



# English-Speaking Union Scotland **NEWSLETTER**

*Summer 2008*

## **LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN**

Dear Friends

Since I last wrote to you, our Deputy Chairman, Brian Monteith and I visited Iceland as part of our ongoing efforts to develop an ESU there. The original idea for an ESU in Iceland came from Brian, who visited that country as part of a Scottish Parliament delegation several years ago. On that trip, Brian quickly established that there was no ESU and got the willing agreement of the British Ambassador, Alp Mehmet, to assist us in this enterprise to establish one.

Brian and I both concluded that Iceland is ideal for an ESU – English is universally spoken as a second language and indeed Icelanders are the most literate people in the world. Also, their position in the mid-Atlantic, and their small but prosperous population mean that they need to look outward to the outside world but are also keen for the outside world to learn more about Icelandic culture. The ESU clearly would assist in these aims.

Brian and I first visited Iceland on ESU business last March and I was able to experience this unusual, cold but beautiful country, with its friendly, warm people. We had a whirlwind visit, with all of our engagements organised by the Ambassador and we found ourselves talking to business leaders, academics and the press over two days. We certainly managed to generate a lot of interest and enthusiasm for the ESU cause during that trip with the people that we met. I also quickly got used to having the ambassadorial Range Rover and driver whisk me off to each engagement!

Following our first visit, we left the British

Ambassador with the unenviable task of tracking down a potential chairman for ESU Iceland and some committee members. Alp was successful in locating some committee members but encountered a few false starts regarding chairmen. At the end of last year, I must confess I was starting to lose hope that we would be successful in our venture, but in January, Alp emailed me to say he had found a suitable candidate – Siggí Skulason – who was willing to be the Chairman of ESU Iceland. Siggí was already the Chairman of the Oxford alumni in Iceland so was ideally suited for the role.

So it was on the back of the Ambassador finding Siggí and his committee that Brian and I agreed to go back to Iceland in April for a couple of days to meet them and help them develop an initial programme of work and discuss other potential issues they might face. Lack of space prevents me from writing in more detail about the trip but we did get to meet Siggí and his new committee several times – it was great to see a mixture of younger and older faces and that the committee is predominantly Icelandic. I am very hopeful that Siggí and his committed band will establish an ESU and I am already looking forward to going back out for their official launch party! I hope that the ties between ESU Scotland and ESU Iceland which are already forged grow stronger and I think we can definitely lay claim to some parental (or at least older sibling!) role for ESU Scotland with regard to ESU Iceland's growth and development.

Meanwhile, we have passed the milestone of less than four months to the World Members' Conference. Having been involved in the planning for the last three

years, sometimes it has felt like the Conference was never going to happen, but I am pleased to say that almost all the plans are in place, we have over 100 delegates booked already and we are going into the final stretch! Obviously I hope to see as many Scottish delegates at the Conference to welcome our guests to Edinburgh and I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in September.

With best wishes

Jon

## **HEADLINES & NEWS**

- 2007/8 Juniors Debating Final in The Scottish Parliament
- Second Phase of the Falkirk Outreach Project
- Adam Smith Debate
- Reports of the Schools and University Mace Finals.
- Global Campaign For Education Debate Report
- Upcoming ESU events
- World Members' Conference update

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

**Debate**

**JUNIORS' DEBATING COMPETITION**

The Juniors Competition has been in full flow over recent months. Four teams from across the country have battled through four rounds of debate to reach the National Final which is taking place on Saturday 31st May at The Scottish Parliament. The event will start at 1.30pm with the debate itself starting at 2pm.

The four teams in the final are;

- 1st Prop - Robert Gordon's College
- 1st Opp - Newcastle RGS
- 2nd Prop - St. Joseph's , Dumfries
- 2nd Opp - Dollar Academy

The motion for the final is: **This House believes that the government should act to encourage the production and use of biofuels.**

If you would like to attend the Juniors Final, please do get in contact with Rob at the office either by phone or by email.

This year saw the biggest ever entrance of teams into the Juniors - 128 in total. The tournament is growing each year and we hope that next year's entrance will be even bigger still.

A final mention should go to St. Maurice's High School - they were one of our first ever Outreach Schools in 2005 and this year reached the Regional Final in Glasgow!

**ESU SCHOOLS MACE**

■ The 19th March saw ESU Scotland host the Scottish Schools Mace Final at the ESU Gallery.

The contestants were:

Debate 1: **This House would allow the police to use entrapment**

- Proposition - Morrison's Academy
- Opposition - Stewarton Academy

Debate 2: **This House believes doctors should report suspected cases of domestic violence**

- Proposition - Uddingston Grammar School
- Opposition - George Heriot's School

In a pair of feisty and fiery debates, Hannah Mackaness and Georgina Barker of George Heriot's School were proclaimed as the winners.

The George Heriot's team represented Scotland at the International Mace Final on Saturday 10th May at Liverpool Town Hall.

