PRESIDENT’S CORNER

Dear ESU Denver Branch Members,

Happy New Year! May I borrow a phrase from William Shakespeare and welcome you to a Brave New World? Regardless of your political persuasion, after a contentious election I hope we can all set aside our differences and move forward together, at the very least with our mission to celebrate English as a shared global language.

The New Year begins with a mixture of sadness and anticipation. As we mourn the passing of two longtime ESU members, Mort Perotin and Jean Mobley, we also look forward to enlivening our traditional programs with a new one. I commend to you the article in this newsletter written by 2015 BUSS fellow and new Board member Todd Madison. You will learn about an exciting new direction we are about to take.

As I review 2016, I also find that the year’s successes are tempered by the losses we experienced. We successfully staged the Region VIII meeting in May, and we partnered with CU Boulder and the Folger Shakespeare Library on the Teaching Shakespeare workshop and the First Folio exhibit. But we lost Board members Karen Kellogg-Fain and Everett Engstrom following sudden illnesses.

Our next event is the Shakespeare Competition at the University Theatre in on the CU campus in Boulder, Sunday, January 29, 2017, from 1 to 3 pm. I hope to see a good turnout of Denver Branch members there!

Cheers,
Bruce Haefner, President, Denver Branch
Queen Victoria on PBS

Victoria, the highly anticipated new drama series about the epic life of Queen Victoria, will air on MASTERPIECE on PBS in 2017 in the Sunday night time slot which Downton Abbey occupied for six years. Jenna Coleman (Doctor Who) stars as the young Victoria, a tiny (4’11”), neglected teenager who overnight became Queen and eventually the most powerful woman in the world.

The eight-part drama follows Victoria from the time she becomes Queen in 1837 at the age of 18, through her courtship and marriage to Prince Albert. Famous for her candor and spirit, she was the first woman who seemed to have it all: a passionate marriage, nine children, and the job of being Queen of the world's most important nation. Victoria's often tumultuous reign lasted for 63 years; she was England's longest-serving monarch until she was overtaken by Elizabeth II in 2015.

In addition to Ms. Coleman, the stellar ensemble includes Rufus Sewell (The Man in the High Castle, The Pillars of the Earth) as Lord Melbourne, her first prime minister and intimate friend; Tom Hughes (Dancing on the Edge) as her husband Prince Albert; Alex Jennings (The Lady in the Van) as Leopold I, King of Belgium and uncle to both Victoria and Albert; Paul Rhys (Borgia, Being Human) as Sir John Conroy, ambitious controller of the household of Victoria's mother, the Duchess of Kent; and Peter Firth (MI-5) as Victoria's conniving uncle, the Duke of Cumberland.


Upcoming ESU Denver Branch Calendar

**Saturday**
*Jan 14, 2017*  
Denver Branch Board Meeting  
Common Room, Saint John’s Cathedral, 9:30-11:30 am

**Sunday**
*Jan 29, 2017*  
Denver Branch Shakespeare Competition  
University Theatre, University of Colorado, Boulder, 1-3 pm

**Saturday**
*Feb 11, 2017*  
TLab UK Application Review  
Library, Saint John’s Cathedral, 9 am-12 pm

**Saturday**
*Feb 25, 2017*  
TLab UK Interviews  
Library, Saint John’s Cathedral, 9 am-12 pm

**Saturday**
*Mar 18, 2017*  
Denver Branch Board Meeting  
Common Room, Saint John’s Cathedral, 9:30-11:30 am

**Friday-Sunday**
*May 19-21, 2017*  
ESU Region VIII Meeting  
Los Angeles Branch

**Saturday**
*May 20, 2017*  
Denver Branch Board Meeting  
Common Room, Saint John’s Cathedral, 9:30-11:30 am
In Memoriam

Mort Perotin passed away November 29, 2016. Mort is survived by his wife Norah, Norah’s daughters Marilynne Ramsey and Tricia Farrell, grandchildren Alada (Wayne) Ramsey Siebrecht and Alexandre (Patrick) Ramsey Jones, and great-grandfather of Price, Violet, Jackson & Timothy. Services were at Mt. Nebo Cemetery December 2.

Mort served in the Navy during World War II and worked in the furniture manufacturing business. A friend invited him to an ESU event where he met his future bride, Norah, and the rest is history.

