



English-Speaking Union Scotland **NEWSLETTER**

Spring 2008

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Dear Friends

I was reflecting recently that in my five years as Chairman of ESU Scotland, I have had the privilege of meeting the most wonderfully diverse and interesting people from all over the world: from the Director of diamonds at Tiffany, a retired French General, the Minister of Culture in Thailand and the Editor of 'Frettbladid' Iceland's daily newspaper to name but a few.

One question I am invariably asked from those people who have had no previous contact with the ESU is – what does the ESU stand for and is it an organisation to promote better use of English? (And for those who are foreign I am also often asked is 'do Scots people speak English?!')

The question has at times in the past somewhat flummoxed me, mainly because it is difficult to sum up the ESU's range of activities both domestically and internationally in a short paragraph and to give a flavour of its history and its current role.

This question of the ESU's aims and objectives is particularly apt in 2008 which is the 90th anniversary of the ESU's inception. It was founded by Sir Evelyn Wrench at the end of the Great War mainly as an organisation to cement ties between the then great English-speaking peoples of the world – Britain and America. In 2008, it is a very different organisation with over 50 countries worldwide with ESU representation and the most growth of new ESUs in recent years coming from non-native English speaking countries.

I believe the ESU's mission has never been as relevant since its founding in 1918 using the unique position of English as a common medium of exchange to promote friendship, understanding and peace particularly amongst young people. I also believe that the ESU's position as both a membership organisation and charity is still valid and that our membership are able actively to support the ESU's purpose. The ESU of the USA are actively promoting the concept of from a 'club to a cause' reflecting that the ESU was originally a club for like-minded members and that we are now a cause with which members identify. I support this idea absolutely.

I think it is important that the ESU takes some time to reflect in 2008 on its role in the 21st century to ensure that we are still relevant and active. There are common problems in the ESUs worldwide such as declining and ageing membership; funding and programmes: problems that I believe are not insurmountable but that we can usefully take time to discuss at the ESU world conference in Edinburgh in 2008.

Plans continue to progress for the world conference and we are building up to a very exciting event where I look forward to making and renewing friendships with ESU members from all parts of the globe. We are keen that the membership locally plays a full and active part and if there is anything you feel you are able to do to assist with the Conference then please get in touch.

Our programme of activities

nevertheless continues and there are a number of programmes which have already taken place in 2008 and planned described later in the newsletter – in particular, the European debating competition for Universities which was an unqualified success. I think 2008 will prove to be a busy and successful year!

With best wishes,
Jon

Jon Dye,
Chairman, ESU Scotland

HEADLINES & NEWS

- **Funding for Debating in Schools Project**
- **European Parliament Intervarsity Debating Competition**
- **2007/8 Juniors Debating Competition**
- **European Parliament Guest Speaker Debate**
- **ESU Scotland Burns Supper**
- **Upcoming ESU events**
- **World Members' Conference update**
- **New ESU Scotland Website Launched!**

If you would like to see your advertisement here, please call:
0131 229 1528 or email: director@esuscotland.org.uk

Debate

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT GUEST SPEAKER DEBATE

■ In February 2007, ESU Scotland was awarded European Parliament funding to run three projects to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. The funding totalled £21,500, and was supported by generous match funding of £10,000 from ASDA, our main sponsor for schools debates work.

The first of these events was a Public Speaking Competition held in June.

On November 23rd 2007, ESU Scotland ran the second part of the the European Parliament Project - a major public debate at the Glasgow University Union.

Nearly 150 people turned out to watch

an interesting and entertaining debate on the motion:

This House believes that the Treaty of Rome's ambition of an ever closer European Union is more important today than ever.

The speakers were:
 David Martin MEP
 Struan Stevenson MEP
 Robin Harper MSP
 David Campbell Bannerman, Deputy leader of UKIP
 Vivian Linacre
 Sir Ken Collins.

The debate was of a very high standard and was followed by a heated floor debate!

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT INTERVARSITY

■ On 1st February 2008, ESU Scotland ran the final part of the European Parliament Project - an EU-wide intervarsity tournament.

