

Indianapolis Branch of the English Speaking Union
Secretary's Report 2025-2026

The Indianapolis Branch celebrated its 77th anniversary year, 2025-2026.

Members and guests enjoyed a variety of programs, several of which included a brunch at Woodstock Club under the leadership of co-presidents Mary Ann Bradley and Debra Lloyd. Keith Lerch served as treasurer and Carolyn Lausch as secretary.

Meetings:

October 25, 2026—Book Discussion held at Woodstock Club on Chloe Dalton's memoir *Raising Hare*. "A fascinating meditation on freedom, trust, loss, and our relationship with the natural world...." Chloe Dalton is a political advisor and speechwriter who lives in the English countryside and also in London. (bookbrowse.com)

November 9, 2025—Member Kathryn Lerch, editor of "The Power of the Written Word, 1939-1941," spoke on European correspondent Alma De Luce and her husband Daniel De Luce who won the Pulitzer Prize in 1944 as the correspondent with the Associated Press. Kathryn answered the question: "How did Alma De Luce's writing inform friends, family and the world about WWII"? After the question and answer period, a short business meeting followed.

February 8, 2026--After a brunch and short business meeting at Woodstock Club, Amy Thompson, Purdue University garden specialist gave a lecture on "Gardens of England and Scotland." She presented slides of over 20 garden sites she had led a travel group to in both countries.

March 15, 2026--Brunch at Woodstock Club after which Mark Zelonis, president of Cultural Excursions and retired Ruth Lilly Department Director of Environmental and Historic Preservation, Indianapolis Museum of Art, presented on "Gardens of Scotland." A discussion with questions followed and then a short business meeting.

March 21, 2026—Book discussion held at Woodstock Club on Andrea Wulf's *The Founding Gardeners. The Revolutionary Generation, Nature and the Shaping of the American Nation*. Shirley Fry explored with those attending how "the passion for gardening, agriculture, and botany among George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, John Adams and James Madison "...profoundly shaped the American nation, connecting their political ideals with their love for nature, crops and landscape." They used the American landscape as metaphors for the nation's strength, independence and potential.

{March 26, 2026—members who support a fund connection between the President Benjamin Harrison Presidential Site and Rothermore American Institution at Oxford, met with Robin "Rob" Bates from Oxford for a pleasant evening at the historical site for a progress report.}

April 19, 2026—Our guest was Miriam Loladze-Meredith, this year's recipient of the Indianapolis Branch's ESU Fellowship for British students attending Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. She is a prize-winning international pianist doing post-graduate performance studies at IU's Jacob School of Music. She talked about how her career is leading to performance and good teaching skills. She presented on German Schumann and played one of his compositions.

June 13, 2026—77th Annual Meeting and Garden Party toasting King Charles with a cup of Pimm's at the home of member Shirley Fry, and

members enjoyed refreshments and conversations. Then James Fadely, chair of the nominating committee, convened us to elect our directors and then adjourned that meeting, and convened a board meeting during which we elected our board officers.

Board Officers 2026-2027—

President: Mary Ann Bradley

Vice President: Kathryn Lerch

Secretary: Carolyn Lausch

Treasurer: Keith Lerch

Board Class of 2024-2027

Kathryn W. Lerch

Keith W. Lerch

Debra Lloyd

Board Class of 2025-2028

Mary Ann Bradley

Carolyn Lausch

Eugene Lausch

Board Class of 2026-2029

James P. Fadely

Shirley Fry

Thomas Mason

Sharon Merriman

Debra Lloyd offered to chair the Book Club committee, and Kathryn Lerch will continue to design and send out the announcements of future meetings and Book Club discussions.

Co-presidents Mary Ann Bradley and Debra Lloyd led the meeting/discussion which followed.

Carolyn Lausch gave the annual Indianapolis Branch secretary's report followed by Keith Lerch who gave a summary of his treasurer's report informing us of \$25,000 in our account divided among the endowment and three funds. He will send the final report out to the membership in the near future.

A discussion followed on the idea that each member sends in five nominations for new members and possibilities for taking our invitation to Marquette Manor and other retirement homes to talk up our mission and to invite those interested to join our Indianapolis ESU Branch.

Jim Fadely proposed a full board meeting for July 22nd at Woodstock to consider possibilities for meetings and adding members 2026-2027.

The Branch then toasted and sang "God Save the King" in honor of King Charles and toasted the office of the presidency of the United States of America.

The meeting was then adjourned at 4:00 PM, and a social time followed.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Lausch, Secretary
July 20, 2026