



English-Speaking Union Scotland NEWSLETTER

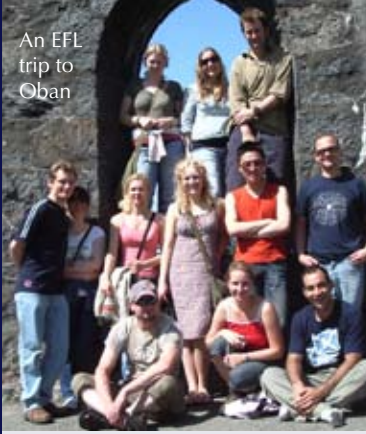
November 2009

- Argentina
- Armenia
- Australia
- Austria
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Brazil
- Bulgaria
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Cyprus
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- England & Wales
- France
- Georgia
- Germany
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- India
- Japan
- Korea
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lithuania
- Madagascar
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Nepal
- New Zealand
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Pakistan
- Philippines
- Poland
- Portugal
- Romania
- Russia
- Serbia
- Sierra Leone
- Sri Lanka
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- USA
- Vanuatu
- Yemen

WELCOME to the ESU Scotland new monthly newsletter. You, our members, are at the heart of the organisation and we would like to keep in touch better with you. We hope to see you at some of our events over the next few months, and we welcome your comments and suggestions. If you would like to come to any of our events or activities, or would like to learn more, please do telephone the office.

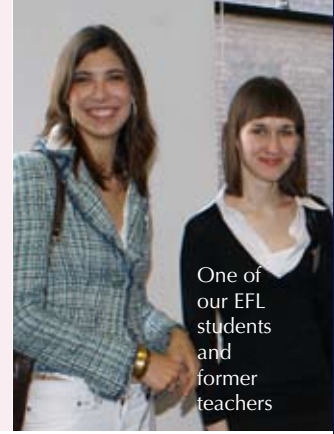


Last month we were sad to say goodbye to **Rob Marris**, our Head of Speech and Debate, as he leaves for pastures new. He achieved an enormous amount during his time at the ESU, and everyone will miss him. We are delighted to welcome **Jack Donaldson**, who is ably stepping into the speech and debate shoes. Jack is already busy organising the 2009/10 competitions and workshops and lining up excellent speakers for the next few Atholl Crescent debates.



An EFL trip to Oban

We have **English classes** this term from Elementary to Advanced level. The students are making excellent progress. This month we launched our **International Coffee Mornings**, from 10am-12 noon on the 1st Friday of the month, at the ESU. This is a chance for members and students to meet and make friends. All we ask for is 2 hours of your time to help our students practise their English, and £2 contribution. Please do get involved! For more details, please contact Suzanne.



One of our EFL students and former teachers

The **Atholl Crescent Debating Society** goes from strength to strength with a **Guest Speaker Debate** in September on **Scottish Independence** and in October on the motion **This House Believes That Promoting the Welfare of Offenders Is In The Best Interests Of Victims**. The speakers included Paul McBride QC and Aamer Anwar. There will be a fun ACDS Christmas event in December. For more details email debates@esuscotland.org.uk



The **Edinburgh Branch Speech Forum** took place in October. The topic was *Cities are for people, and people need to move, but how?* 19 pupils from 10 schools provided a very entertaining evening of speeches. The winner was Rebecca Scott from Linlithgow Academy and the best novice was Finley Hutchison from Moffat Academy. Congratulations to all the speakers who took part.

IMPORTANT! The **ESU Scotland AGM** will take place on 18th December at 23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh. More details will follow next next month.



The **inspired? get writing! Creative Writing Competition**, run by ESU Scotland, the National Galleries of Scotland, and the Scottish Poetry Library, is in its fifth year. The second edition of the inspired? get writing! book will be launched at a **Supper and Stories** evening on 11th December at the Scottish Arts Club, with poems and stories from the competition. Please contact Suzanne for further details. We also run Creative Writing groups at the ESU on the first Thursday of each month.



In focus...

Rob Marrs writes... As you may know after three and a half years with ESU Scotland, I'm heading off to pursue a career with The Law Society of Scotland. With this in mind it falls upon me to reflect on my time at the ESU, the major achievements of ESU Scotland in recent years, and the bright future ahead for the organisation. There are many things I will miss about working at ESU Scotland: working with Suzanne and Evelyn; delivering Outreach workshops all over Scotland (from Drumchapel to Tiree!); listening to young people discover their voice. I won't miss trying to organise four teachers to be in the same room at the same time on the same night or peeling 100 turnips each Burns Supper, but I take with me many happy memories and will cherish the friends and opportunities the ESU has afforded me.

Looking back, my favourite moment, from a debates perspective, was launching the CPD programme earlier this year. This has been a huge boon for ESU Scotland and it is fantastic that so many teachers are being trained directly by the organisation. Through this programme we are affecting positively the lives and life chances of thousands of Scottish school pupils. As of my last day, we had worked with over 300 teachers from over 80 schools, a figure which was inconceivable a year ago, and all involved should be proud of that achievement. I thoroughly expect this work to continue to grow over the coming years.

As well as that, the sheer relief after the Conference last year and the giddy joy of receiving phone calls from South Korea telling us that Scotland had won the World Schools Debating Championships were both fantastic feelings. Watching two young, kilted Dundonians jumping around the House of Lords as they won the International Schools Mace was also a special moment. Closer to home, all at the ESU made no secret that they wanted Abronhill High School, one of our very first Outreach Schools, to win the Scottish Mace Final, a feat they achieved this year.

Throughout my time at ESU Scotland, I received letters from teachers and parents thanking me and the ESU for our input, telling us that their children had enjoyed our workshops, that they had a great time and that they had learned some new things. The most moving of these was one from the parents of a young girl in North Lanarkshire who said that their daughter had, before our workshops, been shy to the point of tears if she was asked to speak in public. This crippling shyness was affecting her work and she had started bunking off school because of bullying that stemmed from her shyness. They had seen an immediate change in her after our workshop: she had become more confident, able to speak in public and able to speak in class without breaking down. They thought that a debates workshop on a dreich November morning had changed the course of their daughter's life. She is now a formidable debater in her spare time and will no doubt head to a very good university. That's what the ESU should be all about.

I am sure I'll be around at events so this is farewell but not goodbye. I would like to thank all involved with the ESU. To my colleagues in the office: thank you, it was always a genuine pleasure working with you. To the members of the SNC: thank you for the many opportunities you and the organisation offered me. To the members of ESU Scotland: thank you for your support of all our activities, it was always much appreciated.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

NOVEMBER 2009

- Thursday 26th November
12.30pm-2.00pm
Edinburgh Branch Lunch
Robert Forman WS, Solicitor
The History and Role of the High Constables in Edinburgh
Overseas House, 100 Princes Street, Edinburgh
£12 for 2-course lunch

Please contact the office if you would like to attend the Branch Lunch. Bookings must be made no later than the Monday preceding the lunch.

DECEMBER 2009

- Thursday 3rd December
6.00-8.00pm
Evening Creative Writing Group
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh
- Friday 4th December
10.00am-12.00pm
NEW International Coffee Morning
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh
- Friday 11th December
6.30pm for 7.00pm
Supper and Stories
Supper followed by Readings from Inspired? Get writing! Volume 2
Scottish Arts Club, Rutland Square, Edinburgh
£18 per person for dinner
Please book with the ESU
- Friday 18th December
Time TBC
ESU Scotland AGM
ALL members are warmly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting, where a new Chairman of ESU Scotland will be elected
23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh

For more details of any of these events or membership activities, please contact Suzanne in the office

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