CAFRITZ FOUNDATION Supports a Festive Event at THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE

Please join us for a gathering that has established itself as one of the ESU's signature occasions: our spring *SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION FOR THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION*. The object of this much-admired contest is to enhance students' appreciation for and comprehension of the writings of a poet who has been described as history's most reliable guide to the mileposts of life. As the centerpiece of a curriculum-based program that now extends to a number of middle schools in the Washington area, this endeavor provides an opportunity for forty or more pupils from the 10th, 11th, and 12th grades to display the insights and skills they've been acquiring as they recite Shakespearean sonnets and perform dramatic vignettes from such masterpieces as *Hamlet* and *Much Ado About Nothing*.

Their presentations will be evaluated by a distinguished panel of actors, directors, and teachers, and those who emerge as the top three candidates will come away with monetary prizes from a fund that has been generously

supplied by **Mrs. Priscilla Liggett**. The contestant who finishes with the highest rating will then proceed to LINCOLN CENTER in Manhattan for an April 26th *NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION* whose winner is to be rewarded with a summer at London's BRITISH-AMERICAN DRAMA ACADEMY.



MONDAY, MARCH 1

OPENING ROUND

*Light Lunch 12:00 noon
Program 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.*

CONCLUDING ROUND

*Buffet Reception 6:00 p.m.
Program 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.*

SHAKESPEARE THEATRE

*450 7th Street NW
Between GALLARY PLACE
and ARCHIVES on Metro*

ADMISSION FREE

While the *COMPETITION* judges deliberate following the afternoon performances, participants and audience members will have a chance to hear and talk with one of the finest talents of our era, **Keith Baxter**, who has worked with such legends as John Gielgud, Paul Scofield, and Orson Welles, and who is now earning plaudits as King in RSC director Bill Alexander's stellar production of *Henry IV, Part 1*. At a comparable point during the evening session, we'll enjoy a chat with **Catherine Weidner**, who runs THE SHAKESPEARE THEATRE's superb *ACADEMY FOR CLASSICAL ACTING*, and who will be joined by the 2003 and 2004 recipients of the ESU's annual *WALTER L. WRIGHT III FELLOWSHIP FOR EXCEPTIONAL PROMISE IN THE DRAMATIC PROFESSION*. Other highlights of the proceedings will include remarks by **Dana Gioia**, Chairman of the

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS, and by **Mrs. Virginia Hayes Williams**, mother of the Shakespeare aficionado who serves as Mayor of our city. We'll also bestow the ESU's *SHAKESPEARE TEACHER AWARD* upon an instructor who has helped prepare students for this year's activities. Thanks to the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY, each entrant will be recognized with a beautiful keepsake. And thanks to the philanthropy of the MORRIS AND GWENDOLYN CAFRITZ FOUNDATION, every attendee at both sessions will be invited to partake of the refreshments to be proffered without paying any admission charge. See the back panel for details about reservations for this engaging event.

Recent Events

A WARM WELCOME TO SIR DAVID AND LADY MANNING OF THE BRITISH EMBASSY

"You're going to be just fine, provided you get some red socks." With these words, as *Washington Post* reporter Roxanne Roberts noted in her January 26th "Out and About" column, Senator John



Warner reminded Sir David Manning of a sartorial trademark that had endeared his predecessor to a delighted cadre of American admirers. In what proved to be but one of the night's wry witticisms, the Senator set the tone for a celebratory

January 21st black-tie gala at which the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION joined hands once again with the BRITISH-AMERICAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION for a heartfelt tribute to HER BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S AMBASSADOR.

In February of 2003 the two organizations had convened at the WESTIN EMBASSY ROW HOTEL to commend Sir Christopher and Lady Meyer for all they'd done to strengthen the ties that bind the United Kingdom and the United States. This time they attracted nearly 200 constituents to a delicious repast at the FAIRMONT HOTEL, visit to the Ambassador's residence had been exceptional even by the exalted standards which had been set by Sir Christopher and Lady Meyer. In his welcoming remarks the Ambassador had cited the events of September 11 and said that in the wake of that trauma he'd felt as never before the "special relationship" that has long linked the United Kingdom and the United States. He'd gone on to note that he regarded the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION as an epitome of that bond, and he'd praised the vigor he saw as he looked out upon the largest turnout he could recall at such an affair. The following day Amanda Downes, the Embassy's social secretary, had called with news that, in a characteristically magnanimous gesture, Sir Christopher had decided not to bill the ESU for the costs associated with that wonderful reception.