The motions debated were:

Round 1: This House Would Recognise An Independent Kosovo

Round 2: This House Would Illegalise The Payment of Ransom

Round 3: This House Would Introduce An EU-wide Salary Cap For Footballers

Round 4: This House Believes that Health Services Should Never Pay for IVF

After the scores from these four rounds had been collated, the top four teams went forward to debate against each other in the final. These teams were Finland, Greece, Ireland and Scotland and they debated the motion **This House Believes That The European Union Should Have A Common Foreign Policy.**

The judging panel, which comprised John Duncan of ESU Scotland, Kizzy Russell (one of Scotland's top debates judges), Kevin Ward (Depute President of Strathclyde Union), John Edward (Head of Office in Scotland, European Parliament) and Niall Kennedy (former Scottish Mace winner), were faced



The speakers before the debate
 (C) JWG Gallery

with a difficult choice but in the end decided the winners were Team Scotland (Doug Cochran and Connie Grieve of St. Andrews) and the best speaker in the final was Art Ward of Team Ireland (UC Cork).

It was a pleasure to host young people from around the continent. Hopefully, they will have been bitten by the ESU bug!

The nations represented were: Scotland, England, Ireland, Wales, France, Portugal, Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Finland, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Germany, The Netherlands and Greece.

ESU Scotland would like to thank everyone involved in making the event such a success.

JUNIORS' DEBATING COMPETITION

■ Sixty teams managed to navigate through the first round of the ESU Juniors successfully. The motion for the first round ties was **This House Would Legalise Drugs In Sport.**

The second round is currently underway and the pupils are debating the motion **This House Would Renationalise The Railways.**

It is great to see so many young people debating, and especially pleasing to see so many of our Outreach schools taking part in the competition and winning debates.

This year a record 128 teams entered the Juniors.

WORLD SCHOOLS

■ After last year's stunning success in winning the World Championships, the fight has begun to retain it. A development squad of twenty speakers was chosen earlier this academic year. This squad was trained by George Molyneux and a cohort of senior debaters and from this initial twenty, twelve have been chosen to trial for the World Schools Team.

The trials day is March 22nd at Atholl Crescent and all are welcome to attend. It was very pleasing to see two speakers from the Outreach Programmes make the Development Squad this year. A great achievement!

ESU SCHOOLS MACE

■ The final of the ESU Scottish Schools Mace will take place on Wednesday 19th March at the ESU Gallery, 23 Atholl Crescent from 6pm.

All are welcome to attend. The finalists will be decided over the coming weeks and be announced in due course.

Scotland currently holds the Schools Mace and the winners of the 2008 Scottish Schools Mace will go forward to try and retain the title in May 2008.

The Schools Mace International Final will take place on Saturday 10th May 2008 in Liverpool Town Hall.

ESU JOHN SMITH MEMORIAL MACE (UNIVERSITY MACE)

■ The Scottish Final of the John Smith Memorial Mace will take place on March 25th at 7p.m. at the spectacular Playfair Library, Old College, Edinburgh.

All ESU Scotland members are welcome to attend. If you would like to attend the Mace Final, if you could please tell Rob Marrs that you would like to attend that would be most appreciated.

The final motion will be announced nearer the time.



Euro IV winners
(C) JWG Gallery

Debate**DEBATES OUTREACH
FALKIRK**

■ Over the last three years, ESU Scotland has run a number of Debates Outreach Programmes. These involve ESU staff and trained university mentors training S1-S3 pupils in speech and debate activities.

The next project is with Falkirk Council in March. This is a hugely exciting development for ESU Scotland and we are really looking to working with the young people of Falkirk.

We are also in discussions with East Lothian, East Dunbartonshire and Aberdeen.

**GLOBAL CAMPAIGN
FOR EDUCATION**

■ In December 2007, ESU Scotland was approached for advice by Oxfam and Save The Children. Each year, these two organisations run a number of events as part of the Global Campaign For Education and this year they are running a debate on the motion: **This House Believes That The Goal of Education For All by 2015 is Unattainable.**

Oxfam and Save The Children wanted to know how to run a debate and came to the experts!

The details for this event are still to be finalised but the debate should be held in the week commencing 21st April at a prestigious venue in Edinburgh. If you would like more information, contact Rob at the office.

**NEW DEBATES
FUNDING SECURED**

■ Funding secured for Debating in Schools Project.

We have just heard that our submission for funding for Phase 2 of our Debating in Schools Project has been successful.

Over the next two years Learning & Teaching Scotland, who are in charge of curriculum development in Scottish schools, will be giving us £70,000 towards this.

This is a terrific outcome, which will ensure the continuation of our work for the Scottish teaching profession in developing resources and training on the use of speech and debate. The project will include expanding our existing on-line debating resources, as well as undertaking a major programme of Continuing Professional Development for teachers.

In yet a further development, we have also heard that the Scottish Qualifications Authority has agreed to give us £5,000 sponsorship this year towards our general debates work.

This is great news, and helps secure the future of our debating programmes - though more needs to be done, and we are actively pursuing several other possible sources of funding.

