

DIALOGUE

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER IN A FRACTURED WORLD

Professor James Raven, our new
Chair, on the ESU's vital role today


Celebrating our shared cultures at
the Commonwealth Day Service

The Public Speaking Competition
– Changing lives for 60 years



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

discovering voices



Your donations help us to ensure that many more young people have the speaking and listening skills and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive

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ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
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WELCOME

A message from our DIRECTOR-GENERAL



As this edition of *Dialogue* goes to press it is the week before Easter. The ESU's Patron, Her Majesty The Queen, has broadcast to the nation. She ended her heartfelt speech with the words 'We will meet again.' Many of the ESU members I have spoken to this week have told me how this phrase resonated with them. Members in branches are looking forward to resuming local events, and at the same time are hugely grateful for the friendship of

fellow members who have kept in touch by phone and in video messages. Our Secondary School Exchange scholars who have had to return early from the United States are hugely grateful to the ESU for the opportunity they have been afforded. The students who were hoping to have completed ESU competitions, in the UK and internationally, are also keen

to 'meet again' to pick up their public speaking, debating and Shakespeare.

Messages of greeting and goodwill from international ESU members abound. Not only do we share a dedication to the ESU's mission for dialogue in the English language and improved communication, education and understanding, but for the first

time ever, and in our patron's words '... we join with all nations across the globe in a common endeavour'.

The ESU's values of friendship, internationalism and commitment to education and dialogue play into a global context where the spoken word, clear communication and the power of conversation have a new importance. Now more than ever, we need to work together.

**'THE ESU'S VALUES
OF FRIENDSHIP,
INTERNATIONALISM
AND COMMITMENT
TO DIALOGUE HAVE
A NEW IMPORTANCE'**

JANE EASTON, DIRECTOR-GENERAL

MEMBERSHIP PRACTICALITIES

While Dartmouth House is closed, I am sorry that we are unable to send membership correspondence by post. If you normally receive a renewal letter from us, we will extend your membership automatically. If you usually send us a cheque then, if possible, a BACS payment would be welcomed. Please quote your surname and membership number, and use the details below. Luke Robinson in the Finance Team is available on 020 7529 1567 if you need advice.

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CONTENTS

5 News

Including the House of Lords Chamber Event, the winners of the International Oracy Teacher and Oracy Culture awards, and news on the East Region's Public Speaking Competition for Sixth Formers



20 Celebrating our shared cultures

Highlights of the annual Commonwealth Day Service in which the ESU plays a part

22 This house believes...

Governments are responsible for tackling climate change

24 Young voices for the planet

Meet the young people using their oracy skills to campaign for the environment

ORACY, DEBATE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE

10 Interview

As society becomes increasingly polarised, new ESU Chair James Raven outlines the importance of bringing people together to try and understand each other's positions

14 60 years of the ESU Public Speaking Competition

We catch up with six finalists from the various decades to find out how the contest has shaped their lives

19 10 things you didn't know about Chile

Fascinating facts about the home of the winner of our International Oracy Teacher Award



ESU BRANCHES AND PEOPLE

26 Branch News

The latest news from around the ESU's branch network

34 Who's Who?

Say hello to some of our members and staff



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NEWS

THE LATEST NEWS AND EVENTS FROM THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION



In the hot seats

On 29 November 2019 the chamber of the House of Lords opened its doors to non-members for only the 13th time in its centuries-old history for the House of Lords Chamber Event, for which the ESU coaches the participants. This year's theme was 'How do we reach a sustainable future?' and comprised three debates in which 90 secondary school students from across the UK took part, alongside Lords and members of civic organisations including the Royal Meteorological and Royal Geographical societies.

The largest vote of the day was registered in the second debate on 'Should we make sacrifices now to benefit people in the future?' in which 123 participants overwhelmingly agreed we should, voting for 'an immediate and rapid reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in all private and industrial sectors'. Indeed, this was the overriding theme running through the entire event: that change, by governments, businesses and individuals everywhere, needs to happen *now*. For more on the debate around climate change, see pages 22 to 25.

SIXTH FORMERS SPEAK UP

Fifty-seven young people from seven state and four independent schools from Norfolk to Hertfordshire participated in the annual Public Speaking Competition for Sixth Formers run by the East Region.

At the final on 18 November, generously hosted by The Perse School, Cambridge, judges Dr Joanna Burch, founder of the literary festival 'Words in Walden', and the ESU's Matthew Christmas deemed St Benedict's Catholic School, Bury St Edmunds, to be the winners. The team comprised

chair, Emily, questioner, Emily, and speaker, Alfred, arguing that it was not unethical to use live animals in organoid research. Holly, the speaker from Colchester County High School for Girls, was also recognised for her outstanding performance.



NEWS FLASH

'If you can speak in this country, you can do anything'



Richard Langworth, Senior Follow of The Churchill Project, Hillsdale College, has accepted a quote uncovered by our centenary alumni interviews as a genuine and formerly unknown quote by Winston Churchill. The quote was reported to us by former Schools' Mace winners Edward Stourton and Sir Nicholas Mostyn, recounting a comment made by Churchill to Lord Hailsham after a speech at the Oxford Union.

Top teacher

We're delighted to announce David Massiah (pictured, centre), former headmaster of Redland School in Santiago, Chile, as the winner of the ESU International Oracy Teacher Award 2019. Liudmyla Dzhus, an English Teacher from Inhulske School, in Ustynivka district in rural Ukraine, was also awarded a commendation.

The judging panel was delighted by the passion, knowledge and dedication evidenced in the applications. Chair judge Gavin Illsley, ESU Head of Programmes, noted that, 'All the entrants



this year have brought innovation, enthusiasm and insight to their work in making spoken language skills a central part of teaching and learning. The ESU talks about the importance of oracy in helping young people engage with the world and to reach their full potential and

David's application stood out for the way in which he has made constructive engagement with social and political issues central to his oracy work. He is a leader, creating many more thoughtful, rational leaders, to everyone's benefit.' To find out more about Chile, see page 19.

LINDEMANN OUTREACH

On Thursday, 12 March the Lindemann Trust (the funds for which are managed by the ESU) was delighted to host three Cambridgeshire primary schools at Magdalene College, Cambridge, for a day of 'Introduction to Science'. Year 6 pupils from Shirley Community Primary, Winhills Primary and Trumpington Meadows Primary Schools joined us for a series of bite-size science talks, aimed at inspiring an interest in the part that science plays in our everyday lives.

With the help of some balloons, ping-pong balls and a large speaker, Dr Alastair Gregory, a Research Fellow at Magdalene College, demonstrated how sound waves move through the air. Cosmologist Dr Chandrima Ganguly, who is an alumna of the Lindemann Fellowships, excited the pupils in talking about how the universe began. And mathematician Lisa-Maria Kreusser (pictured), also from Cambridge University, used a numbers game to demonstrate



mathematical patterns. A poster competition was launched to conclude the event and we look forward to seeing the completed artwork later in the year.



NEWS FLASH

As we go to press we are delighted to receive confirmation that Baroness Hale of Richmond will be our speaker at the Evelyn Wrench Lecture 2020. Lady Hale was Britain's first female law lord, the first woman to serve on our supreme court, and its first woman president. We look forward to an enlightening evening and will share details as soon as possible. Keep an eye on esu.org/events for more information.

DIARY DATE
To keep up to date with all events, visit esu.org/events



Dartmouth House takes centre stage

Alongside the usual weddings, openings and dinners, Dartmouth House has recently hosted a number of high-profile events, including the glittering after-party for the launch of Sky Atlantic's lavish drama *Catherine the Great* starring Helen Mirren (pictured). Over 30 per cent of hire charges go towards the ESU's education programmes.

TEACHERS TOGETHER

On 25 February Lincolnshire Teaching School Alliance (LTSA) in collaboration with the Lincolnshire branch of the English-Speaking Union, hosted a CPD day in Grantham for 14 teachers from schools across the county. The aim was to encourage schools to engage with the ESU in order to improve the quality of speaking and listening in classrooms across Lincolnshire. 'These skills are so vital to the academic, economic and social health of our region,' says Steve Willshaw, Subject Lead for English at the LTSA. 'Unless students can try out ideas in speech first, they have little chance of being able to develop their ideas effectively in fluent writing. More importantly, talk and listening are the key elements of effective communication. We look forward to an increase in debating activity across the schools in our region with all the gains in confidence, articulacy and social engagement that this will bring.'

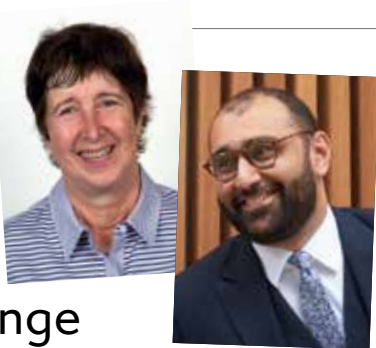
Speaking up for success

Around 60 primary and secondary pupils from schools across London came together on 28 October at Samsung KX to quiz business and civic leaders about the importance of oracy (speaking and listening skills) as part of the ongoing Parliamentary Inquiry into the subject.

