

Newsletter: Princeton Branch of the English-Speaking Union (ESU)

March 2016

Dear Members,

How quickly time goes by; we are almost at the end of our 2015-2016 season! I will attempt to provide you with a brief overview of what the Branch has achieved or will shortly achieve over this past season as follows:

### **Awarding of Scholarships**

My thanks go again to Anne Willis our very capable Chair of the Education Committee. This year Anne was assisted by Board members Irene Fitzpatrick and Cecilia Talzelaar. After reviewing applications and interviewing candidates the Committee has decided to award three British University Summer School (BUSS) Scholarships as follows: Matthew Campbell from Lawrenceville School who will attend the Globe program in London, Cheryl Chambliss from Allentown High School who will study Modernism or Contemporary Literature at Edinburgh and Margaret McDonald from Holmdel High School who will study Contemporary Literature or Theater and Performance also at Edinburgh. Each teacher will receive a fully funded scholarship and on their return they will be asked to speak with the Branch about their experiences and provide a summary for the website. We were thrilled to have two of our ex Scholars with their students at the Shakespeare Competition this year and both teachers indicated that their experiences have been life changing for them!

### **The Shakespeare Competition**

The Competition, at the end of February was a tremendous success! We had 26 participants from 10 NJ schools and the winner was Connor Vasile of Morris Knolls High School whose teacher was Sharon Gally and the runner-up was Tiffany Grossfeld of the Morris County School of Technology whose teacher was our own Board member Irene Fitzpatrick! Our winner will receive an all-expenses paid trip to the National final in New York in early May.

We have Irene to thank for the increase in the number of students participating and without Sonja Herzinger and Kathy Marmion there would have been no

competition. Both Board members put in more than their fair share of work to ensure that the competition was a success. Finally, we were delighted to welcome member Diana Crane as one of our judges; a daunting task for a new judge this year due to the increase in participation but Diana was perfect for the task. Thank you Diana!

### **ESU-Folger Teaching Shakespeare Workshop**

As 2016 is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Shakespeare's death and the First Folio will be visiting Drew University, NJ in October our Branch was asked to sponsor, with the Monmouth County Branch, a one-day teaching workshop at the Two River Theater in Red Bank, NJ. This was held at the beginning of March and was a sold-out success with over 35 teachers from NJ attending! The workshop was led by experts from the Folger National Teacher Corps and focuses on scholarship, performance, curriculum and assessment. We were thrilled that one of our former BUSS Scholars was inspired to become one of the Folger experts and she was one of those who taught at this workshop. An example of how inspiring these scholarships are. We have Janet Pitman, the education expert at the Monmouth Branch, to thank for bearing the brunt of the organization required for this workshop.

### **Next Meetings**

There will be three more lecture meetings this season. On March 20, Caroline Seebohm, noted author, will speak on Rescued Public Gardens in Great Britain and the United States. On April 17, Joan Berkey who is an architectural historian will speak on England and New England influences in the colonial architecture of southern New Jersey and on May 15, Professor Michael Wood from Princeton University will speak on Alfred Hitchcock. All of these meetings will be held at the Lawrenceville School at 3.00 p.m. Finally, at a date to be determined, probably in early July, we will have our Annual General Meeting at the same time as our famous British Puddings and Movie Night.

### **What have you missed so far?**

Our first meeting was an inspiring presentation by our BUSS scholar of 2016, Line Marshall followed by lectures on Winston Churchill, the home of George Washington in the UK and a remembrance of former President Jean Stephens

followed by a lecture from one of her former pupils who is very active in the arts world and has presented modern productions of Shakespeare. We must not forget the memorable Christmas party held at the beautiful Victorian home, in Hightstown, of Board member Anne Willis.

### **Annual General Meeting of the ESU of the USA**

In October I attended the above meeting in New York, accompanied by member Clive Muncaster and Treasurer Annabelle Radcliffe-Trenner. We were introduced to the vibrant new Chairman Dr. Paul Beresford-Hill MBE who has global experience as a scholar, administrator, educator and administrator. It is worth reading his distinguished resume on the National website at [esuus.org](http://esuus.org).

We were able to share experiences with many other branches across the US and were advised that the National Board of Directors had approved a Branch Services Committee's recommendation that ESU/US adopt and implement a new organizational and management structure. This will provide better liability protection for all Branch individuals, including Board members, members of the Branches and other volunteers as well as strengthen and better protect the nonprofit 501(c) (3) tax-exempt status with the IRS. Under the new legal structure each ESU Branch is to be formed as its own Limited Liability Company entity. The Branch is currently signing the appropriate documents and is applying for an Employer Identification Number in NJ as well as changing its bank account to that of an LLC. The main change for us as a Branch is rather more rigidity as regards term limits for Officers (not Board members) primarily of President, Secretary and Treasurer. We need more members to step up to the plate PLEASE!

### **Save the date!**

A regional meeting of the ESU branches (Princeton, Monmouth County, Philadelphia, Delaware, Central Pennsylvania and Washington DC) is tentatively scheduled to be held on Saturday, 7 May at Bartram Gardens near Philadelphia. A tour of the gardens and house will be organized and the actual meeting of the Branches – organized by National – is not very long but interesting. Last year Annabelle Radcliffe-Trenner and I, plus our respective spouses, attended the meeting at Winterthur and this was a great day out! More details will be forthcoming shortly.

## **Branch Finances and Membership**

We continue to do well with our finances thanks to the tireless efforts of Annabelle Radcliffe-Trenner. The preparation of the annual tax return has proven to be an onerous task and thanks goes to member Allen Schwartz who has given up countless hours to assist Annabelle. It is clear that in future we will have to hire an accountant to assist unless a member with finance experience is willing to assist. As regards membership – you win some and lose some as the saying goes! We are delighted to welcome some new members this year and are sorry to say goodbye or perhaps au revoir to others. As always I ask for you to encourage friends to join so that we may remain a viable organization. Additionally, we need some assistance to ensure that it is not always the same people volunteering for the Board each year. This is not a time consuming task and we are very happy to have welcomed Irene Fitzpatrick, Pat Sayles and Cecilia Tazelaar this past year. They have been invaluable. I cannot finish without saying a really special thank you to our wonderful Secretary Sonja Herzinger. Sonja is always on the ball as regards sending out information and her Minutes and organizational skills are A-1!

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting!

With warm regards,

(signed)

Dulcie Bull, President

Princeton Branch of the ESU