EFL**EFL CLASSES**

■ We continue to run English Language Classes both at Meadowbank in the evenings and at Atholl Crescent during the day. Students can enrol at any time during the course so if you do know anyone who is interested in improving their English then please do tell them about us.

We would like to expand the programmes that we offer and we hope to start working with a teacher that Suzanne met in Moscow to offer short full-time courses to groups coming in from Russia. If this happens then it will help widen the range of our courses and also build on links between ESU Scotland and ESU Moscow.

As part of our new initiatives we are now holding a monthly coffee morning for students who wish to improve their conversational English. These take place on Wednesday mornings from 10.30-12.00pm at 23 Atholl Crescent.

It is a really valuable opportunity for students to meet new people and we do need volunteers for this group. If you could spare a few hours a month and would like further information then please do get in touch with Suzanne at the office.

■ **Coffee Morning dates:**
12th March, 10.30am-12.00pm
16th April, 10.30am-12.00pm
14th May, 10.30-12.30pm

INSPIRED? GET WRITING! COMPETITION

■ As most of you know, we organise an annual creative writing competition jointly with the National Galleries of Scotland and the Scottish Poetry Library. Entries are submitted in one of five categories: three for school-children; and further ones for published and unpublished adult writers. All the pieces submitted have to be inspired by a work in the National Galleries' permanent collection.

The competition has been running for three years now, and is currently sponsored by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The Scotsman, our media partner, gives it great publicity, and prints the winning entries in each category.

The 2007/8 competition attracted yet another record entry of some 850 poems and short prose pieces. This year for the first time we opened the competition up to people living outside Scotland – and we had entries from places as diverse as the United States, India and Australia. Perhaps the most unusual entry was from a US Marines colonel, currently serving in Afghanistan!

John and Suzanne from the office did the short-listing, along with our colleagues from the National Galleries and the Poetry Library, at the end of January. The short-listed entries in each category are currently with the judges, so they have a chance to read through

them before the final judging day on 8th March.

As usual, the competition will conclude with an Awards and Readings Day in the Hawthornden Lecture Theatre in the National Galleries. This year's Awards Day is Thursday 17th April.

The readings for primary children are in the morning, for secondary pupils in the afternoon, and for adults in the early evening. The top ten entries in each category are read out, in front of a colour slide of the art work that inspired them. There is always a great atmosphere at these events, with friends and family of the winners much in evidence. But you, as ESU members, are welcome to come along too. Please note, though, that numbers are limited, so it would be best to tell the office if you plan to come to one of the sessions, just to avoid disappointment.

Finally, as many of you already know, last autumn we published a stunning book to showcase some of the best entries from the first two years of the competition. Each piece is printed alongside a colour reproduction of the art work that inspired it, and it really makes a beautiful addition to any bookshelf. Copies are available from the office for only £5.95, so roll up and buy!

■ **The ESU Creative Writing Group meets at the ESU Gallery from 2.00pm to 4.00pm on the first Thursday of every month. The next meeting will be on Thursday 6th March 2008.**

NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHED

■ In December 2007, ESU Scotland relaunched its website. The new website, designed by two of our former EFL students, looks great and we will be adding more and more content over the coming months. The website can be found at www.esuscotland.org.uk

As well as this, ESU Scotland is embracing social networking. There is now an ESU Scotland group on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com>). This is a great way to keep in touch with members especially within the student fraternity. We also have an ESU Scotland EFL group where current and former teacher and students can keep in touch with each other.

BURNS SUPPER

■ On Saturday 19th January, ESU Scotland ran its annual Burns Supper. It was a great affair with exactly 50 people braving the weather to come along for haggis, neeps and tatties!

The speeches included an extremely humorous Immortal Memory delivered by Kenny Fleming, a former John Smith Memorial Mace Finalist and member of the Glasgow Branch Steering Committee; a theatrical rendition of Tam O'Shanter by our director, John Duncan and a witty reply from the lassies by Miss Ashley Cole, a debater at the University of St. Andrews. Afterwards, we were treated to some traditional Scottish tunes by Ewan MacDonald on his bagpipes.