The event, which was co-organised and chaired by Voice 21, saw representatives from KPMG, Ernst & Young, Young Citizens, the Association of Citizenship Teaching and others answer a barrage of questions from the children (aged 7-16) including 'Do you

think oracy helps with the right to be heard?' and 'Is good oracy more important than truth?' John, a Year 6 pupil from Torriano Primary School in Camden, said: 'I think people being taught oracy is a great stepping-stone for them to go on and have their views heard.'





All change

Alongside James Raven’s appointment as Chair (see page 10), there are a number of other changes to the board. Please join us in welcoming new trustees Gillian Day; former ESU Head of Speech and Debate James Probert; and seasoned debater Emma Gleave (see page 34), and in welcoming back Bilal Mahmood, our former youngest ever governor (in 2008), and Matthew Congreve. James Scruby, whom many of you will already know as a governor and East Region PSC Coordinator, takes on the role of Honorary Treasurer. We look forward to working with you all.



An invitation to
MAGDALENE COLLEGE

Our new Chair, Professor James Raven, requests the pleasure of your company for afternoon tea at The River Gardens, Magdalene College, Cambridge. We will be in touch with new dates as soon as possible, and very much hope you will be able to join us there.

DIARY DATE
To keep up to date with all events, visit esu.org/events

5 MINUTES WITH...

Anthony Davies,
Branch Chair,
West Sussex



When did you join and why?

I joined the ESU about 12 years ago after a colleague had taken me to Dartmouth House for lunch. The subscription appeared good value and the house an inviting place to pop into on my infrequent London visits.

What are your aims as Branch Chair?

I believe presentation skills are key to finding employment and am keen to engage with as many young people as we can, particularly in areas of disadvantage. We have begun sponsoring some Discover Your Voice sessions for local primary schools with mid to high levels of Free School Meals eligibility and are also collaborating with the Chichester Festival Theatre to enable pupils who would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience live theatre. My thanks go to all our donors, members and supporters who enable this work.

What do you enjoy about your role?

I much enjoy the schools’ competitions, which I find both enlightening and uplifting. My school was more concerned with fagging and beating than public speaking or debating, and I think that’s why I am so impressed by the achievements of the young people. I constantly marvel at their social confidence and ease, even when they are ‘offstage’.

You were a barrister and a QC – how did you learn about public speaking?

We had an enlightened and supportive English teacher who nurtured drama in us. In 1965 I joined the National Youth Theatre, through which I ended up in a sword fight with Timothy Dalton (in *Troilus and Cressida*, televised by the BBC) and which also earned me the dubious pleasure of being slapped across the face by a young Helen Mirren when, as a messenger, I had to bring her, as Cleopatra, the news that Anthony has wed Octavia. With evening and matinee performances and no theatrical trickery, there was never a more justified rendition of ‘Gracious madam, I that do bring the news made not the match.’

Culture Club

South Hampstead High School has become the second winner of our annual Oracy Culture Award. Since September 2018 the school has doubled the provision of debating clubs each week and tripled the number of students involved. It has also more than doubled the number of external speaking and debating competitions it takes part in (to 15) and has put significant effort into outreach activities working with a total of 14 other schools – most of them state schools – to encourage wider participation in debating in the local community.

‘As we are a single-sex school for girls, we felt it was particularly important to encourage our students to become confident in expressing their views,’ says Kate Etheridge (pictured), Director of Debating and Public Speaking at the

school. ‘We have also hosted regional rounds of the ESU’s Mace and Public Speaking Competitions which have been a brilliant way for us to make further links with local schools. This has been invaluable both for our students, who have appreciated the opportunity to get to know children from other places, and for our partner schools.’

Chair of judges, Gavin Illsley, ESU Head of Programmes, said, ‘We commend South Hampstead High School for the way it has fostered a sense of community around debating and public speaking, and how it has created an impressive culture of inter-year collaboration. Its inclusive approach, both in school and in its outreach work, has allowed many students who may not otherwise have had the opportunity, to gain the



confidence and skill to speak in public and to broaden their understanding of the world.’

As winner, South Hampstead High School receives a trophy and a free Discover Your Voice session for up to 24 students. Eight further schools were highly commended by the judges.

With thanks

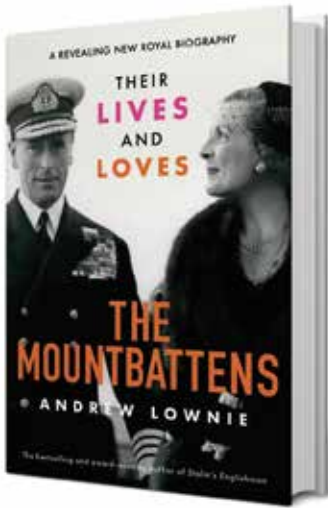
Sixty years ago this year, inspired by a speech in which HRH Prince Philip, the ESU’s President, urged members to go beyond being an Anglo-American friendship society and to use the English language to engage young people and to achieve greater international understanding, two young members of the Brighton & Hove branch came up with the idea of a Public Speaking Competition for school children. Our thanks and gratitude go to Michael Anstey (pictured) and the late John Williams, for their hard work and dedication in founding a competition which soon spread not only nationally but internationally and has touched the lives of thousands. Find out more on pages 14-18.



DIARY DATE
To keep up to date with all events, visit esu.org/events

The Mountbattens:
Their Lives & Loves

On Monday, 14 September (6.30 for 7pm), London branch invites you to an evening at Dartmouth House with historian Andrew Lownie who will deliver a fascinating talk on his joint biography of the lives of Earl Mountbatten of Burma and his wife Edwina. For more details and to book, please see esu.org/events



'THERE'S A REAL NEED TO BRING PEOPLE TOGETHER TO TRY AND UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS'

Meet Professor James Raven, the new Chair of the ESU

It's Brexit day – Friday, 31 January – when I meet the ESU's new chairman, Professor James Raven, to talk about his experiences with and vision for the charity as it enters its second century. *The Telegraph's* front page declares our departure from the EU as 'not an end but a beginning'. The *i* bills it as the 'UK's leap into the unknown'. The *Frankfurter Allgemeine* insists 'We remain partners'. *Rzeczpospolita*, Poland's oldest newspaper, leads with 'Europe abandoned'. The *Daily Star*, in its inimitable fashion, proclaims an 'Historic moment for our great nation... the end of dry January.'

Given the English-Speaking Union was founded on ideals of interpersonal and international understanding and collaboration what, I wonder, does James make of Brexit and the fault lines it has exposed?

'Today is a good day to think about the challenge that we face in what has become a very polarised society,' he says. 'There has been so much passion involved, passion that has coalesced around rather entrenched positions, and I think there's a real need to bring people together to try and >

WORDS NATASHA GOODFELLOW
PHOTOGRAPHY CHARLIE HOPKINSON



INTERVIEW

understand each other's points of view. Families have been divided, institutions have been divided, relations between neighbours and friends have suffered. There's a lot of healing to do.'

It's not only Britain's relationship with the EU that concerns him. 'The ongoing debate about the Middle East, about the basis for democratic discussion in the US, there are so many different aspects of current society which have brought not just fracture but very opposed reactions,' he says. 'The real challenge now, particularly for young people, is not just to have the confidence and ability to communicate but to be able to understand how you agree to disagree and how you come to a common understanding – or at least an appreciation of each other's positions. I think we need to raise the ESU's profile in this debate about how we can best conduct ourselves in public discussion – how we envisage or reenvision a civil society and how we operate within that. It's all about understanding – understanding the origins of conflict between people and how that might be resolved, and that applies on an international level and within countries as well.'

Of course, understanding begins with communication and James is proud of the charity's oracy programmes and competitions which he sees as a 'very real expression of our founding principles'. Indeed, he has intimate knowledge of them, having been Chair of the Education Committee since 2018, having organised and judged countless ESU public speaking competitions ever since he joined 40 years ago and, most saliently perhaps, having won Best Speaker as part of the Best Team at the Public Speaking Competition in 1976 when he was a pupil at the Gilbert School, a state grammar in Colchester.

'I'd never done anything like that before and I remember the enormous enjoyment of it,' says James. 'I don't think I really knew what a private school was before the competition, the *Jennings* books aside,' he laughs. 'I came from a very supportive family but a family who worked on the land in north Essex and south Suffolk and none of whom had taken A levels, so the PSC really opened my eyes to a whole

'The real challenge now, particularly for young people, is not just to have the confidence and ability to communicate but to be able to understand how you agree to disagree and how you come to a common understanding'

range of different life experiences and understanding.'

Those experiences included coming to Dartmouth House, meeting the Duke of Edinburgh, then the charity's President, and travelling to America on the Colchester-New Brunswick NJ US Exchange scholarship (a month-long biennial exchange established between the two ESU branches in 1973), an experience he describes as 'truly extraordinary'. 'I'd never been abroad before; never flown – I remember I was armed with notes from the ESU about "what to do at an airport". I saw automatic garage doors for the first time, shopping malls – it was a very foreign country, much more foreign than it is now.'

