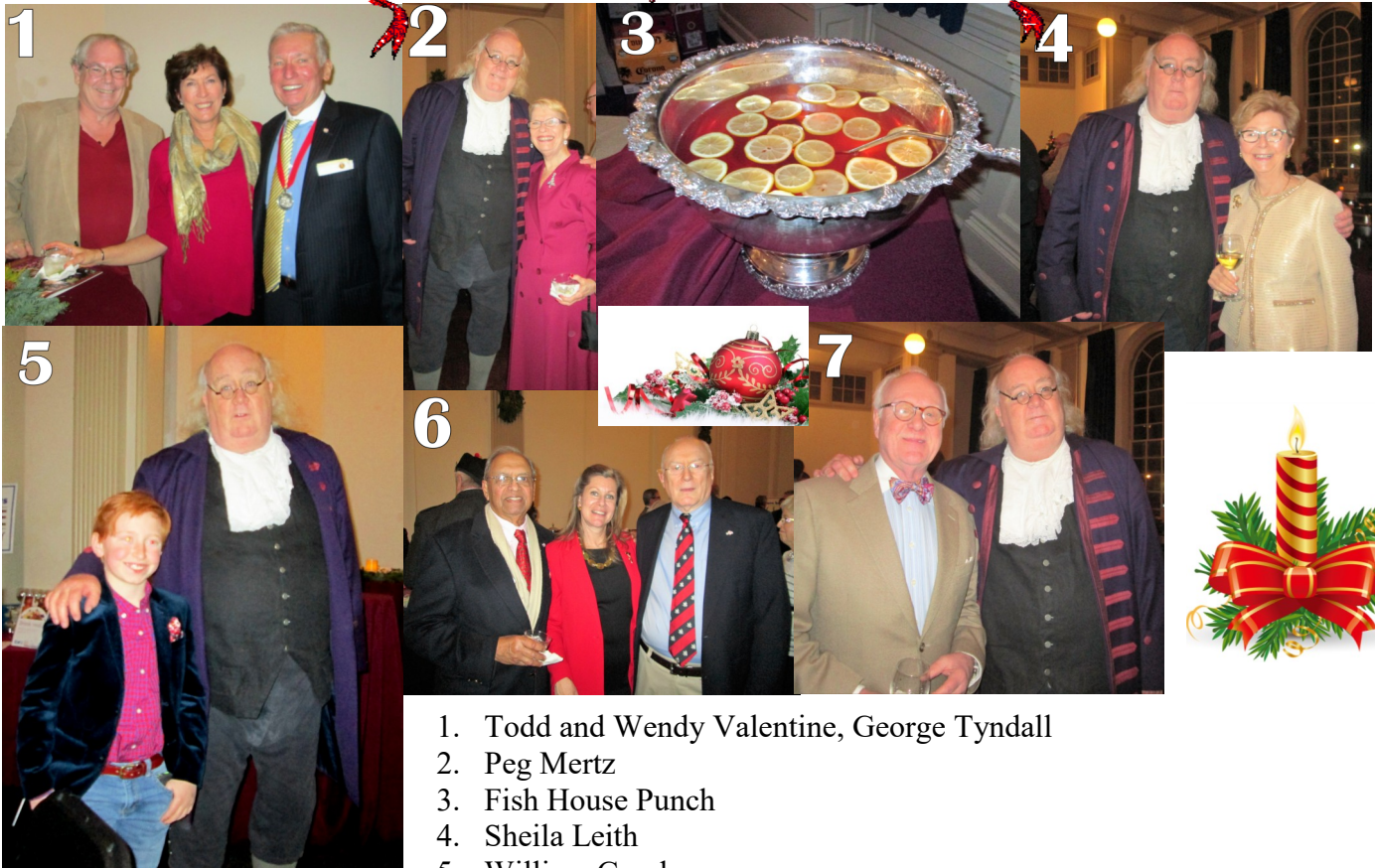




Sunday, December 18th—A COLONIAL CHRISTMAS

The 5th Annual Christmas Celebration and benefit for St. James School was a big success. The evening started with an Advent service of Lessons and Carols at Christ Church including several students and volunteers. Following the service, guests were piped across the cobblestoned street to The Neighborhood House for a festive evening, sumptuous meal and open bar. The food was provided by DiBruno Bros. Moore Bros. provided and served wine. In tune with our Colonial theme, Fish House Punch was prepared as well. The silent and live auctions provided some fun competition and wonderful charitable giving to St. James. Co-chair Ronna Tyndall was serenaded by the group with Happy Birthday and the evening ended with student Jeremy Weiss playing Christmas carols on the piano.

Over 130 guests attended this grand festive evening.



1. Todd and Wendy Valentine, George Tyndall
2. Peg Mertz
3. Fish House Punch
4. Sheila Leith
5. William Goodman
6. Chuck Gupta, Debbie Webster, Jim Cromwell
7. Val Sauri



President's Column

Dear Friends,

I hope all who attended the Colonial Christmas celebration had a wonderful time. This event brings me great joy each year. Many of our members ask why we do this event and I wanted to provide an outline as to the history and benefits for all three organizations involved.



The English-Speaking Union held a Christmas cocktail party for many years. The last one we had in 2011 was very poorly attended. The food was mediocre and because of the cost of space rental, we did not make much money. For The ESU to continue to prosper, all of our events need to be successful. We work very hard to not only make them successful, but also a lot of fun.

I know from our executive Director, Judith Francis, that the St. George Christmas party each year started off with a Service of Lessons and Carols at St. Marks followed by a formal dinner at The Racquet Club. Although attendees had a wonderful time and paid over \$100 to attend, the ticket price did not come close to paying the expenses and the Society of St George spent thousands of dollars to underwrite this event for its members.

