



English-Speaking Union Scotland NEWSLETTER

January 2010

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- Latvia
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- Lithuania
- Madagascar
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Nepal
- New Zealand
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- Pakistan
- Philippines
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- Portugal
- Romania
- Russia
- Serbia
- Sierra Leone
- Sri Lanka
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- USA
- Vanuatu
- Yemen

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WELCOME and Happy New Year! We have been very busy and we hope this newsletter will give you a flavour of recent activities. If you would like to know more, please do get in touch. We look forward to seeing you soon.



The ESU **Schools Debating Competitions** are already well under way. A record number of 154 teams have entered the ESU Juniors Debating Competition and first round ties have been held all over Scotland, with Schools Mace ties starting this week. We would like to say a huge thank you to all our judges who give up their evenings to judge ties, and without whom these competitions would not be possible. We are always looking for new judges, so if you are interested in attending or judging any of the ties, please contact Jack.



Jon Dye and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG KT at the opening of St Margaret's House

The **ESU Scotland AGM** took place on Friday 18th December. Jon Dye stood down after six years of dedicated service as Chairman. All of our members appreciate everything he has achieved during his time in office, and we will not be saying goodbye to Jon as he has taken on the post of Treasurer. We are delighted to welcome Brian Monteith as new Chairman. Brian has been a friend of the ESU for a long time, serving first as Honorary Vice-President and then as Deputy Chairman.



2009 Schools Mace trophy

ESU Scotland organised a debate to celebrate **St. Andrew's Day at the Scottish Parliament**. This was the first ever debating competition with mixed teams of school pupils and university students competing together. 18 teams of young people from all over Scotland are took part in this very special event. The winners were John McKee from Glasgow University and Rachel McLellan from the High School of Dundee.



EFL classes started on 11th January with day and evening classes at different levels. Our Monthly International Coffee Mornings where students and members meet over coffee to chat and share stories continue on Friday 5th February from 10am-12 noon (£2). **Please come along!**



On sale now for £5.99

Entries for our **inspired? get writing! Creative Writing Competition**, run with the National Galleries of Scotland, and the Scottish Poetry Library, are flooding in. There is still time to enter as the closing date is 22nd January. You need to write a poem or prose piece inspired by one of the works in the National Galleries' permanent collection. Details of the competition are on the ESU Scotland website. Our next **Creative Writing Group** meeting is on Thursday 28th January, from 6.00-8.30pm. Please contact Suzanne for details of all creative writing events and programmes.





In focus...

Brian Monteith, Chairman, ESU Scotland writes...



The year of 2010 has certainly thrown ESU Scotland a challenge right from the start – the heavy snow and freezing temperatures making it difficult for some schools to compete in our debating competitions as mayhem descended on Scotland’s transport links.

Fortunately our Head of Speech and Debates, Jack Donaldson, reports good progress with the ESU debating competitions despite the occasional hiccup. At least Suzanne Ensom, our Head of Membership and English Language, will be dealing with the latest entries for the Creative Writing Competition from the comfort of our office – we’ve promised to keep the heating on for her and her fellow judges as they sift through the essays. Look forward to the announcement of the winners at the National Gallery on the Mound, later in the Spring.

Meanwhile Evelyn Banna, our ever-reliable administrator, will be helping us prepare for the first social event of the year – the annual ESU Scotland Burns Supper on Saturday 6th February. The supper has become a favourite with members and friends and this year will form part of what is hoped to be a regular bi-monthly series of social and fund-raising events that I would like to institute.

In these cash-strapped times when corporate sponsorship is harder to come by it is vital that we make more effort to raise funds - and what can be better than doing it while ESU supporters are able to socialise and make merry? During the course of the year we also hope to have a Literary Treasure Hunt, a Summer Garden Party, another Race Night (after last year’s great success), a Casino Royale Evening with a Bond theme (obviously) and possibly a Hallow’s Eve Night.

So do come along to the Burns Supper – which at only £15 per head, good food, great laughs and a BYOB policy is excellent value for money. Numbers are limited to fifty so book early!

I must thank the recently retired Chairman, Jon Dye, for all his individual efforts and team building that has helped ESU Scotland achieve so much in the last six years. If I can build on his foundations and deliver half as much as he has then we should be prospering as an organisation.

I look forward to seeing you at the Burns Supper and meeting you over the course of the year.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JANUARY 2010

■ Thursday 28th January 2010
6.00-8.30pm
Creative Writing Group
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh
(Moved from Thursday 4th Feb.)

■ Thursday, 28th January
12.30pm-2.00pm
Edinburgh Branch Lunch
Dr. Richard Kimberlin
Scientist and ESU member
Q&A session on “Microbes”
Overseas House, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh
£12 for 2-course lunch

FEBRUARY

■ Friday 5th February
10.00am-12.00pm
International Coffee Morning
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh
£2 coffee donation

■ Saturday 6th February
7.00pm for 7.30pm
ESU Burns Supper
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh
£15 for dinner BYOB
Please contact the office as soon as possible to book a place

■ Wednesday 10th February
Evening, time TBC
Panel Discussion with The Howard League for Penal Reform on Criminal Justice
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh

■ Friday 12th February
6.30pm for 7.00pm
ESU & Heriot Watt University Debate on Minimum Alcohol Pricing
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh

■ Saturday 13th February
11.00am - all day
John Smith Memorial Mace
Glasgow University Union
Final to be held early evening
Please contact Jack for details

For more details of these events, please contact Suzanne in the office

All photos except creative writing pictures courtesy of Ian Geddes
www.jwggallery.com

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