The branch members who welcomed and hosted James were mainly academics, educators and fundraisers, many of whom had been the founders of the New Jersey College for Women, later renamed Douglass College, now part of Rutgers University. Though he couldn't have known it at the time, the friendships he made, with both his hosts and his contemporaries, have been enormously helpful throughout his subsequent career. A past and present Fellow of two colleges in Cambridge (currently at

Magdalene) and one in Oxford, James is an international authority on literary culture and credits his time in the US as giving him the 'stepping-stone' he needed to allow him to pursue his academic work. 'The ESU gave me a boost at an absolutely pivotal early stage,' he says. 'It gave me the confidence to travel; without it I probably wouldn't have undertaken my historical research.' His contacts and knowledge of the



The ESU's competitions and programmes such as Discover Debating, pictured, help young people engage with the world and to understand other points of view

American university system have had other benefits too, allowing him to foster early careers in academia among his own students. 'It's left a very practical legacy,' he says.

What, then, does James see as the priorities for the charity today, given his knowledge of education and his long experience of the ESU?

'The ESU is an educational charity that sets out to transform lives and that transformation is about giving people an opportunity to think for themselves, to explore the world through communication – and sometimes in person – and to give them opportunities which they might not otherwise have access to,' he says. 'Sadly, despite the national rhetoric and all the political initiatives over the last 20-30 years, we live in a more divided and more unequal society than we did and there has been a real closure of access to opportunity, a limitation of horizons, for many young people. I'd like to see us going forward in partnership as part of a coalition of people working in schools, particularly in disadvantaged communities, to make a very powerful and sustainable contribution.'

James sees this idea of partnership and collaboration as being as important at branch level as it is at national and international level. 'We have a keen and committed volunteer membership and I'm very much in favour of branches saying in their local communities, "We are the ESU."



A life in the ESU

1976

Won Best Speaker and Best Team at the PSC

1980

Joined ESU

1985 onwards

While a Fellow of Cambridge and Oxford colleges invited ESU to hold summer schools there

1990

President of Colchester (now Colchester and North Essex) branch

2000-2006

Appointed Governor of the ESU

2012 onwards

Elected Governor of the ESU

2014-2017

Deputy Chair

2018

Chair, Education Committee

2020

Chair, ESU

This is what we do. Would you like to join or support us?" Involvement from parents and support from schools was always a strong aspect of our competitions and I would like to see a return to that.'

In tandem, James is also keen to promote the charity's profile, particularly with a view to contributing to the debate on the nature of civic discourse. 'We have a wonderful history in terms of our contribution to past debates through the Churchill Lecture and other high-profile events and I hope we can continue and refresh that,' he says. He's also eager to consider how communication intersects with technology, something he's all too aware of through his two young children (William, 14 and Rupert, 12). 'Teenagers are in an entirely new world of communication,' he says. 'They have been brought up with the internet, Instagram, Facebook etc and now they have someone, notably in the White House, who is tweeting all the time, which they see as a model for how to conduct political debate. Messaging as a form of communication presents an important challenge, and one I think we can engage with.'

As someone who has benefitted so much from international links himself, James also intends to extend cross-cultural collaboration wherever possible, especially between the UK and America. It's amusing to note that the topic for James's speech in the final of the PSC in 1976 was 'the future of US/UK relations bilaterally and multilaterally'. Back then, he pronounced them rosy and that's an opinion he continues to hold. 'Britain outside the EU is going to have a new relationship with the US, as with every other country, and how that relationship is fostered is very important,' he says. 'An organisation like the ESU is in an unrivalled position to contribute to that, particularly through its branches. As Sir Evelyn Wrench said, "international relations should not be left to governments alone".'

160

YEARS

of the ESU Public Speaking Competition

From its beginnings organised by the Brighton & Hove branch 60 years ago, the PSC has grown into the largest national public speaking competition in England and Wales. To celebrate its anniversary, we catch up with six finalists from the various decades to find out how it shaped their lives



PHOTOGRAPHY JULIA HAMILTON

1965
Professor Angela Stent
 Director of the Center for Eurasian, Russian & East European Studies, Georgetown University

'Aside from one of the judges commenting on my "feminine charm mixed with firm control" – not a remark that would pass muster now – my main memory of the competition is the important part it played in developing many of the skills that I have gone on to use in my life and career since.

I was the chair and so had to introduce the subject – my teammate Bharti spoke on "The Commonwealth and the International Idea" – and keep to time. It helped develop my skills as a public speaker of course and, because we had to prepare to talk about a variety of subjects, it improved our research and organisational skills. Listening to the other schools was very instructive, too.

After school, I went to Cambridge and then did a Masters and a PhD at Harvard. I've been a professor at Georgetown University since 1979 and I've also worked twice in the US government and published several books. During the course of all that I've done a lot of public speaking and I've also chaired many discussions, notably in my role as National Intelligence Officer for Russia and Eurasia where I had to chair meetings between people from different intelligence agencies. Understanding how to listen and how to form a consensus or, if they disagreed,

TIMELINE

1960
 Competition founded in Brighton & Hove branch by John Williams and Michael Anstey

how to begin to minimise those disagreements, are all skills that I began to learn at the competition.

Although things are much better than they were, I still think women have to be encouraged to speak out and to understand that what they have to say is important. I think practising for competitions like this, and competing against boys, is crucial in enabling young women to have the self-confidence to speak up, and I'm very grateful for having had the opportunity to participate.'

1972
Tim Hancock
 Chairman, McLean Advisory

'I remember feeling rather put upon when I was chosen to give the vote of thanks because that's the role you can least prepare for. But prepare we did. I wrote skeleton subject headings irrespective of the topic at hand, and then had to listen hard and build in details from what was being said.

We won two rounds, and then went up to Newcastle for the final. Since we were at school in Sussex, we stayed at

1964
 Competition extended to London and South East

1966
 Competition extended to East region, North West and Canterbury

1961

the home of an ESU member in the city the night before. He was an extraordinarily well-to-do individual and it was all slightly surreal.

On the day, everything was going well until part way through my vote of thanks, when my mind went completely blank and I dried. It must have only been for a few seconds but it felt like minutes and I can still feel the sense of deep, total shock now. I was sure I'd scuppered our chances but although the judges mentioned it, we still went on to win.

I've never got over the nervous tension I feel speaking to very large groups, but in my line of work (investment banking and financial services) I have to give a lot of presentations to smaller groups and the competition certainly helped with that. It also helped prepare me for interviews and made me realise the importance of listening to what is being said, as well as teaching me to always button my jacket when standing to speak, something the judges commented on at the final and which I've made sure to do ever since!

Public speaking is an essential skill and one I think all children should have the chance to try. It's inherently confidence-building and encourages you to understand that people want to hear what you have to say.' >



1987

Lolita Chakrabarti

Actress & writer

'My brilliant drama teacher, Miss Maureen Stack, introduced me to public speaking when I was 14. I did a lot of competitions over the years; the ESU was the last one I took part in, just before my A levels. We won best team [Lolita also won best speaker] so it was a real high to go out on. We won the most incredible prize, too: a weekend in London with a limousine tour and a very posh lunch in the NatWest tower [the competition's then sponsor] which was one of the tallest buildings in Europe at the time and, coincidentally, where I learnt to use a fish-knife!'

In retrospect I see that the competition gave me a foundation in speaking publicly as myself, not as an actress. I'm now often asked to say a few words at events so it's something I have to do more and more. Taking up the information in the room, the



current situation in the world and your own opinion, then putting it together into something palatable and entertaining for an audience is definitely a skill you have to practise and I started it there.

We're all battling with our own insecurities, whether it's about our intellect or the way we stand or the way we look, but to be able to speak out publicly to a group of people and say what you think is really important, and especially essential for young people who may be worried about how they might come across. It also teaches you how to construct an argument – to explain why you think that way and to convince others and bring them along with you. That clarity of thought has been very important in my writing – it has formed the basis of half of my career.'



1991

Louise Crow

Head of Development, mySociety

'One of the best things about doing the PSC for me was that I became friends with my teammates whom I hadn't known well before. Our team's speaker, Kate Paice, chose fascinating subjects to talk about, from "the virtues of idleness" to "the rock star as role model", which was her theme for the final.

My role was to give the vote of thanks: to listen and summarise what the other team's speaker had said, thank them for their contribution and to relate it to other parts of the event. I found it incredibly nerve-racking. I remember I was sick before I went on but learning that you can be nervous and still do your thing was a valuable lesson, and one that stands me in good stead today.



ALUMNI STORIES

'We need people who can talk to others, listen to them and really understand what they're struggling with – that's a very valuable skill set'

I now work in software development and still use the skills I learned in the competition – it's not all about making an amazing algorithm. Much more important is to understand what people are doing and what support they need to achieve their goal. So we need people who can understand the technical side but who can also talk to others, listen to them and really understand what they're struggling with – that's a very valuable skill set.