In a close debate, Dalriada School - the Irish representatives - won the International Mace Final. Georgina Barker, of Scotland, won The Kenneth Harris Memorial Prize For Best Speaker in the Final.

**ESU JOHN SMITH MEMORIAL MACE**

■ On March 25th, the Scottish Final of the John Smith Memorial Mace took place in the sumptuous surroundings of The Playfair Library at the University of Edinburgh.

The four teams that made the final were:

- 1st Prop - Glasgow University Union (David Tait & Claire Brown)
- 1st Opp - St. Andrews CS (Beth Conner & Jess Siegel)
- 2nd Prop - St. Andrews CG (Doug Cochran and Connie Grieve)
- 2nd Opp - St. Andrews HW (Chris Hawkins & Rachael Whitbread).

The motion for the final was: **This House Would Ban Faith Schools.** The seven judges thought it was a close debate but in the end decided that Doug Cochran and Connie Grieve from the University of St. Andrews were the winners.

On Friday April 25th, the John Smith Memorial International Mace took place at Dartmouth House in London.

The motion was **This House supports increasing the use of civilian nuclear energy** and, in a very close debate, the winners were Team England (Usman Ahmad and Hannah Klein of the Honourable Society of Lincoln's Inn).

## WORLD SCHOOLS

■ Last year, Scotland won the World-Schools Debating Championships for a third time. The team to (hopefully!) retain the title was selected on March 22nd at the ESU Gallery.

The five judges - Pat Slaven, George Molyneaux, Will Jones, Kizzy Russell and our own Rob Marrs - decided that the team to represent Scotland shall be:

Sandy Jackson - Morrison's Academy  
Natalie Smith - Aberdeen Grammar  
Rachel Watson - Aberdeen Grammar  
Jo Farmer - Robert Gordon's  
Lauren Pringle - Dundee High School

This is a strong team and ESU Scotland is proud of its ongoing association with the team.

## FOUR NATIONS

■ The first test for the WSDC team was the annual Four Nations Competition, which is a warm-up for WSDC. This was held in Dundee in Mid-April and was organised by SSIDC.

On Friday 18th, a reception was held at Duneed City Chamber for the four Home Nations Teams. Over the next two days, all four teams debated against each other. In the end, the final was contested by Scotland and Ireland - Ireland very narrowly winning.

This was a good performance and should be useful preparation for WSDC!

## GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION

■ Before Christmas, ESU Scotland was contacted by Oxfam and Save The Children to help run a debate as part of the Global Campaign For Education.

The Global Campaign For Education Debate took place on Thursday 24th April. The motion was: **This house believes that the goal of Education for All by 2015 is unattainable.**

The debate took place in the Scottish Parliament and was judged by John Duncan, Linda Fabiani MSP, Douglas Fraser (The Herald journalist) and Judith Robertson (Head of Oxfam in Scotland). The debate was chaired by Deputy Presiding Officer, Alastair Morgan MSP.

All of the speakers that took part have competed in the two main ESU debating competitions (the Juniors and the Schools Mace).

In an interesting debate, the 2nd Proposition team (Rebecca Joseph of Dumfries Academy and Ewan MacGregor of Stewart's Melville) won the debate. They were presented with silver quichs.

The event was well received in the media and ESU Scotland was mentioned in numerous newspapers as well as on the BBC!



**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 first phase of the Falkirk Speaks Project took place earlier this Spring with 4 schools from the council area. As usual, ESU Scotland ran a teacher workshop for interested teachers, a pupil workshop to introduce the concept of debating to pupils and a finals day.

The finals day took place on Thursday 3rd April and the standard of debating was very good indeed for speakers so new to the activity. In the end the winners of the Falkirk Speaks Finals Day were the team from Braes Academy B.

Over the next few weeks, we are looking forward to the second phase of the Falkirk Speaks Project - working with a number Primary Schools. This is a hugely exciting development for ESU Scotland as this is the first Outreach Project to focus specifically on Primary School children.

Since 2005, ESU Scotland has worked with over 70 schools and over 1,200 pupils in Outreach Projects and Individual Schools workshops. We are making a huge difference to the lives and aspirations of hundreds of Scottish schoolchildren.

**ATHOLL CRESCENT  
DEBATING SOCIETY**

■ The Atholl Crescent Debating Society held its May meeting on Thursday 8th May on the motion: This House Would Ban Strip Clubs.

The four speaker in the debate were Claire Jarvis of the University of Edinburgh and Kenny Fleming in proposition and George Grant of the University of Edinburgh and Alex Massie in opposition.

The debate managed to balance the complexities of a serious issue whilst also remaining humorous. The audience attendance was very good and it seems that the ACDS is a great vehicle to get new people involved in the ESU.

As well as this, there has been some exciting news regarding the Atholl Crescent Debating Society.

In early May, The Adam Smith Institute approached us about running a debate to mark the unveiling of the new Adam Smith statue on The Royal Mile.

