



The Nashville Speaker

The English-Speaking Union
NASHVILLE BRANCH

Volume 6, Issue 2

Spring, 2008

SPRING BANQUET

Julius Bryant of London's Victoria and Albert Museum to Speak



The Branch will host its annual black-tie spring dinner beginning at 5:30 P.M, Thursday, April 24, at the Hillwood Country Club.

Julius Bryant, the Keeper of the Word and Image Department of London's Victoria and Albert Museum will be the featured speaker. Mr. Bryant's program will be accompanied by color slides of

many of the Museum's treasures. This promises to be one of the most exciting events the Branch has hosted in many years.

Once again, our speaker will present his program before dinner. Please arrive by 5:30, if possible, to give you an opportunity to socialize with other members. Mr. Bryant's program will begin promptly at 6:30.

Your officers and directors look forward to seeing you.



Constable's Boat Building near Flatford Mill

from the collections of the V & A



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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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Newsletter Editor

Lynne Siesser

2009 Overhill Drive

Nashville, TN 37215-3414

lsiesser@comcast.net

615-298-5659

www.esuus.org/branches/nashville

THOUGHTS AND ADVENTURES

by Dick Knight, President



We are concluding a very successful year, and I thank everyone for making it possible.

I have had an executive committee second to none. Lynne Siesser, Susan Sinclair, and Ann Cook Calhoun have left me with very little to do. And, the Directors have always been available for consultation and guidance, and I appreciate their continuing interest and support.

We have enjoyed modest membership *growth* this year, and that is saying something. All of you know that most of the nation's venerated organizations are suffering a national decline in membership. The decline is cultural and generational. However, we have bucked the

trend this year. We will continue to offer our members many reasons to renew their memberships and recruit new members. We will continue to grow. (Please look for your renewal form as early as next month. It will be mailed from New York.)

The ESU is hosting an exciting international conference in Edinburgh, Scotland, in September. If you plan to go, please let me know, as I will need to submit your name(s) to the Credentials Committee. That way, you can officially represent the Branch at business meetings. What a shame that the exchange rate makes international travel so expensive.

We were very busy this winter. We hosted the *Walter Hines Page* Scholar and, with our partner, the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, we hosted the Shakespeare acting workshop and the regional Shakespeare competition.

Our members have been exceptionally generous this winter.

Joan Campbell and Roger and Donah Burgess opened their lovely homes for dinners and receptions. Lynne and Bill Siesser opened their lovely home (the "Siesser B&B") to anyone claiming an association with the ESU. Our members opened their treasure chests. We were able to fund two teaching scholarships this year, and we may be able to again fund, the BUSS Fellowship, next year, depending on several factors, including the exchange rate. A hearty "thanks and well done" to everyone!

Dr. Ann Cook Calhoun continues to represent us on the ESU Board of Directors. I have been appointed to the ESU's Bylaws Committee. The ESU will adopt new and restated bylaws sometime within the next year. I am also attending a regional meeting in Staunton, Virginia, in April.

Thank you for the opportunity to be your president. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to add value to your membership.

Volunteer opportunities with the English Speaking Union.

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Host a tea or reception | <input type="checkbox"/> Host an overnight guest | <input type="checkbox"/> Present a program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Suggest a program | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist at an event | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on the Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make telephone calls | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as an officer |

Please volunteer to Lynne Siesser Hm: 298-5659 Wk: 936-1457 lsiesser@comcast.net

SHAKESPEARE FELLOWSHIPS AND COMPETITION

by Dr. Ann Cook Calhoun

Two Nashville Teachers Win Fellowships

Continuing the long-standing educational work of the Nashville Branch of the ESU, fellowships will go to two area English teachers to further their techniques for teaching Shakespeare.



Malcolm Morrison of Montgomery Bell Academy will take part in a workshop at the Blackfriars Theatre in Staunton, VA, on April 18-19, 2008. Sponsored by the American Shakespeare Center, this program has pioneered in performance-based classroom practices, this year focusing on its current productions of *Taming of the Shrew* and *Merchant of Venice*.

Sarah Harrison, a faculty member at University School of Nashville, will attend the Shakespeare in the Classroom seminar on July 8-13, 2008, at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival. This festival, with three theaters performing six plays each day except Monday, is the oldest and arguably the finest of all the Shakespeare theater companies in the United States. During her week in Ashland, Ms. Harrison will see *Comedy of Errors*, *Othello*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Coriolanus*, and *Our Town*, besides attending sessions with actors, directors, designers, and other educators.



At our first meeting in the fall, both Malcolm Morrison and Sarah Harrison will report to the Nashville Branch on their respective experiences.

Next year, with sufficient contributions from the membership, we hope to offer a British University Summer Study (B.U.S.S.) Fellowship to an area high school teacher of English or Social Studies. These fellowships allow the recipients to study in programs at Oxford, Edinburgh, or London's Globe Theatre.



Ann Calhoun & Ricardo Beaird

Ricardo Beaird Wins ESU Shakespeare Competition

Representing Nashville School of the Arts, Ricardo Beaird, a high school senior edged out other talented students with a speech by the villain Edmund from *King Lear* to take first place in the 2008 Regional Shakespeare Competition. Garrett Anglin of Montgomery Bell Academy came in second, while Grace Douglas of Harpeth Hall School placed third.