Upcoming Events

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

FEBRUARY/MARCH

■ Thursday 6th March
Creative Writing Group
2.00pm - 4.00pm, Atholl Crescent

■ Wednesday 12th March
EFL Coffee Morning
10.30am-12.00pm, Atholl Crescent

■ Wednesday 19th March
Scottish Schools Mace Final
6.00pm, Atholl Crescent

■ Saturday 22nd March
Scottish World Schools Trials
Atholl Crescent, All day

■ Tuesday 25th March
John Smith Memorial Mace Final Scotland
7.00pm, Playfair Library, Old College, Edinburgh

APRIL

■ Thursday 3rd April
Creative Writing Group
2.00pm - 4.00pm, Atholl Crescent

■ Friday 4th April
Finals Day, Falkirk Debates Outreach Project

■ Wednesday 16th April
EFL Coffee Morning
10.30am-12.00pm, Atholl Crescent

CHURCHILL LECTURE

■ Each year, ESU London runs the Churchill Lecture where a high-profile speaker is invited to address members of the English-Speaking Union.

This year to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the English-Speaking Union, the ESU is delighted to announce that this year's Churchill lecture will be given by The Ambassador of the United States of America The Hon Robert H Tuttle.

The Churchill Lecture will take place on Monday 17th March 2008, 5.30 for 6.15pm, at Guildhall, London, EC2 and will be followed by a Reception in the Guildhall Art Gallery hosted by City of London Corporation.

Ambassador Tuttle will be introduced by The Rt. Hon The Lord Hunt of Wirral MBE PC and will be presented with the ESU Churchill Medal of Honour by The Lady Soames LG DBE.

Tickets cost £15 and are available from Dartmouth House. If you would like to attend the Churchill Lecture, please contact Jo Wedderspoon (jo_wedderspoon@esu.org).

CALL SERVICE

■ This year's annual Call service will be held on Monday 26th May, US Memorial Day. Most of you already know the story behind the Call statue in Princes Street Gardens – how it was erected by public subscription in the US as a tribute from America to Scotland's contribution in the Great War.

The ESU of the United States, especially the Philadelphia Branch, took the lead in this amazing enterprise, and were well represented when the statue was unveiled in 1927. Except for a couple of years during the War, the Call service itself, in more or less its present form has been held almost without a break since 1933, and 2008 will be the 74th time it has taken place.

In a slight change from tradition, this year's Call lunch will be held in the ESU Gallery rather than the Royal Overseas League. As a result, tickets will only cost £10 against £25 last year, and we hope that this lower price will encourage as many of you as possible to attend.

Full details and booking forms will be sent out nearer the time.

ESU MEMBERS' TALK: FREEMASONRY IN SCOTLAND

■ On 21st May one of the members of the London Branch of the ESU, Pauline Chakmajian, will be giving a talk for members of ESU Scotland on "Issues Related to Freemasonry in Scotland". We are lucky enough to be holding this event at the Freemasons Hall on George Street where we will be given a tour by Mr Robert Cooper. Pauline is an expert in this field and has spoken all over the world on the subject of Freemasons. Please let the office know if you would like to attend this fascinating event.

WORLD MEMBERS' CONFERENCE 2008

■ We are working very hard on the organisation of the 2008 World Members' Conference, to be held on 15th-18th September this year. These conferences take place every four years so it is a very special event for ESU Scotland and a wonderful opportunity to welcome friends from all over the world.

We are pleased to announce that we have secured sponsorship for the Conference from a number of companies. These include Glenfiddich, Cambridge University Press, Standard Life, Highland Spring and The Town-

house Company. We are delighted to welcome these companies on board and we very much appreciate their contribution to what we are sure will be a spectacular event.

We have now opened booking for the World Members' Conference. If you would like to attend, please go to our Conference Homepage (<http://www.esuworld2008.org>) to book your place. Alternatively, please do feel free to contact the office for further details and a postal booking form.

As has already been mentioned we have an excellent line-up of speakers.

These include :

- Sir John Bond
- Shami Chakrabarti
- Professor David Crystal
- Professor Ron Carter
- Sir Richard Dearlove
- Sir Christopher Meyer
- Lord Roberston of Port Ellen
- Sir Robert Worcester

The Opening Dinner will take place on Monday 15th September at Our Dynamic Earth and the Closing Dinner will be on Thursday 18th September at Murrayfield Stadium. Drinks receptions will be held on Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th September at the National Gallery of Scotland and the Mansfield Traquair Centre.