I'm a big believer that education should prepare you for life's challenges. In my work now we look at how to help people become active citizens and the data shows that increasingly people feel like their voices aren't being heard. To combat that, I think we have to spread a lot of different skills throughout the population, not just among the privileged. Being able to understand how power and civic life works is one of these skills, as is being able to articulate your point and understand those of others.'



2003

Charlie Samuda

Team Lead, Social Mobility, Department of Education

'My involvement in public speaking is all down to my wonderful English teacher, Mrs Haines, who ran our debating and public speaking society. I think the main interest for me was the issues we spoke about. I wanted to study history and politics for A level and the ESU competition topics were always some sort of social or ethical debate. That got me more interested in politics and government and likewise my interest in politics made me more interested in public speaking.

Winning best team was fantastic, and led to me participating [Charlie also won best speaker] in the International Public Speaking Competition where I met people from all around the world. Then, in 2008, when I was at university, I successfully applied for the ESU's Capitol Hill internship, and spent ▶

1968
Competition goes national

1975
A young Michael Crick is the winner



1979
Newsreader Alastair Burnet and actor Derek Jacobi are judges. Rory Bremner is crowned champion



1990
Anita Anand wins

1980
International Public Speaking Competition established



1991

1995
Vote of thanks role replaced by questioner



ALUMNI STORIES



2014

International Churchill Society becomes our sponsor

2010

Broadcaster Sue MacGregor and journalist Kate Adie are judges

2017

Speechwriter Simon Lancaster is a judge

a summer interning at the House of Representatives in Washington DC and volunteering for Barack Obama.

I think the PSC helped me in several ways. Without a doubt, it helped me develop the interest in politics and government, which led me to the job that I have now. It has also helped me express my ideas more effectively – a clearly argued point in a meeting or a presentation can land an argument better than any chart or report – and it's made me a better writer. It taught me that if you can't explain something clearly, chances are you don't really understand it, so speech writing often helps you think through and clarify your ideas.

I very much believe public speaking should be taught in schools because presenting is still the currency of many professions. Unfortunately and unfairly, that currency is more easily available to certain people. Participating in competitions with the ESU shows young people that this is a skill that can be acquired and practised, like getting better at a sport or exercising a muscle. It levels the playing field.'

'Competitions show young people that this is a skill that can be acquired and practised. They level the playing field'

2010

Katie Heard

Strategist, Marks & Spencer

'The ESU's competition felt very different to some of the other public speaking contests we did at school for two main reasons. First, the feedback from the judges felt very professional and second, it gave us an opportunity to leave Lincolnshire and to travel to other schools and meet different people. I particularly remember the regional final in Leeds where we had to wrangle the massive trophy we won into a plastic bag to carry it back on the train, as we were the only team which didn't have our own minibus.

The final was similarly impressive, and very intimidating. Held at one of the Inns of Court in the City, war reporter Kate Adie was a judge and we were up against some of the top

private schools. My brother was our speaker and, as chair, I had to introduce our guest speaker, from Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Glantaf in Wales, take questions and sum up. I spent most of our prep time trying to pronounce the school's name correctly and then, in my panic, I completely forget to take questions from the floor. I just went into the bathroom and cried, I was so sure I'd messed everything up.

A very nice lady eventually coaxed me out and, to my amazement, I discovered that we had won. Of course, what you realise afterwards is that it's not really about the winning, much more important is how you learn and develop through the process and I would say now that it was the competition which introduced me to that critical thinking mindset which has led me to my current career. It's not just about standing up and giving your speech, it's about interaction, active listening and thinking about how to respond in a way that moves the conversation forward. It's not necessarily adversarial, it's about getting closer to the answer.' ●

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT

CHILE

Fascinating facts about the adopted home of the winner of our International Oracy Teacher Award

1. Around twice the size of Japan, Chile is the world's longest country. Despite this, it has a population of just 18 million, compared with Japan's 127 million.

2. Chileans, or *Chilenos* as they call themselves, love a UFO. The country has one of the only government-funded UFO research organisations, and Forbes has listed Chile as the number one place in the world to spot UFOs.

3. Chile is the largest producer of copper. The Sewell Mining Town, built in 1905 by the Braden Copper Company, and now one of six UNESCO world heritage sites across the country, tells the story of the early days of the industry.

4. While several countries have research bases in Antarctica, Chile has a civilian town here. Villa Las Estrellas ('Town of the Stars') is home to a school, a hospital, a post office, and even has internet access.

5. With its stained glass domes, chandeliers and acres of wood panelling the National Library in Santiago is one of the largest in Latin America, containing over 1.6 million books.

6. Bernardo O'Higgins, the son of an Irishman, was Chile's first president after it declared independence from the Spanish Empire in 1818. He is considered one of the 'Founding Fathers' of the nation.

7. Powerful earthquakes have shaken the country on several occasions (most notably in 1960) and have given their name to a popular cocktail – the *terremoto* – made with white wine and pineapple ice cream.

8. The Atacama Desert may be one of the driest regions on Earth but when it does rain it is transformed into a carpet of flowers – over 200 species grow there.

9. Pudu (the world's smallest deer), puma and penguins can all be found here. The penguins are particularly easy to spot: there are around 8,000 breeding pairs in the Pinguino de Humboldt National Reserve.

10. Chileans refer to their land as *Pais de Poetas* or 'Country of Poets' as Chile lays claim to two Nobel Prize winners in Literature; Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral. ●

WORDS: LOUIS PRESTON

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

CELEBRATING OUR SHARED CULTURES

Join us for the highlights of the annual Commonwealth Day Service in which the ESU, as one of the four Loyal Societies of the Commonwealth, plays a part

The multi-faith ceremony took place at Westminster Abbey on Monday, 9 March, with representatives from each of the 54 sovereign states of the Commonwealth. Representing the ESU were Professor James Raven, Chair; Jane Easton, Director-General; governors David Shaw OBE and Gillian Day; Dr Alastair Niven, Co-Chair of the Events Committee; alumnus and long-time supporter Richard Humphreys QC; and Tina Turner who does so much to coordinate our Public Speaking and Performing Shakespeare competitions in Tunbridge Wells.

PHOTOGRAPHY WESTMINSTER ABBEY/PICTURE PARTNERSHIP

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

Her Majesty The Queen and Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge greeted the crowds outside the Abbey. They were joined by the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex and the Earl and Countess of Wessex.



'As members of this very special community ... I hope that the people and countries of the Commonwealth will be inspired by all that we share, and move forward with fresh resolve to enhance the Commonwealth's influence for good in our world.'

Her Majesty The Queen is the Head of the Commonwealth

Children also played a part in the service, forming the **Griffin Schools Commonwealth Choir** and the **Purcell School's Brass Quintet**. Among their repertoire were songs from New Zealand, Trinidad and Bengal, India.



The **One-Drum Foundation** – a collective of African master drummers, dancers and musicians – was just one of the acts in a service that included performances from singer **Alexandra Burke** and readings by boxing champion **Anthony Joshua OBE**.

BUY A PICTURE

To buy a picture featured here, or any others from the event, please go to <https://gallery.picturepartnership.co.uk/gallery/cwd2020/home>. Add 'ESU20' in the notes section and 20 per cent of sales will go towards the ESU.

This house believes...

Governments are responsible for tackling climate change

IN FAVOUR

Lauren,
Holyrood
Secondary School,
Glasgow



The general public, particularly the younger generation, is becoming increasingly aware and alarmed by the pressing issue of climate change and the detrimental effect it will have on all our futures.

Chilling figures telling us we have merely 18 months left to live if change is not made instil severe fear and panic in us. We then look online and to our peers and discover that no one else really knows what to do either – we just recognise that it's bad.

Individually, we are almost powerless. It is easy to feel hopeless when it seems all one person can do to save the world is to stop eating meat and to cut down on their plastic use, especially if we do not see these progressive behaviours implemented in our schools and workplaces. Passionate activists such as 'Generation Z' representative Greta Thunberg inspire hope in us that people do care and solutions can be offered, and lead the way in the one thing which might

make a difference: pressuring people in power to do more for the cause.

For as long as governments permit corporations to cut down entire rainforests and not introduce eco-friendly workplace procedures, a single person swapping out chicken for tofu does nothing to save us from our impending doom. If people in power actually take a stand against climate change by increasing laws against it for all people, including companies and firms which have enormous carbon footprints; if

'Governments must take action now to not only ensure a prosperous future, but a future full stop'

they introduce education schemes which provide advice and support on living eco-friendly lifestyles and actually listen to and work with politicians and parties who are keen to implement ideas for reducing climate change in the UK, we may hopefully

reside on our earth for much longer.

Ultimately, no matter how big, small, powerful or powerless you are, and no matter what your view is on climate change, we will all be affected similarly and our lifestyles are going to be significantly altered. So, governments must take action now to not only ensure a prosperous future, but a future full stop.