Mr. Beaird will travel, all expenses paid by the National ESU, to New York City for the finals of the Shakespeare Competition on April 26-29, 2008, where he will attend workshops, go to a Broadway play, form strong bonds with the other winners, and perform on the stage at Lincoln Center. Should he come in first there, he would spend

six weeks this summer studying Shakespeare in England

Despite an overnight snowstorm, all but two of the winners from more than a dozen participating schools showed up on Saturday morning, March 8, 2008, to deliver their monologues and sonnets. Certificates of commendation went to every student who took part in every school involved – more than 200 in all. Gifts of Shakespeare books went to the judges, the teachers at schools with the largest numbers of participants, and the winners, with a \$100 prize to Ricardo Beaird.



Unlike the previous ten years of Nashville Branch sponsorship of this National Shakespeare Competition, the finals were held at Christ Church Cathedral rather than TPAC. When a change in policy forced a move elsewhere, Christ Church generously made their beautiful sanctuary available as part of their Sacred Space in the City program. Many felt the new venue offered an even better place for the performances, as well as for enjoying the refreshments provided by the ESU.

The Branch is also grateful to the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, not only for providing the professional judges at no cost but also for staffing the hugely successful Shakespeare Workshop on Saturday, February 2, 2008. We further appreciate Harpeth Hall School for hosting this event, as it has done in the past.

The Branch recognizes the following members whose generous contribution since the last issue of *The Nashville Speaker* has assisted in making this year's education programs possible.

The Estate of James W. Hofstead
Marion Couch
Bill Engel
Susan Sinclair

In Memory of Tony Heard

Ann & Gerry Calhoun
Genevieve Farris
Jean & Dick Hart
Ann Marie & Martin McNamara, III
Livingfield More
Lynne & Bill Siesser
Pat Wallace

In Memory of Fred Tarkington

Ann & Gerry Calhoun

*In Memory of Marshall Chandler, Julia Gober
& Pat McCool*
Lynne & Bill Siesser

Consider giving a gift membership to the ESU or a donation to the Education Fund as a way to remember someone on that special occasion, during holidays or as a "thank you" for just being a friend.

BRANCH HOSTS PAGE

SCHOLAR



Carolina & dinner, hostess,
Joan Campbell with Thumbelina

Carolina Benavides, Head of the English Department at the Hans Christian Andersen School in Buenos Aires, Argentina, visited Nashville as a Page Scholar in February.

A national ESU program, the Walter Hines Page Scholarships go to educators from Great Britain, New Zealand, and Argentina, who come to the United States

BRANCH HOSTS PAGE

SCHOLAR

continued



Hosts, Bill & Lynne Siesser with Carolina

to study a particular area of interest. Local branches provide hospitality and set up appropriate schedules.

Ms. Benavides wished to see how American schools provide for students with various kinds of learning disabilities. While here, she visited University School of Nashville, had appointments with the head of Vanderbilt's National Research Center for Learning Disabilities and with a coordinator at the Department of Special Education of the Metro Public Schools, and spent an entire day at Currey Ingram Academy. She had only the highest praise for our efforts and resources in the area of her interest.



Susan Sinclair, Linda Knight,
Phyllis Heard & Carolina

During her visit, February 10-13, 2008, ESU members Lynne and Bill Siesser graciously welcomed her as their house guest,

Joan Campbell entertained her at a small dinner party, and Donah and Roger Burgess hosted her at a reception for the Nashville Branch. On this occasion, the charming Carolina Benavides talked about her school of five hundred students, its five-year history, and its plan to begin accepting a limited number of children with disabilities. She also talked about the work of the ESU in Argentina, as well as her Page Scholar experiences

Besides Nashville, Ms. Benavides visited St. Louis, Washington, DC, and Greenville, SC, Branches. This marks the fourth year that our Branch has hosted a Page Scholar as part of its commitment to creating global understanding through English.



Jeanne Smith, Carolina & hosts,
Roger & Donah Burgess

You are cordially invited to

The Spring Dinner Meeting

of the NASHVILLE BRANCH of
The English-Speaking Union
OF THE UNITED STATES

5:30 P.M. Reception

6:30 P.M. Program

***Julius Bryant, Keeper of the Word and Image,
Victoria and Albert Museum***

7:15 P.M. Dinner

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Hillwood Country Club

R.S.V.P. \$59 per person

(checks made payable to English-Speaking Union)

Mailed to 2009 Overhill Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37215-3414

Questions? 298-5659 or lsiesser@comcast.net

Black Tie

*In Memoriam***JOHN FRED TARKINGTON, JR.,**

The Branch sadly reports the death of Mr. Fred Tarkington, Jr., a longtime member, on February 21, 2008. Fred was a retail furniture businessman and a respected community leader. He is survived by Jane Anderson Tarkington, his wife of 47 years; his daughters, Jane McFerrin Tarkington Mavar, Leslie Lipscomb Tarkington McCullough, and their husbands; and four grandsons. Fred graduated from Vanderbilt University where he was a member of Beta Theta Pi Fraternity. During the Korean War, he was as an Air Force captain. He began his career at Davis Cabinet, in 1958. Assigned to the New York/Philadelphia Territory, he was the company's leading salesman for ten years. Eventually, Mr. Tarkington was the founder and CEO of Bradford Showroom Memphis, Tarkington Showroom and Mister T's Patio, Nashville. Fred served on the boards of the National Home Furnishings Association, **English-Speaking Union**, Bradford Management Services, Nashville Chamber of Commerce, First Tennessee Bank and Better Business Bureau. He was the Chairman of the Board of Nashville Electric Service and President of the Boards of American Red Cross (Nashville) and Boys and Girls Club of Nashville. He was a deacon at New York's Brick Presbyterian Church and an elder at Nashville's First Presbyterian Church.

Fred was a delightful man, full of charm, and he will be missed.

Excerpt from The Tennessean

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