For further details of the Conference please visit www.esuworld2008.org

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

APRIL (cont'd)

■ Thursday 17th April
Inspired? Get Writing! Competition Readings
 10.30-11.30am - Under 12
 1.30-3.00pm - 12-15 yrs, 16-18 yrs
 5.00-7.00pm - Adults
Hawthornden Lecture Theatre, Weston Link, National Gallery of Scotland

■ **Global Campaign For Education Debate**
 (Late April. Details to be finalised)

MAY

■ Thursday 1st May
Creative Writing Group
 2.00pm - 4.00pm, *Atholl Crescent*

■ Saturday 10th May
Schools Mace International Final
Liverpool Town Hall

■ Wednesday 14th May
EFL Coffee Morning
 10.30am-12.00pm, *Atholl Crescent*

■ Wednesday 21st May
Tour of the Freemasons Hall by Mr Robert Cooper and talk by Pauline Chakjmajian on The Issues Related to Freemasonry in Scotland
 6.00pm for 6.30pm
Freemasons Hall, 96 George Street

■ Monday 26th May
Call Service
 12.00pm at *The Call Service, West Princes Street Gardens*
 Lunch at *23 Atholl Crescent*

EDINBURGH BRANCH LUNCH PROGRAMME

All lunches take place at 12.30pm at Overseas House, Princes Street, £11

■ MR MATTHEW MACIVER
 Chairman of Bòrd na Gàidhlig (The Gaelic Language Board)
The Gaelic Language
Thursday 28th February, 12.30pm

■ SARAH BOYACK MSP
 MSP Central Edinburgh
Communications
Thursday 27th March, 12.30 pm

■ MR BOB MCINTOSH
 Civil Engineer
Scottish Lighthouses
Thursday 24th April, 12.30 pm

The lunches will then break for summer recess and recommence in September 2008.

Appeal for Support

As we hope you have seen, the level of ESU activity in Scotland has increased dramatically over the last three years. Among our major achievements have been:

- Continuing development of the National Juniors Debating Competition
- Launch and expansion of our innovative programme of schools debates outreach workshops (which have now reached some 700 pupils from 40 schools)
- Securing sponsorship from Asda for both the Juniors and the outreach programme
- Securing sponsorship from Baillie Gifford for the ESU John Smith Memorial Mace
- Winning funding from the Scottish Executive to develop debates training resources for the Scottish teaching profession
- Developing close cross-party support for our work from MSPs, and securing the services as Hon Office Bearers of representatives of all the main political parties
- Launching our English as a Foreign Language Classes, and developing this into a profitable core programme with some 50 enrolled students
- Securing the 2008 World Members Conference for Edinburgh
- Generally developing and strengthening our international ties with other ESUs – and gaining a reputation as one of the main movers and shakers in the ESU worldwide
- Working with the National Galleries of Scotland to launch a hugely successful creative writing competition, now entering its second year, and securing sponsorship from the SQA
- Developing our media contacts and obtaining significant coverage for various ESU programmes
- Increasing income 3-fold in two years, and significantly improving ESU Scotland's financial performance
- Growing staff numbers to 3 full-time and 5 part-time, to manage the ever-growing activity levels
- Obtaining an enviable reputation for quality in the delivery of all our programmes

Unfortunately this rapid growth in activity level has put our cash flow under strain in the short term – not least because we are having to lay out significant sums for the 2008 Conference now, while the related income will not start arriving until 2008. In addition, many of our programmes involve laying out cash in advance of receiving payment.

We are therefore asking you, as a committed member and supporter of our work, for your financial support, however small. Every pound makes a difference, and we need to invest in reinforcing our success.

Attached to this Newsletter are a Gift Aid declaration form and a direct debit donation form. Even a contribution of a few pounds a month adds up – especially if it is gift-aided, enabling the ESU to recover additional money from the taxman.

If you can manage it, please do take this time to consider this appeal carefully. All contributions, no matter how small, will be most gratefully received and acknowledged.

Charitable Investors

- For any members with managed investments (ISAs, PEPs or Unit Trusts) there is a new way to give money to the ESU (or any other charity of your choice) – at absolutely no cost to you!

If you assign the trail commission on your investments to Charitable Investors, they will give half of the commission you are paying anyway to the charity you name. If you want more information on this innovative way of supporting the ESU, please contact John in the office, or have a look at the Charitable Investors website: www.charitableinvestors.net.



CONTACT DETAILS

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION

23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh

EH3 8HQ

Telephone No. (0131) 229 1528

Fax No. (0131) 229 1533

www.esuscotland.org.uk

Conference website:

www.esuworld2008.org.uk

DIRECTOR

John A. Duncan

director@esuscotland.org.uk

ADMINISTRATOR

Evelyn Banna

secretary@esuscotland.org.uk

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Suzanne Ensom

efl@esuscotland.org.uk

development@esuscotland.org.uk

SPEECH & DEBATES OFFICER

Rob Marrs

debates@esuscotland.org.uk

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Remember, ESU Scotland is your organisation. Please feel free at any time to contact the office with suggestions you may have for future activities or events.