When news came that the Meyers would be leaving their posts during the winter of 2003, the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION called the BRITISH-AMERICAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, another organization that had often benefited from the Embassy's cordiality, and began planning a gathering to thank Sir Christopher and his charming Lady and bid them Godspeed. Working in collaboration with Patricia Karhuse, executive director of BABA, and her associate Scarlett Lucas, and conspiring with former BABA president Courtenay Ellis of the Murphy Ellis Weber legal firm, the ESU assembled a lustrous roster of fellow presenters and booked the WESTIN EMBASSY Row hotel for a festive tribute that took place on Tuesday evening, February 11.

The event drew more than 150 admirers and well-wishers, and everyone cheered as the guests of honor responded to remarks from A. Graham Down (president of the Nation's Capital

branch of the ESU), Kristen Verderame (vice-president of BABA), the Honorable John Warner (chairman of the SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE), Alice Boyne (executive director of the ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES), Susan Eisenhower (president of the EISENHOWER WORLD AFFAIRS INSTITUTE), and Virginia Hayes Williams (civic leader and mother of DC MAYOR ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS). Speaking on behalf of both the ESU and THE SHAKESPEARE GUILD, branch executive director John Andrews read eloquent messages from former Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger and actor Michael York. Then he and Courtenay Ellis unveiled a certificate that had been framed beneath a pair of deftly knotted articles of neckware, one patterned after the Union Jack, the other festooned with the Stars and Stripes. This keepsake (recorded here in a picture by Keith Harvey) was a salute to the Meyers for all they'd done "to strengthen the ties that bind the United Kingdom and the United States." Referring to a wry honor that Sir Christopher had received from BABA a year earlier – his induction to the Royal Order of Red Socks, a distinction that recognized a unique and endearing sartorial trademark – Mr. Andrews and Mr. Ellis then welcomed the Ambassador and Lady Meyer to a new trans-Atlantic society, *The Most Illustrious Order of the Red, White, and Blue*.

International News

WILLIAM L. RENFRO ATTENDS THE WORLD MEMBERS CONFERENCE IN ST. PETERSBURG

In late June and early July a dedicated member of our Board of Directors, William L. "Ren" Renfro, joined executive director Alice Boyne of the national office to represent the English-Speaking Union of the United States at the 2003 ESU WORLD MEMBERS CONFERENCE. This convocation drew more than fifty delegates from thirty-five countries around the globe, and it took place in the exquisite metropolis that Peter the Great founded three centuries ago as Russia's window to the West. Hosting the proceedings, and greeting everyone in the name of the ST. PETERSBURG ESU, was Margarita Mudrack, that association's resourceful and eloquent president. She'd put together an outstanding menu of cultural offerings that featured receptions, dinners, a river cruise, special excursions to the HERMITAGE and other architectural gems, and a Beethoven concert by the ST. PETERSBURG PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA. For the logistics of the convention, and for meticulous attention to the needs of her guests, President Mudrack was ably assisted by a cadre of high-school and college students, most of whom were affiliated with her INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP HOUSE at the UNIVERSITY OF ST. PETERSBURG and all of whom were impressive in the fluency with which they communicated in the language that had brought the conferees together. The University awarded an honorary degree to Lord Watson, who chairs the English-Speaking Union from its international center at DARTMOUTH HOUSE in London. After he accepted the latest of many accolades, this engaging leader spoke about the pivotal role of a global discourse at a period when social cohesion and conceptual understanding have become increasingly difficult to sustain.