AGAINST

Chrinovic,
Sprowston
Community
Academy, Norfolk



I believe we cannot simply put the focus on a small number of people such as the government. Responsibility means accepting that you are the cause of and the solution to the matter. As a nation, we each have an individual right to reduce our consumption, and we cannot blame others for how we live or ask them to fix our sustainability. The average person's carbon footprint is roughly equivalent to filling 24 million balloons with carbon 10 times over. This is an issue for each of us individually. I understand that some may think that we have chosen leaders to take the initiative on supporting this process, but that is completely futile if we continue to add to the problem.

The issue is about education and taking action. An example of this is the consumption of meat and dairy. Today, many of our beef cattle are raised on deforested lands, which results in 12 times more greenhouse gas emissions than if they were allowed to graze natural pasture. Travel is also an issue. A typical



passenger vehicle emits about 47 metric tonnes of CO₂ a year. We need to take the initiative by using green transport: for example, taking the bus more often or simply using bikes; it really is not that hard.

I understand that the government is needed to do this and that they can provide some solutions for us. Some may also say that the government makes laws, but when we consider all the different laws we have, do people actually follow

them? They are most likely to be broken. In the end, it is our problem and we all need to take the time to come together and grasp the fact that we all need to change. ●

Texts are edited extracts from participants' contributions to the House of Lords Chamber Debate in November 2019

HAVE YOUR SAY

What do you think? We'd love to know. Please email yourviews@esu.org or tweet @theESU and we'll feature a selection of responses in the next issue.

YOUNG VOICES FOR THE PLANET

Meet the young people using their oracy skills to campaign for a cause they really believe in – the environment

‘It seemed like an incredible opportunity to collaborate with other schools to help protect the planet’

Lorena (Year 13, Hammersmith Academy) and Chiara (Year 11, St Paul’s Girls’ School) met in spring 2019 when students interested in environmental issues from the two schools collaborated to help run an eco-workshop on the theme of marine plastics and river pollution with two local primary schools. ‘Then, in the summer term, members of our eco-committee walked over to meet the Hammersmith Academy Eco-Council,’ says Chiara. ‘We met their chickens, saw the amazing student-run gardens, discussed what we had achieved so far in our schools and our future plans.’

From this, the West London Schools Eco-Partnership (attended by students and teachers from six local secondary schools) was born, with the intention of working together to reduce the schools’ environmental impacts through joint fundraising, volunteering and awareness raising.

‘Local climate activist Noga Levy-Rappaport spoke at our first meeting and it’s been inspiring to learn about each of the school’s environmental initiatives,’ says Lorena. ‘For example, St Paul’s eliminated single-use plastic bottles and cups last year, as well as introducing the Terracycle recycling scheme (for hard-to-recycle

items) and we donate the vegetables we grow at Hammersmith Academy to the local food bank. As a partnership we are planning to raise money for the Australian bushfire damage and arranging a Green Week with workshops and talks in each school, as well as planning joint cleans (of the river or local parks) and events to educate people outside our schools, such as parents or local residents.’

There are far bigger plans too. The partnership intends to conduct a multi-school survey of students’ environmental concerns, from which to collate a list of actions for individuals, schools and communities. It has also started thinking about ways to get West London schools involved in the COP26 UN Climate Change conference in Glasgow this November [now postponed] –

‘a chance to influence real change together,’ says Chiara.

Effective communication is plainly key to all their plans. ‘Public speaking has helped me to be more confident,’ says Lorena, ‘especially when I see people understanding the message.’ Chiara, who has been part of St Paul’s Girls’ School debate team for three years, agrees. ‘Debating has also helped me articulate my thoughts more clearly,’ she says. ‘We want to persuade people to do more to help the environment and debating has definitely helped me to structure my arguments to make them more convincing.’

‘School strikes give people the sense that they can change things’

When Clara (Year 9) and Reuben (Year 10) from Whitley Bay High School in Tyne and Wear saw coverage of the UK Student Climate Network schools strikes on the news, it struck a chord. ‘It’s the most fundamental threat to our future right now and I found it really empowering to see people on the street and speaking their mind,’ says Clara. ‘It made me think “I want to do something as well”.’

Not friends beforehand, they have bonded over their shared cause and have

banded together to try and get others involved. ‘We talk to as many people as possible to try and get them to come along – the most we’ve had from our school is about 20 people,’ says Reuben who, with Clara, has been on all the school strikes since last April. They admit it has been tough. ‘People are reluctant to miss school particularly now we’ve started our GCSEs,’ Reuben continues, ‘and a lot of people seem not to want to think about the future. Some people say “we’re going to die anyway so what’s the point?” It’s like they don’t have hope.’

‘It’s giving people the sense that they can change things and that’s really important’

There has been other opposition too. ‘At the strikes, teachers on their lunch breaks have come up to me and said “This won’t do any good”,’ says Clara. ‘They tell me to wait and become an engineer and then help solve it.’ Both agree that this is where debate club and the debates they have in their history lessons have helped the most. ‘Debating has definitely helped us to think about different opinions,’ says Reuben. ‘We’ve learnt to listen and take on board what others are saying before we can argue our point of view.’

The highlight so far has been the September strike when over 1,500 people including trade unionists, Newcastle University academics and the North of Tyne mayor marched in the centre of Newcastle. ‘It was so nice being a part of so many people coming together,’ says Clara, ‘and it felt like there was so much power there. I’m a student, I’m from a working class background, I’d always thought I couldn’t really change anything but it’s made me realise I’m not entirely useless.’

‘I think that’s one of the best things about the campaign,’ says Reuben. ‘It’s giving people the sense that they can change things and that’s really important.’ ●

PHOTOGRAPHY ANTONIA COLEMAN-HARVEY



BRANCH NEWS & EVENTS



Spring/Summer 2020

For more information about any of our branches please visit esu.org/branches

BRIGHTON, HOVE & DISTRICT

Our September guest speaker was Susan Sandover. Her illustrated account of life as the British wife of a Libyan diplomat under the Gaddafi regime gave us an interesting perspective of international relations in some very troubled parts of the world. In October our past chairman Arthur Collins OBE drew on his experience as a diplomat to talk about an intriguing story of late colonialism under the title 'Queen Victoria's Distant Island' – a reference to Papua New Guinea. Continuing the theme of international relations General the Lord Richards of Herstmonceux (pictured below) delivered the Joyce Rolf Memorial Lecture to a full house at the Hove Club in November. In conversation with writer



BRIGHTON, HOVE & DISTRICT Lord Richards delivered the Joyce Rolf Memorial Lecture

BRISTOL Redmaids' School was the winning team at the Bristol final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition



Harry Bucknall, General Richards, a former Chief of the Defence Staff, reviewed the unsettled strategic landscape and presented some possible solutions where a shortage of statesmen and statecraft is complicating a volatile situation on the world stage. In January Dr Barry Twigg MBE spoke about the 200th anniversary of the accession to the throne of George IV, who as Prince Regent and as King left his mark not only on Brighton but also on the development of English literature as a result of his founding of the Royal Society of Literature.

BRISTOL

Since September the Bristol branch has held meetings on Ernest Shackleton, El Greco, the history of the Victoria Cross,

and the rise of China as a global power. Our last two meetings attracted over 50 members and guests, with Professor Zhang's talk on China, in particular, prompting a large number of questions. Members wanted to know Professor Zhang's views on matters including the sustainability of China's economic growth rate, the government's repression of religious minorities, and its record on environmental pollution.

In November, Queen Elizabeth's Hospital School and Cotham School hosted keenly contested heats in the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition, leading to six teams going forward to the Bristol final in January, hosted by The Redmaids' High School. Teams from the host school and Colston's School deservedly went forward to the

KEEP UP TO DATE For more information about any of our branches please visit esu.org/branches

South West regional final at Sherborne School, Dorset, on 15 March (as did Clevedon School from the nearby Bath competition). We are pleased to welcome new member Norma Felstead, an experienced judge with the International Federation of Festivals, as a judge for our competition. We look forward to hearing more of her perceptive advice for our budding public speakers.



Summer Party

Wednesday, 15 July, 6-8pm

29 Mariner's Drive,
Stoke Bishop BS9 1QG
Tickets £5

**For further details please contact
Nigel Currie, Chairman, at
nigelcurrie29@gmail.com or on
0117 914 0773**

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

Buckinghamshire held two wonderful heats of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition on 11 and 19 January. At the branch final, kindly hosted by Wycombe Abbey School, on 1 February the judges had a very tough decision and selected John Hampden Grammar School Team Two to go forward to the regional final.



AGM & Summer Barbeque

Saturday, 5 September, 1pm

Jubilee Cottage, Church Farm,
Hughenden Valley HP14 4LB

**For further details please contact
Dr Annette Dearmun at
annettedearmun@gmail.com**

COLCHESTER & NORTH ESSEX

Two local heats were required for the blossoming annual East Region Sixth Form Public Speaking Competition, held in October 2019.

The Colchester heat was held at the County High School for Girls and contested by two teams from the host school and two from Colchester Sixth Form College. High Steward of Colchester, Sir Bob Russell, and award-winning toastmaster, Karen Bellerby, judged the County High Team Two to be the winners. The team comprised chair, Rosie, questioner, Ana, and speaker, Holly, who argued that politics should not be isolated from our daily lives.

