



The Nashville Speaker

The English-Speaking Union
NASHVILLE BRANCH

Volume 13, Issue 2

Education. Scholarship. Understanding

Fall, 2015

For your calendars . . .

Sunday, September 13, 2015 at 4pm

Membership Meeting: **Judith A. Morgan:** *Nashville Stories*
Cocktails at the Siessers

Saturday, October 17, 2015 at 5pm

Andy Jampoler: *The Art of David Roberts, R.A.*
Cocktail Supper at the Condras

Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at 8:30am

Breakfast at Belmont: **Kimberly Balding:** *A Touch of the Irish*
Belmont Mansion

Wednesday, December 9, 2015 at 6pm

Gala Dinner
The Nashville Woman's Club

Look for the next newsletter for details on these events:

January, 2016

Cocktails at Sugartree Club House

February, 2016

Page Scholar

Saturday, March, 2016

Regional Shakespeare Finals
Troutt Theater, Belmont University

March, 2016 at 8:30am

Breakfast at Belmont
Belmont Mansion

April, 2016

Spring Banquet:
Richland Country Club

Sunday, May 15, 2016 at 3pm

Commemoration Tea
Afternoon Tea at the Home of the President

Our Mission

The English-Speaking Union of the United States is committed to promoting scholarship and the advancement of knowledge through the effective use of English in an expanding global community.

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Lynne Siesser
2009 Overhill Drive
Nashville, TN 37215-3414
lsiesser7@gmail.com
615-298-5659

Message from the President Greetings, fellow ESU members,



I just last night returned from seeing *Henry V* presented by the Nashville Shakespeare Festival in Centennial Park.

What a fun evening! As the shadows filled the night sky and bats began to fly back and forth above the lights, I felt as if I were seeing Shakespeare's play as it would have been seen in some torch-lit inn courtyard in his own day. The ship sailing to France was a sheet of cloth waved above the heads of the swaying actors beneath; spears were sticks; King Henry's royal robe was a red scarf draped over his shoulders. Actors raced in and out bearing messages of the battlefield and of the French defeat at Agincourt. Pure magic!

As you know, your ESU has a part in supporting and helping the Nashville Shakespeare Festival to operate. But of course, that's only part of what your ESU Nashville is doing. We have a great schedule of fun events scheduled for this year and next.

Our first get-together is at Lynne Siesser's on **September 13 at 4 p.m.** for cocktails and **Judith Morgan on Nashville's Lost Past**. Your invitation should have already arrived. If it hasn't contact Lynne Siesser, please. Then on **October 17**, we have a cocktail supper at the Condras' house with **Andy Jampoler's** slide presentation on the *Art of David Roberts, R.A.* If you don't know of his art, he did the first drawings of Petra, when it was rediscovered in the 1840's.

On **November the 10th** we have another Breakfast in the Belmont Mansion with **Kimberly Balding**, who specializes in Irish Literature, speaking on ***A Touch of the Irish***.

On **December 9th**, we have our **Gala Dinner** at the Woman's Club of Nashville specially decorated for Christmas. Did someone say champagne and music? Bring out your festive attire!

And that's only the first half of the year. We plan to have ESU events each month through May, and we want YOU and your friends at each one!

Susan (Robin) Sinclair, Ph.D.

HONOR ROLL OF DONORS TO THE EDUCATION PROGRAMS 2014/2015

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These generous donations underwrite the Nashville education programs.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE for teen from Nashville



New York City, April 27th, 2015 – With a performance of a sonnet and monologue from Shakespeare, **Jacob Huff** from Brentwood, TN, a student of Kara Kindall at Nashville School of the Arts in Nashville, placed as a semi-finalist in the 32nd annual English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition. The Competition was held on April 27th at Lincoln Center Theater in New York City for 57 winners of ESU Branch competitions nationwide. Jacob had previously won the ESU Nashville Branch regional competition.

This year's winner of the English-Speaking Union Hawaii Branch competition, **Sarah Spalding**, won first prize in the ESU National Shakespeare Competition, winning a full Scholarship to attend the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art's *Young Actors Summer School* in London, England. Second place winner, **Evelyn Johnson**, representing the Philadelphia Branch, won a scholarship to attend the American Shakespeare Center Theatre Camp. Third place winner, **Elizabeth Mears**, representing the Boston Branch of the ESU, won \$500 from The Shakespeare Society.

The English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition is a school-based program designed to help students develop their speaking and critical thinking skills and their appreciation of literature as they explore the beauty of the language and timeless themes in Shakespeare's works. In three progressive competition levels, students memorize, interpret, and perform monologues and sonnets in their own schools, at ESU Branch-sponsored community competitions and at the National Shakespeare Competition. The program has engaged more than 250,000 young people since its inception. Citing its 32nd season this year, the Honorable **Bill De Blasio**, Mayor of the City of New York, proclaimed April 27th as William Shakespeare Day. **Nick Astbury**, the British Deputy Consul-General in New York, read the proclamation, and **Josiah Bunting III**, Chairman of the English-Speaking Union, awarded certificates to the competitors.