AN EVENING WITH ELISABETH VON TRAPP

On Thursday night, March 11, at 7:30, Elisabeth von Trapp, an eminent member of the family that has been immortalized in *The Sound of Music*, will be appearing under auspices of the AMERICAN-AUSTRIAN SOCIETY for a special concert at the EMBASSY OF AUSTRIA, 3224 International Court NW. The AAS cordially invites ESU members and their guests to attend. Those who wish to do so should get in touch as soon as possible with Ulrike Joiner at (703) 823-9334. Tickets ordered by March 1 are \$20; tickets purchased at the door will be \$25.

The Boston Globe has praised the "sheer beauty" of Ms. von Trapp's voice and described her songs as "beautifully arranged and full of hope and goodwill." *The New York Times* depicts her singing as "hauntingly clear" and "tender and romantic."

English in Action

Does becoming acquainted with a visitor from abroad, or helping a foreign-born student, appeal to you? If so, you should ponder the idea of becoming involved in one of the most gratifying pursuits available to a civic-minded volunteer. ENGLISH IN ACTION is a one-to-one tutoring service in which ordinary people get together for relaxed conversations. One will be an adult with normal proficiency, but no special training or formal teaching credentials, in the use of spoken and written English. The other may be a recent immigrant to the U.S., a high-school or college student from overseas, or a professional (employed, perhaps, by an embassy or a multinational business) who grasps the rudiments of our tongue but seeks to acquire the skillful ease a native speaker of it takes for granted.

Under the usual format an ESU tutor meets once a week with his or her charge for an hour of enjoyable give-and-take at a mutually convenient time and location. It's not unusual for tutors and their grateful "English patients" to develop lifelong friendships and thereby enhance the appreciation both parties have for diverse cultures and traditions.

ENGLISH IN ACTION has been provided by our branch of the ESU for more than twenty years, and it has assisted hundreds of newcomers as they've learned to cope with the expectations of a society quite distinct from their own. EIA has bolstered their self-assurance and enabled them to obtain better positions, both in America and in their countries of origin, and it has significantly elevated the quality of their lives.

During the last few months we've welcomed new students from Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, France, Hungary, Korea, Taiwan, Togo, and Turkey. We're also refreshing a longstanding relationship with the PAN-AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION, an association of mostly Spanish-speaking technical professionals, which is now experiencing a growing demand for assistance of the kind that we provide. We're grateful for PAHO's awareness of how much the ESU can contribute to the success of its operations, but we must also recognize its latest request

as yet another reminder of how urgently we ourselves depend upon reinforcements from those in our midst who can lend a helping hand. If you'd like to learn more about ENGLISH IN ACTION, and hear about some of the rewards a dedicated EIA community is reaping from interactions that are pivotal to the mission of the English-Speaking Union, please get in touch with EIA's director, Mrs. Diana Nicholson, at 4600 Connecticut Avenue NW, Suite 723, Washington, DC 20008. You can reach her by phone at (202) 966-3921 or by e-mail at afromdc@aol.com.

A Word from our President

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we prepare for the ESU's annual *SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION*, our lives are being immeasurably enriched by three initiatives that promise to make the Washington branch of the organization an increasingly potent force in the community it represents.

The first of these initiatives, under the imaginative leadership of Gerry Kauvar, special assistant to President Stephen J. Trachtenberg of GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, will result in the expansion of a summer internship program that has brought dozens of college and university students to Capitol Hill from the United Kingdom in recent years, and afforded opportunities for a comparable number of their U.S. counterparts to become familiar with the storied legacy of Parliament in Westminster. Thanks to Dr. Kauvar's efforts, GWU will soon be strengthening this forms of cultural and political exchange and extending its benefits to additional participants on both sides of the Atlantic.

A second initiative, issuing from the ESU's NATIONAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE, will focus on ways to use the Internet to encourage more effective means of global communication. Referred to as *CROSS-CULTURAL CURRENTS*, this effort will begin with online conversations about Grace Paley's *Collected Stories*, a volume that won the AMBASSADOR BOOK AWARD in 1995. If successful, the pilot project that will soon commence should foster the establishment of "virtual book clubs" that encompass our planet.

A third initiative, under the aegis of Board member William L. Renfro, will bring to our region in the autumn a delegation of visitors who'll be en route to the WORLD MEMBERS CONFERENCE that opens on Wednesday, October 6, in New York. The constituency of the ESU that serves the Nation's Capital is putting together a three-day calendar of offerings that will ensure that our distinguished guests see the United States at its best.