The Essex heat took place at Felsted School, which graciously lent their theatre for the event. Two teams from the home school competed with two from King Edward VI Grammar School, Chelmsford, and one from Westcliff High School for Boys. Public speaking entrepreneur Nicky Browne and artist, Christopher Meigh-Andrews, announced King Edward VI Team Two as the winners. The team was made up of chair, Jaimin, questioner, Jonathan, and speaker, Scarlett, who criticised the manipulation of comic-book heroes.

Each of the winning teams progressed to the final at The Perse School, Cambridge, in November, where speaker Holly gained further recognition (see page 5).

CORNWALL

Cornwall branch had a well-attended Thanksgiving lunch at the splendid

Carlyon Bay Hotel, with a marvellous talk on 'Churchill the Parliamentarian' by Mr David Kendrick, OBE, QPM.

The Cornwall Public Speaking Competition this year is between two schools from St. Austell – Penrice Academy and Poltair School. Other schools, including previous entrants Truro School and Truro High School, will be back next year.

DEVON & EXETER

The branch has been busy with the promotion of ESU charitable educational and training programmes. In October we arranged a Discover Your Voice training day in Exeter for 20 students from a number of schools, all of whom seemed to appreciate the experience. We also held a further training day for judges of the Public Speaking Competition under the expert guidance of member Roger

Tilbury. Several members attended, all of whom subsequently acted as judges in the branch rounds of the competition. The winner of those branch rounds was Torquay Girls' Grammar School and the school received our winners' monetary prize.

Our monthly speakers lunches and dinners have been well attended. Our speakers were Professor Michael Mendillo, from Boston, USA, on 'Intersections of Astronomy, Art and Religion'; Vic Marks on 'The Allure of Test Match Special'; Alexis Bowater on 'The Life and Times of Lady Astor'; Martin Fisher on 'The First 40 Years of Hollywood' and actor and author (and much else besides) Mike Bearcroft on 'The Life and Times of a Polymath'. >

Owing to the uncertainties caused by coronavirus please confirm events with organisers before travelling

EASTBOURNE

We celebrated our Thanksgiving lunch in November and were most fortunate in having as our guest speaker our past Director-General, Mrs Valerie Mitchell. Mrs Mitchell spoke on her role at the ESU and also of her great interest in cultural affairs and branch and overseas development.



AGM & Cream Tea

Saturday, 6 June, 2.30pm

Royal Eastbourne Golf Club
BN20 8BP

Speaker Mr Richard Blair,
son of George Orwell

Independence Day Lunch

Saturday, 4 July, 12.30 for 1pm

Chatsworth House, Horebeech Lane,
Horam TN21 9DZ

by kind permission of our President,
Mrs Jane Mitchell

The Palace of Westminster

Wednesday, 16 September,
10 for 10.30am

All Saints Church Hall BN21 4HE
Speaker Mr Kevin Gordon

For further details please contact
Sarah Carr on 01323 506308
or Jill Weston on 020 7736 9584

EPPING FOREST

The branch enjoyed its usual monthly meetings with talks given by Sue Clack ('The Silk Road by Bus'), Camilla Nicol ('The Antarctic Heritage Trust') and committee member Janet Wallace, whose summary of recent holidays and events was particularly well received, since much of the audience had been on all the holidays involved.

The highlight of the period was the annual concert at the Royal Festival Hall on 3 November. This year the

programme included *Fireworks* by Stravinsky, *Piano Concerto No 1* by Rachmaninov and finally excerpts from *Swan Lake* by Tchaikovsky. The conductor was Santtu-Matias Rouvali and at the piano Nikolai Lugansky. It would be impossible to exaggerate the amazing performance of both these stars or the thunderous applause which rewarded all three recitals. It is also pleasing to know that the profit made for such branch events goes towards the ESU's charitable work.



AGM & Talk

Thursday, 2 July, 10.15 for 10.45am

Speaker Elizabeth Gowing on
'A Courageous and Skilful Shot'



Clockwise from top:
EPPING FOREST The branch enjoyed a trip to the Royal Festival Hall
GUILDFORD Calthorpe Park School were the winners of the first Guildford heat of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition; Robyn, from Prior's Field school Team One, won best speaker; Kamaal Busari, who was one of the judges

Galapagos Conservation Trust

Thursday, 6 August,
10.15 for 10.45am

Speaker Bob Stockwell

All events take place at
The Murray Hall, 106 Borders
Lane, Loughton IG10 3SB
£5 (members), £6 (guests)
For further details please call
020 8505 9001 or 01992 812454

GUILDFORD

Nineteen teams from 14 schools took part in the Guildford branch & district ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition, four of which went on to the district final held at Guildford Cathedral on Thursday, 13 February. The standard remained high, with students

as young as 13 delivering captivating and well thought through arguments on topics such as: 'Can you hear me? - Is Greta Thunberg actually having an impact?' and 'There is no such thing as old age'. Questioners and Chairs also rose to the challenge displaying quick thinking and the ability to manage the performances efficiently and in a friendly manner. Our thanks go to the Dean of Guildford Cathedral, the Very Reverend Dianna Gwilliams and to our most generous and willing host schools: Prior's Field school in Godalming, Notre Dame School in Cobham, Sutton Grammar School in Sutton and Farnborough Hill school in Farnborough. We thank them. We also thank our team of 13 judges who give of their time and expertise so freely. We welcomed three new judges this year: Kamaal Busari, Nicole Roberts and Dr Sam Fowles, and we mourned the passing of Ian Cullen (RADA-trained actor) on 12.11.19, who judged our second heat last year. Ian is sorely missed.

HASTINGS 1066 & EAST SUSSEX

In September Hastings 1066 met in its usual venue, the Royal Victoria Hotel. After a wonderful buffet lunch, Mark and Karen of Animal Aid spoke about respect for animals. At the October meeting Luke Robinson, the ESU's financial accountant, was our guest. He spoke about the Branch Compact and the new financial arrangements. We held a pre-Christmas lunch in November and were serenaded on the piano by Louis Denny who played a selection of songs from both World Wars. The fallen in both

Owing to the uncertainties caused by coronavirus please confirm events with organisers before travelling

GUILDFORD

The branch Thanksgiving dinner was a glittering occasion, held at the town's historic Guildhall. Guests included, from left, friends of Timothy Lewis, guest of honour; Moira Maidment - a long-standing member of the Guildford ESU; and Olivia, a speaker from Salesian School Chertsey, which won last year's regional final



WITH THANKS

The Guildford branch and all at the ESU would like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Timothy Peter Lewis, a founding member of the branch and its treasurer for 50 years. The Thanksgiving dinner in November was held in honour of his retirement and Mrs Lori Winch-Johnson, the previous Chair of this branch, gave an informative and insightful vote of thanks. The delicious meal was provided by Clark Caterers and musical entertainment by Diane and Becky White.



World Wars were also remembered.

Money made from the raffle, to which guests and members generously donated, will be used to support the ESU's charitable work. In December, guests and members celebrated Christmas with a beautiful lunch. The speaker was

Josephine Stanley from Bexhill High Academy who gave an interesting account about the school's new library. She was presented with a donation to support further development. The two pupils who came with Josephine were presented with prizes as a reward for their progress in reading development. A donation was also sent to support the development of a school in Sierra Leone.▶



Clockwise from top: HERTFORDSHIRE Local public figures at the branch final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition; LINCOLNSHIRE Dr Tony Wood led a successful training day for six local primary schools near Lincoln; former ESU scholar Tasmin Little OBE was guest of honour at the Lincolnshire dinner in November

HERTFORDSHIRE

The Christmas party at Chairman Nigel Rogers' home was held on Tuesday, 17 December and was well attended, resulting in a net surplus towards ESU funds. Nigel provided an excellent buffet which was followed by musical and literary entertainment, mainly led by him, with other members joining in. Nigel played and led singing from the piano and Julia Beynon performed some solo arias and songs. Other members also contributed poetry, readings and some comedy items. On 21 January we were delighted to

welcome local public figures Sir Simon Bowes Lyons KCVO; The Worshipful the Mayor of Hertsmere Councillor Rabbi Alan Plancey; Mr Stuart Nagler MBE, DL; and David Rose, President Radlett Rotary, to the Hertfordshire branch final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition, kindly hosted by Aldenham School. Seven school teams competed, with Haberdasher Aske's School for Girls, Team One, and their guest speaker, Jamila, who was voted Outstanding Personality, going forward to the East Region Final at Magdalene College, Cambridge, on 14 March.

LINCOLNSHIRE

Following a successful summer workshop, Dr Tony Wood returned to lead a training day with a further six primary schools in the LSST training hub near Lincoln. Tony put Year 5s through guided activities and, by the end of the day, the children were impressively active participants: next up is a debating competition and another session with more schools. The branch plans a day for Year 7 and 8 students with humanities teachers to encourage the use of debating skills in the wider context and across a range of subjects, as well as a DYV training day for about eight senior schools delivered by the ESU's specialist education and debate staff. This aims to engage yet more schools to participate in the ESU's public speaking and debating competitions. (For more details see page 7).