Jean Mobley passed away December 12, 2016. Her husband Robert preceded her in death. She is survived by son David, daughter-in-law Janet and granddaughter Robin (Matt) Wilson. Services were at Saint John’s Cathedral and Ft. Logan National Cemetery December 21.

Jean grew up in Wales, where she danced ballet and ran track. She was a hairdresser when she met Robert, who was serving with the US Army in England during World War II. Robert brought Jean to Denver after they were married and they were active in ESU for many years.

Mort and Jean will be greatly missed. Please keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Two Englands
by Kate Murphy

There are two Englands:
One of old old stones,
rivers renowned and flowers, flowers, flowers.
(Like Mrs. Dalloway, I bought some myself.)
Ancient keys, art, iron daggers, chapels, cobblestone,
thatched-roofed cottages, and hospitality for wide-eyed travellers.
Palace luncheons, boisterous pubs, tearooms, (oh, the) tearooms with rich food.
Innumerable generations take in this England to sustain their laughing, loving bodies.

This is the England whose veins I swim through,
rack up twenty-five thousand steps a day,
click two thousand pictures,
afraid my overcrowded memory might forget
an overcrowded Oxford Street.

The other England feeds my mind:
A full moon’s stillness calls me to look up from late night writing,
hallowed Evensong every evening,
seemingly untouchable old books behind gardens, walls, glass that
I can call forth and gorge.

And as I sit down to breakfast across from her,
A new friend fully smiles, excited for conversation.

Then also—MacDuff’s quiet line
“Did you say all?...All of my children?”
cuts through the fourth wall and
slices down my ear. It nests in my throat—
scratches at my tear ducts—I want to scream out, cry with anguish.
I clutch the Globe rail, and the woman beside me pats my hand.

Each day a professor's kind voice guides the voyage
through pen-scratch-computer-click morning lecture notes.
The thrill that comes from encouragement, nay…expectation to
add my voice to our English chorus.

This England, too, must be ingested
so it can nurture the body, the body, the body
(of knowledge).
This is the England that pumps through me
and onto the next generation
because what we know, now a memory we knew
becomes Yorick-like, infinite merriment
bearing us on its back.

Kate Murphy, Denver Branch 2016 BUSS fellow at
Oxford, wrote this poem to give words to her travels and
studies this summer. She read it at the BUSS dinner in
November. Thanks Kate!
Consider two glances at English literature: The first reveals actors dueling on a stage, romance on the moors, pipe-smoking detectives, bonneted heroines, lyric poems, dystopian satires, and London sophisticates.

Another involves one girl’s journey amid refugee camps from South Africa to Botswana; a lazy Bengali son mistaken for a genuine yogi; a Nigerian doctor’s pursuit of success; the magical fates of newly independent Indians; a kidnapping in a New Zealand village; a Jamaican victim of police brutality; a love story forged off the coast of Trinidad.

This second list of stories and poems come not out of some vague “World Literature.” Instead, it is part of a great chunk of that world: English-Language Literature.

Of all the British Empire’s legacies, the easiest one to applaud is the international spread of its language. We need not read Rushdie, Achebe, or Ndichie in translation, for these authors compose using the language they were born into, and that same language is also the language of their inspirations, including William Shakespeare, Jane Austen, George Orwell, and Zadie Smith.

The English-Speaking Union’s mission includes calls to “foster global understanding,” to promote an “open exchange of ideas among the world’s speakers of English.” One excellent way to do this is to emphasize how much great English-language writing has been and is still being produced across six continents.

The ESU Denver branch’s energies should include exposing more students and members to international English-language literature. A movie event around this theme is being organized for spring 2017, and we plan to steer the fall 2017 Dr. Howard F. Beckley Writing Competition toward issues of global English. We also hope to invite an author from beyond the British Isles or the U.S. in the future. These efforts would diversify not only the writing we celebrate but could possibly attract potential members beyond the usual Anglophiles.

Shakespeare may be impossible to beat, but as we survey the brilliant scope of English-language writing around the globe, our own worlds become richer and more populous.
The Sun Never Sets on English-Language Literature
For They Are Jolly Good (BUSS) Fellows!

Denver Branch members arrived at the University Club on Thursday, November 3 anxious to celebrate alongside British Universities Summer School (BUSS) recipients Joseph DeStefano and Kate Murphy. 2016 marked the final year that the study-abroad program will be referred to as BUSS and the evening, full of delightful conversation, good food and engaging presentations ushered the old name out with style.