Coming on the heels of an extraordinarily successful gala to welcome the new BRITISH AMBASSADOR and his wife, Sir David and Lady Manning, these developments provide three more signs that our outreach is progressing at a steady pace. We're grateful for your support during a period of unprecedented opportunity, and we're confident that you'll want to continue doing all you can to help the ESU realize its lofty objectives, whether those aims are expressed locally, nationally, or internationally.

A. Graham Down



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
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.

Rewards of Membership

As we enter the spring quarter of ESU's 2003-4 season, we encourage you to join THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION or renew an existing affiliation if you haven't already done so. We also invite you to consider a gift membership for a friend or loved one who'd enjoy a rich array of educational, cultural, charitable, and social activities. The ESU now girdles the planet, with a beautiful London address at Dartmouth House, and those who belong to 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 tongue that is not native to them, the Washington branch of the ESU is dedicated to extending an incomparable heritage.

To help preserve this legacy, supply the information requested in the Order Form at right and submit it, along with a check or credit-card order, to executive director John F. Andrews at 1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009-2512. You can reach him by phone at (202) 234-4602, by fax at (202) 234-4639, or by e-mail at esuwdc@msn.com.

ASSOCIATE (Individual \$35, Dual \$45)

*Event notices, local and national
ESU newsletters and other publications*

SUBSCRIBER (Individual \$75, Dual \$100)

*All ASSOCIATE-level benefits plus 1 coupon
for a regular ESU event (that is, an
event priced at \$40 or less)*

CONTRIBUTOR (Individual \$125, Dual \$150)

*All SUBSCRIBER-level benefits plus 1 additional
coupon to be used at a regular ESU event*

DONOR (\$250)

*All CONTRIBUTOR-level benefits plus 2 additional coupons
to be used at regular events and 1 coupon for a special
occasion (that is, one priced at more than \$40)*

Whistler's Galleries at the Freer

By special arrangement with the FREER GALLERY OF ART, ESU constituents are being offered a unique perspective on *MR. WHISTLER'S GALLERIES*, an exhibition that focuses on the techniques that James McNeill Whistler devised in 1883 to display his paintings to best effect in an exclusive London salon. Using a script by theater artist Cam Magee, actor Jonathan Watkins personifies Whistler's "Poached Egg Man," a greeter who welcomed patrons in a vivid yellow-and-white waistcoat. Ms. Magee will join Mr. Watkins for this presentation, which will take place between 10:45 a.m. and 12:00 noon on Saturday, March 13. For more detail, including Smithsonian links of interest, go to the Calendar section at www.esuwdc.org.

BENEFACITOR (\$500)

All DONOR-level benefits plus 4 additional coupons to be used at regular events, 1 additional coupon for a special occasion, and recognition in selected print materials

PATRON (\$1,000)

*Free admission for 2 persons to all regular events,
4 coupons for use at special occasions, and
recognition in selected printings*

SPONSOR (\$2,500)

All PATRON-level benefits plus free admission for up to 4 additional guests at all ESU gatherings

UNDERWRITER (\$5,000)

All SPONSOR-level benefits plus free admission for up to 8 additional guests at all ESU gatherings

Order Form

I wish to renew or enroll in the English-Speaking Union at the \$_____ level. I wish to make a tax-deductible donation to the ESU of \$_____ to support endeavors such as the *SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION* and the organization's *ENGLISH IN ACTION* program.

For March 13, please reserve ____ spaces at \$10 a person for the Whistler presentation at the Freer Gallery near the Smithsonian Metro station.

For March 15, please reserve ____ spaces ____ at the \$30 member rate, ____ at the \$35 non-member rate, ____ at the \$15 Program Only rate for the *SPEAKING OF SHAKESPEARE* dialogue with director Bill Alexander that the ESU will be co-sponsoring with THE SHAKESPEARE GUILD.

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

Please charge ____ MC ____ Visa ____ (____/____).

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone, Fax _____

Visit us online at www.esuwdc.org.