The ESU provided the Branch winners with two full days of educational and cultural activities in New York City, including an exclusive acting workshop at the Tisch School of the Arts at New York University and a performance of the *Something Rotten!* on Broadway. Perhaps best of all for these teenagers was the opportunity to spend a weekend in New York City with other students from across the country who share a love of theater, language and, particularly, Shakespeare.

The semi-finals competition judges were distinguished actors and educators: **Miriam Hyman** is a 2012 graduate of Yale School of Drama where she earned her MFA in Acting. Most recently, Hyman portrayed Miranda in La Mama Experimental Theater's World Premiere new musical adaptation of *Tempest* (2014 NYT Critics' Pick). Prior to Miranda, Hyman closed a "Brilliant Performance" of Shakespeare's *As You Like It* as the heroine Rosalind. T.V. and Film credits include: *The Blacklist*, *Hostages*, *30 Rock*, *The Wire*, *Law & Order* and more. **Michael LoMonico**, Senior Consultant on National Education for the Folger Shakespeare Library, has taught Shakespeare courses and workshops for teachers and students in 36 states as well as in Canada and England. This summer he is working with the English-Speaking Union to create Folger Professional Learning Days for teachers at ESU Branches across the country. **Alexandra López**, Associate Director of Education at Lincoln Center Theater, has worked as a theater director, producer and educator. She has directed for the Creative Arts Team Youth Theatre, Henry Street Settlement/Abrons Arts Center, and has produced theater performances at the University of Pennsylvania, Hamptons Shakespeare Festival, and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Alexandra has a Bachelor of Arts in English and Theatre from the University of Pennsylvania. **Dr. Sid Ray** is a professor of English and Women's and Gender Studies at Pace University in New York City, where she serves as Associate Chair of the English Department. Her research and teaching interests range from Shakespeare and early modern drama to early modern women writers and performative identities. Dr. Ray is the author of numerous works, including *Mother Queens and Princely Sons: Rogue Madonnas in the Age of Shakespeare*, and *Holy Estates: Marriage and Monarchy in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries*. She is currently editing a collection of essays on Shakespeare in performance titled "Shaping Shakespeare for Performance: The Bear Stage", forthcoming for the fall of 2015. **Michael Sexton**, Artistic Director of The Shakespeare Society in New York City, recently directed *As You Like It* at The Two River Theater, *Henry V* at the Two River Theater and *Titus Andronicus* with Jay O. Sanders at the Public Theater. He is a regular guest artist at NYU's Graduate Acting Program, the Juilliard School, and Columbia.

Family members in the news
Investiture at Buckingham Palace



held by the
Princess Royal on
Friday, 13th February 2015

The Most Excellent Order of
the British Empire
Civil Division

To be an Officer
Mr. James O'Neil

For services to the British
Banking Industry

Jim is the son of ESU member, **Doris O'Neil**.

Alex Coccia named Rhodes Scholar



Alex Coccia, a 2014 University of Notre Dame graduate, has been selected to the American Rhodes Scholar Class of 2015. A Columbus, Ohio native, Coccia was selected from a pool of 877 candidates who have been nominated by

their colleges and Universities.

"A scholar, student leader and athlete, Alex used his gifts and energy to exert a powerful and positive influence on many" said Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., Notre Dame's president. Coccia majored in Africana Studies and Peace Studies at Notre Dame. Currently a Truman-Albright Fellow, he served as student body president, running on a platform focused on promoting the passions and interests of all students, including those who feel marginalized. Coccia plans to study comparative social policy at Oxford. He is the grandson of ESU member, **Marion Couch**.

In Memoriam



Nelson Edwin Davenport, Jr.

a true southern gentleman, passed away peacefully in his sleep on April 7th at 90 years of age.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tennessean/obituary.aspx?n=nelson-edwin-davenport&pid=174580661&fhid=14062>



Roger C. Burgess

a layman who had a distinguished career as leader in several international agencies of the United Methodist Church over a period of nearly 50 years, died May 10 at St. Thomas West Hospital in Nashville. He was 87.

<http://www.umc.org/news-and-media/unity-methodist-communications-leader-dies-at-87>



Jean Bass Crawford

former editor of the *Vanderbilt Alumnus* and director of the Office of Alumni Publications at Vanderbilt, died August 7.

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tennessean/obituary.aspx?n=jean-bass-crawford&pid=175463225&fhid=5651>

Do you have a friend interested in participating in ESU activities?

Email their address to lsiesser7@gmail.com and we'll mail them a membership brochure.