Five years ago, George and Ronna Tyndall, members of both ESU and St. George, came up with the idea to combine the Christmas party of both organizations. Then St. James School came into the picture. The thought of helping a very disadvantaged group and giving back seemed most appealing. They had the Church and the school provided a place for the reception at no cost. DiBruno Bros., who have a wonderful relationship with the school, provided all the food, gratis. A silent auction was assembled with all the proceeds going to St. James School. It was a beautiful service and the reception was a lot of fun. ESU and St. George split the money brought in from attendance and some additional donations, while St. James received all of the proceeds from the silent auction. ALL three organizations prospered. Plus, bringing together the St. James supporters with ESU and St. George brought awareness to all three organizations. It is also important to mention that the current focus of St. George and The ESU is to promote education and they both provide educational scholarships.

Fast forward 5 years...Christ Church donated use of their space and several staff at no cost to either organization. DiBruno Bros. provided plates, cups, flatware, hors d'oeuvres, a cheese display, full dinner and dessert, gratis. Moore Bros. provided all the wine, gratis. Several Board members from all three organizations donated auction items. All three organizations provided supplies and administrative help. In the end, St. James netted over \$25,000 for their school and ESU and St. George's scholarship programs also benefited financially. This was also a fun, well run and well attended event.

I would call that a HUGE SUCCESS for everyone. Happy Holidays to all!

Very truly yours,

Pat Bushyager

President

The Racquet Club extends dining privileges to ESU members. Please register at the front desk (with a credit card) when you arrive at The Racquet Club to receive a Guest Pass.

The hours of operation for the dining facilities:

Gold Leaf Café: Monday to Friday, Noon to 2:30 PM

Full Service Brunch: Saturday, 11 AM to 2 PM

1889 Pub & Grille: Monday to Friday
5 to 11 PM and additional hours as posted



Please visit our website for dress code policies. www.RCOP.com

We are pleased to announce that the Annual Queen's Birthday Celebration will be Sunday, June 25, 2017 at The Corinthian Yacht Club



Behind The Scenes Tour at The Racquet Club And Reception

Former ESU President, Val Sauri, will lead a tour of some of the secret spaces at The Racquet Club. Following the tour, members and friends will gather in the Sailing Room for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. There will also be pay your way options if you would like to stay for dinner. The invitation is enclosed. If you have any questions, please contact Judith in the office at 215-545-3619 or esu@libertynet.org.



February 20th

Annual Shakespeare Competition



All members of our Branch are invited to attend all or part of the 30th Annual Shakespeare Competition to be held in the Louis Bluver Theatre at The Drake (15th and Spruce Streets). This year's competition will be held on Monday, February 20, 2017 beginning at 9:30 AM, and ending in mid-afternoon. There is no charge for admission.

We expect to have 20 local high schools represented from the Greater Delaware Valley including the 5 county area and southern New Jersey. You will be amazed by this local talent. The winner of this competition will go on to compete at the National Level at Lincoln Center in New York in May. Our competition format remains the same and will include a workshop on acting provided to our participating students. Please consider joining us for an exceptional experience.

March 5th

Shakespeare Competition Awards Ceremony

It is tradition to have a reception following the competition where our members can meet the winners (and their families) of the Annual Shakespeare Competition. The top 3 winners will perform their winning monologues and will also be presented with their scholarship checks by our gracious donor, Andy Webster. The first place winner will also be presented with the engraved trophy that they get to display in their school for one year. Invitations will be mailed in February for this wonderful, not to be missed occasion. Location to be announced.

2017 Is a Rooster Year!

Chinese New Year 2017 begins a year of the Rooster.

On Wednesday, March 1, 2017 starting at 6pm, ESU members and friends will gather at Sang Kee Asian Bistro in Wynnewood to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Invitations will go out electronically. If you would like a paper invitation, please contact Judith in the office at 215-545-3619. The evening includes several courses, all served family style and wine. A cash bar will be available for those who prefer cocktails.



Racquet Club Bridge

ESU Members are invited to join
 “Racquet Club Bridge” at 7pm on Mondays
 in the Main Bar of
 The Racquet Club of Philadelphia.

Beginners and rusty players welcome!
This is a really easy-going bridge group!

If enough players attend, they will have separate
 tables, based on experience and level of play. Start time is as
 close to 7:00 p.m. as possible, but players
 may arrive later, and they may leave whenever they need to.

You will be able to order from
 The Racquet Club’s excellent Pub Menu.
 For questions or to be added to the email,
 please contact
jamesmallinsonmail@gmail.com

**2017 Calendar of Events**

- January 18** Behind the Scenes Tour of Racquet Club
February 20 Shakespeare Competition
 (The Bluver Theatre at The Drake)
March 1 Chinese New Year—Wynnewood, PA
March 5 Shakespeare Competition Reception
June 25 Annual Garden Party—Corinthian Yacht Club

The Royal Oak Foundation is the American Partner of the National Trust of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Their mission is to encourage Americans to learn about, experience and support places of great historic and natural significance throughout the United Kingdom. Our members receive unlimited entry to all National Trust UK properties.

Our branch has received the honor of being listed as a co-sponsor of these events to recognize the steadfast support they receive from our membership. **Lecture location: The Union League of Philadelphia, 140 S. Broad Street.**

Spring Lectures will be announced soon!

The English-Speaking Union □ 215 S. 16th Street, Suite 14 . Philadelphia, PA 19102

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INVITATION ENCLOSED