At the November dinner, this year impressively produced and hosted by the students and staff of Lincoln College, guests enjoyed a memorable evening with top violinist Tasmin Little OBE. Herself a former beneficiary of an ESU scholarship, Tasmin stressed how important being able to communicate had been to her professionally. Words would have sufficed but Tasmin's musical illuminations had the audience swooning – and raised over £2,000.

DIARY DATES

Branch AGM and Reception
Tuesday, 30th June, 6pm
Mansions of the Future,
Lincoln LN5 7EQ

Summer Exhibition Private View
August, date tbc
Doddington Hall

For further details please contact
kelly.bevers@carlbom.co.uk or
call 01469 571387

LIVERPOOL & MERSEYSIDE

The Liverpool & Merseyside branch recently held its branch final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition and to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the contest, the special guest and judge for the event was Alina Maciag from the Polish ESU.

As Churchill himself said, 'The Polish people and nation will forever hold a warm place in British hearts. It was in defence of Poland's freedom and independence that Great Britain drew the sword against Nazi Germany on 3 September 1939, within forty-eight hours of the German invasion of Polish territory.'

Branch PSC organiser Bruce Hicks gained sponsorship for the event from Connards Jewellers, Lord Street, Southport and from Morgan Sindall Construction. This allowed the local committee to have many awards and prizes for this very special competition. The event was held at Hope University, Liverpool with the kind permission of Vice Chancellor and Rector Professor Gerald Phillay. The winning schools were Archbishop Beck Catholic College and St Edward's College and we congratulate them.

A new feature was the involvement of Longmoor Community Primary School who presented a debate using the ESU Schools' Mace model.

LONDON

The period has been dominated by preparation for and delivery of the London heats of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition. On 10 October 2019 we held a judges' training day at Dartmouth House, ably presented by

Roger Tilbury and Anthony Harris. The heats took place in January and February, culminating in the London regional final on 17 March. The Performing Shakespeare Competition followed immediately afterwards. Profuse thanks are due to Matthew Christmas and

Antonia Coleman-Harvey at Dartmouth House for their invaluable help in organising both contests. Our main event for members was a splendid piano recital given on 19 November 2019 to a large and appreciative audience by Alexander Ullman, a former ESU music scholar. We thank Jane Reid for her tireless efforts to arrange an excellent series of branch events. Our best wishes go to our esteemed Honorary Treasurer, Ann Armstrong, who is happily now recovering after a long hospital stay.

MID-CHESHIRE

Our current season of events started in September 2019 with our Annual General Meeting and a presentation by Barbara Crellin about our branch's involvement in the Public Speaking Competition. In October we welcomed Professor Ian Morison who gave a fascinating delivery entitled 'It's about time'. John Miller addressed us in November about his time 'On the road with the BBC'. For our Christmas lunch we looked closer to home when hearing about 'Ways for wildlife' in and around Sandbach. We have four more lunches before we take our mid-year break and we will be arranging a summer fundraising event.

We also enjoyed being hosts to the North-West regional final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking

Competition on Saturday, 7 March at The Grange School in Northwich, in which six schools competed.

DIARY DATES

AGM & Lunch
Tuesday, 8 September, 12.15pm
Portal Premier Golf Club, Forest Road, Tarporley CW6 0JA

For further details please call
07851 772 381

NORWICH & NORFOLK

The branch has enjoyed a number of interesting talks including from Mr Brian Hedge on the story of the Norfolk Wherries and from Carol Watkinson on the East Anglian Air Ambulance. In November we had a quiz arranged by D Bird and our Christmas lunch at Park Farm Hotel was followed by a fun Christmas quiz and raffle.

On Tuesday, 4 February the branch final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition was held at Langley School. Three schools (Langley School, Wymondham High Academy and first time entrants Reepham High School) entered two teams each, and the timekeeper was Isabella Gessner. The judges Mrs S. Barker, Mrs E. Powell and Mr J. Moore congratulated all participants on their excellent performance and encouraged them to learn from each other. Wymondham High Academy Team One (Chair Freddie, Speaker Kate and Questioner Yucheng) won best team and Reepham High School Team One (Chair Jakob, Speaker Alasdair and Questioner Abigail) were runners up. Best Chair went to Freddie of Wymondham High Academy Team One; best Speaker was Asa of Langley School Team Two; and best Questioner was Farhan from ▶

Wymondham High Academy Team Two. Our thanks go to Head Teacher Mr J. Kempton for hosting the event.



The Tea Caddy and Me
Friday, 19 June, time tbc
Speaker Christine Humphries
AGM & Lunch
Friday, 17 July, 11.30am prompt
All events take place at Park Farm Hotel, Hethersett, Norwich NR9 3DL
Luncheon is £20 per head and needs to be booked by the preceding Wednesday.
For further details please call 01603 456661

SOUTH WALES

In December the branch held its traditional Christmas celebration in the Great Hall of Howell's School Cardiff. As always the staff had gone to great lengths to create a wonderfully festive atmosphere and to prepare the school's senior musicians who entertained us and led carol signing before dinner. Members also showed their appreciation for the work of recently retired Chairman, Derek Morgan and his wife Anne who have served the branch for over nine years and have been central to its growth into one of the largest in Britain.

The first fundraising lunch of 2020 took place at Cardiff City Stadium where over 130 members heard guest speaker Dr Bobo Lo speak on 'China and the World'. This was Dr Lo's second visit to the branch and his return was by popular request. Once

Owing to the uncertainties caused by coronavirus please confirm events with organisers before travelling



Above, clockwise from top: SOUTH WALES Members of the South Wales branch at their Christmas celebration; ESU alumnus, author and broadcaster Roy Noble entertains the audience with recollections of Christmases in Wales; speaker Dr Bobo Lo pictured with his wife Siriol and Captain Sir Norman Lloyd-Edwards, President of the South Wales Branch

Above right, from top: WEST SUSSEX Director-General Jane Easton with branch member Mary Esson, celebrating her 100th birthday; WORCESTERSHIRE From left: Sir Nicholas Lechmere (Branch President), Sonia Chance (Chair) guest speaker Ben Cooper, and Lady Caroline Lechmere at the branch Thanksgiving lunch

First Secretary at the Australian Embassy in Moscow and head of the Russia and Eurasia programme at Chatham House, Dr Lo is both an illuminating and highly entertaining speaker.

During late autumn and early winter, a series of public speaking competitions was held in South Wales schools resulting in six teams from Bro Morgannwg, Hawarden High School, Bryn Tawe, Howell's School, Llandaff Cathedral School and St John the Baptist, Aberdare proceeding to the final at the old Welsh Assembly building, Ty Hywel on 5 March.



WEST SUSSEX

In October we enjoyed a fascinating talk on 'Kitchener – Forgotten Hero' from speakers Sandra Lowton and Lady Kenya Tatton-Brown whose family had close connections with Kitchener. Our guest and speaker for our Thanksgiving lunch was Jane Easton, ESU Director-General, who spoke on '100 years of ESU-US collaboration' and presented a gift to our oldest member, Mary Esson, whose 100th birthday we were also celebrating. In January we visited the County Record Office in Chichester where we had the rare privilege of seeing and learning more about the 'Sussex



Declaration', the original copy of the American Declaration of Independence. The West Sussex final for the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition took place in the Bishop's Palace in Chichester in February. The standard was extremely high and the four teams had taken on board the advice given by the judges at the heats the previous month. The worthy winners were Churcher's College Team One (Oliver as Chair, Ellie as Questioner and Amy as Speaker). Our thanks to Chichester publisher John Wiley, who sponsored the event and presented the prizes, and to our three judges: Miranda Powell; Richard Plowman, Mayor of Chichester; and newcomer, The Revd Lindsay Yates.



Thanksgiving Lunch
Friday, 20 November, time tbc
Boxgrove Village Hall, PO18 0EE
Speaker TBA
Price TBA
For further details please contact Adrienne Barnett at adrienne42@hotmail.com

WORCESTERSHIRE

Our Thanksgiving lunch was held on 22 November at The Beauchamp Community Boardroom at Newland. Our guest speaker was Ben Cooper, often seen on BBC's *Bargain Hunt* and this year's Chairman of The Three Choirs Festival at Worcester Cathedral. His talk, 'Tales from the Antique Trail', was wide-ranging, highly anecdotal and delivered with humour and wit. We were delighted that our President, Sir Nicholas Lechmere, and Lady Caroline, his wife, were also present.

The Chairman's Christmas reception, always a cheerful occasion, was held on Sunday, 15 December. At the end Sonia Chance, our Chair, was given a heartfelt vote of thanks for her untiring and conscientious work for our branch.

The Worcestershire final of the ESU-Churchill Public Speaking Competition took place on 21 January at Malvern St James. We were delighted to welcome two young ESU members, Bennet Ager and Hannah Bone as adjudicators, and their youthful professionalism and well-considered judgements gave all the competitors a real insight into what they themselves could achieve. Sonia Chance presented the Worcestershire Cup to the winning team from RGS Worcester, who go forward to represent Worcestershire at the Midland regional final in Oxford.