The teacher presentations, the perennial highlight of the evening, followed dinner and the teachers’ passion for their time in the United Kingdom was fully on display. Kate Murphy combined a slide show of her time at Oxford with narration in poetry form. The visuals were stunning and the words were captivating.

Joseph DeStefano was unable to shake the influence of his study at Shakespeare’s Globe as he moved the audience to laughter in A Midsummer Night’s Dream fashion ---Shakespeare-inspired prose and donkey ears included.

We are continually inspired by the profound effect that the global learning opportunities have on local teachers and, in turn, their students. We look forward to many more successful years of the program under the new Teachers Learning Abroad UK (TLAB) moniker.

Holiday Cheer and Shakespeare

Defending Shakespeare’s relevance in today’s society is a tall order but the winners of the Seventh Annual Howard F. Beckley High School Writing Competition did so with eloquence and style. The Annual ESU Denver Branch Holiday Party, held December 3, was a time for members to gather, ring in the season and honor the young writers who secured the prizes for this year’s competition by answering the question “Why is Shakespeare still relevant today?” The students, in attendance, read their entries aloud while members of the selection committee presented the remaining winning essays.

There was also plenty of time for socializing and Holiday Cheer as members and guests enjoyed food and drink provided by the Branch Board. We extend a special thank you to Patterson Benero for the use of the Denver Women’s Press Club and her history lesson of the venue. Thanks also to members who donated 17 children’s books to Reach Out & Read Colorado.

Ruth Beckley and Writing Competition Winners

Members Enjoy Holiday Festivities
The public is invited to attend this annual Competition held by the Denver Branch of the English-Speaking Union. Watch talented High School students as they recite a Shakespeare Sonnet and perform a Monologue from one of Shakespeare’s plays.

The top three students will be recognized and the winning student will travel to New York City for the English-Speaking Union National Shakespeare Competition, held onstage at the Lincoln Center, tentatively scheduled for April 23-25, 2017.

There will be a free reception with coffee and cookies in the University Theatre lobby following the Competition. Please join us for this exciting event!

Take the Baseline exit on the Boulder Turnpike (US 36), go west to Broadway and turn right. Short-term metered parking is available in the Euclid Avenue Autopark and west of Broadway at 13th Street (pink shading on the map). Street parking may also be available on University Avenue (at the top of the map). We hope to see you there!
SUMMER STUDY IN THE UK
FREE to local public high school English, Drama, and History teachers

BUSS is now TLab! Teachers Learning Abroad-UK provides educators and ESU members alike with dynamic continuing education through study at prestigious British centers of learning—University of Oxford, Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, University of Edinburgh, Shakespeare’s Globe in London, and Shakespeare’s Birthplace Trust. TLab-UK scholars return to their classrooms and communities revitalized and inspired.

Since 1957, 134 Denver-area teachers have studied in England. You may know some of the teachers who have received fellowships: Susan Stokley went to Oxford; Lisa Cillessen from Standley Lake High School and Brian Kurz from Grandview were in London at the Globe; DPS principal Nick Dawkins studied at Oxford as did Alan Martin. Mary Davenport from Bruce Randolph attended the Globe, and Josie Papazis from South High School studied at Exeter College in Oxford. Cindy Poinsett from Cherokee Trail High School and Timothy Reyes from Overland High School attended the Globe. Aimee Arens and Todd Madison of East attended Oxford. In 2016, Kate Murphy from Smoky Hill attended Oxford, while Joseph DeStefano from Heritage performed at the Globe. Their experiences were memorable, and all agree that they are better teachers as a result.

Best of all, the fellowships are FREE.

The Denver Branch of the ESU is seeking qualified secondary teachers of English, Drama, and History who want a chance at this marvelous opportunity. Check the website of the national ESU for current information on the fellowships, the dates, and the university curricula: http://www.esuus.org/esu/programs/tlab-uk/ . Check the website of the Denver branch for the application procedure: https://www.esuus.org/denver/about/tlab-uk/.

Applications must be postmarked by January 25, 2017.

Please help get this information to teachers by forwarding this email to district English, Drama, and History department chairs who can then notify teachers about this great opportunity. The three weeks spent in these summer programs amount to the required hours for the renewal of your teaching license in Colorado. If you have questions, should you have trouble accessing the attachments, or downloading them from the website of the Denver branch of the ESU, contact me.

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