



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating global understanding through English

Southwest Virginia . Roanoke Branch

Newsletter - March 2016

The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched - they must be felt with the heart. Helen Keller

Perhaps spring is just around the corner! Well, hope is always comforting. Suspect we shall just have to wait and see. In the interim, the SWVA Branch of ESU will gather on March 17, 2016 at the Shenandoah Club to hear Mr. Brian Kelly and Mrs. Ingrid Smyer-Kelly speak on "The Anecdotal Winston Churchill and His Mother".

Kelly teaches news writing in the University of Virginia's College of Arts & Sciences and was the original editor of Military History and World War II magazines. In 1989, he and his then-future wife, Ingrid Smyer, a freelance writer-editor, launched their series of "Best Little Stories" historical books. Among the new stories in this latest edition, readers will learn that the famous "Jackson Magnolia" on the South Lawn of the White House may not have been planted by Andrew Jackson after all; and that the first babies born in the White House were enslaved black children, not President Thomas Jefferson's white grandson, as asserted by the official White House website.

The Kellys began their book career in 1989 by self-publishing a slim volume of magazine-like vignettes called "Best Little Stories from World War II." After that sold about 35,000 copies, they produced their first volume of White House stories and followed up with "Best Little Stories from the Civil War." By early 2009, the Kellys had expanded their series to nine books containing nearly 1,000 stories.

The new edition of "Best Little Stories from the White House" will be the fifth book from the series to be re-issued by Sourcebooks. Kelly was a newspaper reporter for 20 years before his magazine stints. Smyer-Kelly, a 1981 UVA graduate, also has a background in newspaper work and magazine freelancing. The other "Best Little Stories" feature the American Revolution, the Wild West and the Kellys' adopted state of Virginia. They also produced an anecdotal biography of Winston Churchill, stemming from their lectures at a 2007 Oxford-UVA. Seminar on the wartime leader held at Oxford's Merton College.

Also at our March meeting, we will be entertained by the winner of this year's ESU Shakespeare contest, Gwyneth Strobe. Her performance at the ESU contest on February 20, was amazing.

BRANCH NEWS

The next meeting will be **Wednesday, April 20, 2015**, and will feature the Wrench Speaker, Simon Claxton. The topic for the meeting is "Meeting William Faulkner: How an English Schoolboy found a Literary Lion." The meeting is our annual **Black tie event**.

PERSIFLAGE

1. Police were called to a daycare center today where a three-year-old was resisting a rest.
2. Did you hear about the guy whose whole left side was cut off? He's all right now.
3. To write with a broken pencil is pointless.
4. When fish are in schools they sometimes take debate.
5. The short fortuneteller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
6. A thief who stole a calendar got twelve months.
7. When the smog lifts in Los Angeles, U. C. L. A.
8. The professor discovered that his theory of earthquakes was on shaky ground.
9. A chicken crossing the road is pure poultry in motion.
10. He had a photographic memory that was never developed.

(Source is Paul Ogden is alphadictionary.com)

Test yourself with these few lines from Shakespeare

Good sir, why do you start and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair? (*to the WITCHES*) I' th' name of truth,
Are ye fantastical, or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal. To me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time
And say which grain will grow and which will not,
Speak, then, to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favors nor your hate.

The lines are spoken by Banquo (Iiii) in the midst of a thunder and lightning storm as he and Macbeth return from a battle where they have quelled a rebellion led by the traitorous thane of Cawdor against the gentle, unwarlike King Duncan. Banquo is told that he will beget kings though he is not one. The play is *The Tragedy of Macbeth* whose date of composition is generally thought to be 1606 and was first published in the *First Folio* in 1623.