Midsummer Musical Evening
Saturday, 27 June, 6.30 for 7.00pm
Jayne Swann (Soprano) and Nicola Shorland (Flute)
£40 to include Champagne reception and a buffet supper
Mayflower 1620
Friday, 11 September, 7.30pm
Peter Sutton and Jules Hobbs (narrators) and the Guadeamus Vocal Consort
Tickets TBA
All events take place at The Beauchamp Community, Newland, Malvern WR13 5AX
For further details please contact Mrs Elizabeth Farrer on 01905 774212

YORK & DISTRICT

Both of our branch heats were held in January 2020, the first at St. Peter's School in York, a school which claims to be the oldest school in the country, founded in AD627. We had five teams, two from St. Peter's itself, two from Malton and one from Harrogate Grammar. The standard was high and a splendid evening was had by all. We were royally treated by St. Peter's which included a delicious supper and our thanks go to Dr. Alastair Dunn who helped coordinate the smooth running of the evening from St. Peter's end. Our second heat was held at Silcoates School in Wakefield, with thanks to Simon Wardle, Head of English there. Speeches were delivered with passion and conviction and The George Fleming Memorial Prize for Best Speaker was presented by George's daughter Sheila Ainsley to Holly. Well done to Malton School, winners of heat one and Silcoates School, winner of heat two, both of whom we shall see again in the North Eastern regional final. ●

PEOPLE

WHO'S WHO

Say hello to some of our members and staff and find out what makes them tick



Luke Robinson

Financial Accountant, joined 2018

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Either a fireman or a forensic scientist, both a far cry from accountancy come to think of it!

What are you proudest of in your ESU career so far?

A charity that has been around for over 100 years inevitably has some ingrained ways of working, so being part of a team that has helped implement a more modern way of operating (such as a new finance system, online payments, and invoicing) in a short time frame has definitely been a personal achievement.

Who is the best speaker you've heard?

Hearing Stephen Fry speak is always such a pleasure. The way in which he presents himself regardless of topic is fascinating; that and the fact that I grew up listening to his *Harry Potter* audiobooks might have something to do with it.



Emma Gleave

Governor, joined 2014

What did you want to be when you grew up?

Since the age of 12 I have always wanted to be a solicitor. My late father was a barrister and my inspiration, and the plan was that I would provide him with cases. I achieved both of these aims.

What made you want to join the ESU?

As a neighbour living opposite I was intrigued by the building and the club.

What do you hope to achieve in your role?

To help inspire young people, ideally from less privileged backgrounds to speak up and achieve their potential.

When have you used your voice to speak up for something you believed in?

As Chairman of the Women Solicitors group in Manchester I campaigned for greater female participation at a senior level in the law.



Alastair Niven

Co-Chair of the Events Committee, joined in 1970s

What made you want to join the ESU?

I joined the ESU because I think the English language is one of the glories of the human race. The ESU understands that and does a wonderful job promoting it.

What do you hope to achieve in your role?

Being male, pale and now well on the wrong side of 21 I have always tried to speak up for cultural diversity. I hope to see the ESU become more engaged with contemporary culture, much of which originates among young people of diverse social and ethnic backgrounds. Our Events Committee has made a good start, but it won't be at the cutting edge without itself having a wider representation in its membership.

Who inspires you and why?

Modest people: former prime minister Clement Attlee to whom I gave the vote of thanks when he came to speak at my school; the writer Chinua Achebe; and Mary Poppins – a model of firmness, determination, high behavioural standards, politeness and humour. She ought to be prime minister. ●



**DARTMOUTH
HOUSE**

HOLD YOUR EVENT AT DARTMOUTH HOUSE

Dartmouth House, home of educational charity the English-Speaking Union, is an elegant mansion set in the heart of London's Mayfair. With its stunning classical interiors, original features and a beautiful marble courtyard, the house is the perfect venue for elegant private dinners and drinks receptions, as well as conferences, board meetings, seminars and lectures.

ESU members receive discounts on hire charges and over 30 per cent of proceeds go to the English-Speaking Union's education

programmes, so by holding an event at Dartmouth House, you are helping ensure that all children, regardless of their background or education, have the speaking and listening skills and cross-cultural understanding they need to thrive.

The house can accommodate groups of all sizes, from 10 to 450 for a standing reception.

To find out more, speak to our events team on 020 7529 1554 or email info@dartmouthhouse.co.uk

ESU BURSARY FUND

Bursaries are awarded both to schools in disadvantaged areas and to individuals – at home and overseas – who would otherwise be unable to participate in our programmes.

Through our debating, public speaking and cultural exchange programmes we give young people the skills and understanding they need to think for themselves and to explore the world through communication. By helping us to support a young person or school to take part in our programmes you help transform lives. Thank you.

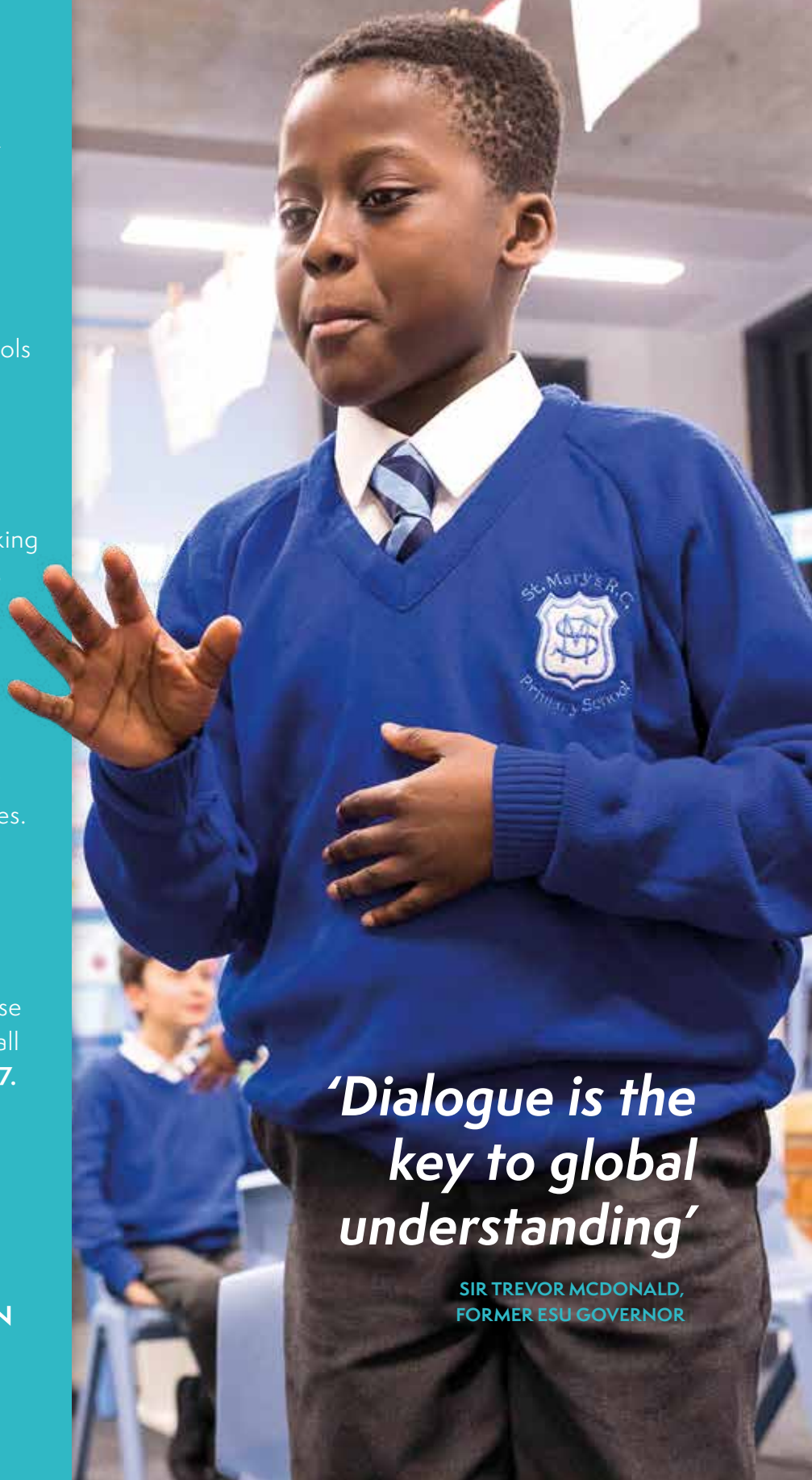
SUPPORT OUR WORK

To make a donation to the English-Speaking Union Bursary Fund, please visit portal.esu.org/donation or call the finance team on **020 7529 1567**.



ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
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***‘Dialogue is the
key to global
understanding’***

SIR TREVOR MCDONALD,
FORMER ESU GOVERNOR