Final details need to be confirmed but the debate, on a topic relating to Adam Smith's life and work, will take place on the evening of the 3rd July at The Caves on Niddry Street (just off The Cowgate). If you would like to attend or would like more detailed information please do get in touch with Rob at the ESU office.

**EFL Classes****EFL CLASSES**

■ Our English Language Programme continues to do well. We have an increasing number of students taking 1:1 classes and a good number of enquiries for full time courses in the summer. Our part-time students can attend classes at four different levels at evening classes in St. Margaret's House, or two different levels during the day at Atholl Crescent.

We have had a number of recent successes with students passing the Cambridge Advanced and IELTS Exams and hope to build on this when more students sit their exams in July and December. Well done everyone.

The past few months have seen several changes in EFL teaching staff: After working with us for several years, Samantha Henry has now moved on to teach in Spain. We wish her all the best. Rosa Ryou has just returned from Australia and we have also welcomed two new teachers; Des Bradley, who has taken over teaching our Intermediate class, and Jennifer Claire, who is doing an excellent job with the Pre-Intermediates.

Our monthly coffee mornings have been well attended by both students and volunteers alike. Many thanks to those of you who have given up your valuable time to help us with this. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. The coffee morning programme will now have a break for the summer and we will start up again in the autumn.

## INSPIRED? GET WRITING! COMPETITION

■ We have now completed the third year of our Creative Writing competition with the National Galleries of Scotland and the Scottish Poetry Library. All the pieces are inspired by a work in the National Galleries' permanent collection. The competition is sponsored by the SQA. The 2007/8 competition attracted some 850 poems and short prose pieces. This year for the first time we opened the competition up to people living outside Scotland.

We are delighted to announce the winners of this year's competition.

### ■ Under 12 Years

#### Ist place

Stuart Aitken, Isle of Islay

#### Runners Up

Freya Dixon-van Dijk, Edinburgh

Amy Thompson, Isle of Islay

#### Special Merit

Sophie MacLeod, Sutherland

Emily McCullagh, Perth

Lucy Ann Rae, Edinburgh

Delilah Fawcett, East Lothian

Saskia Harper, Aberdeen

Sally Blaylock, Kelso

Esme Pringle, Peeblesshire

### ■ 12- 15 years

#### Ist place

Fiona Ritchie, Kilmalcolm

#### Runners Up

Phoebe Fisher, Edinburgh

Taylor Watson-Fargie,

Clackmannanshire

#### Special Merit

Michael A Hunter, Clackmannanshire

Stuart Wright, Kilmalcolm

Katie Headridge, Angus  
Annie Liddle, Edinburgh  
Kate Williams, Edinburgh  
Tommy Pia, Edinburgh  
Manakan Christie, Newburgh

### ■ 16-18 years

#### Ist place

Andrew McCormack, Paisley

#### Runners up

Sandi Aitchison, Angus

Calum Gardner, East Renfrewshire

#### Special Merit

Ruth Mainland, Shetland

Ceris Aston, Dumfriesshire

Lynne Mackie, Edinburgh

Lucy Hall, East Kilbride

Philippa Cowie, Angus

Catriona Jardine, Clackmannanshire

Nicola Verra, Banchory, Aberdeenshire

### ■ Unpublished adults

#### Ist place

Andy Jackson, Tayport, Fife

#### Runners up

David Bell Nicholson, Cumbria

Roxanne Paris, Edinburgh

#### Special Merit

Anna Dickie, Haddington

Margaret Lynn Stewart, Annan

Pete Goldsack, Edinburgh

Donald McKenzie, Inverness

Alison Summers, Edinburgh

Kim Patrick, Lanarkshire

D M Abbott, Edinburgh

### ■ Published adults

#### Ist place

Ian McDonough, Edinburgh

#### Runners up

Alan Gay, East Lothian

Rob A Mackenzie, Edinburgh

#### Special Merit

Ashley Lennon, Glasgow

Heather Reid, Abernethy, Perthshire

Morgan Downie, Perth

Lesley Harrison, Mongolia/Dundee

Alan Gay, East Lothian

Julia Bohanna, Reading

Lesley Harrison, Mongolia/Dundee

■ **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 5th June 2008.**

*The Buried Sun*

(Rembrandt van Ryn- Self Portrait Aged 51)

*Aged two, they said, I drew the outline of a sparrow in the dirt.*

*Soon my eye consumed the whole of Leyden, fingers etched with light, ears burning with a score of crafty secters from old Swanenburch,*

*Pieter Lastmann's recipe for clouds.*

*Fast enough I left them, the old devils, to their tricks,*

*set off to snare the glory of our world. Year on year,*

*rejoicing, aching, among gesso chalk and glue,*

*layering impramatura till my boards yielded such glow*

*you'd swear the sun lay buried just beneath the floor.*

*Older, I turned rougher with the brush, capturing*

*nothing more or less than I bore witness to.*

*This blanket of years, sewing such a bleak embroidery,*

*presses heavy as time rolls, stifling the blaze to smoulders,*

*Ochre to Raw Umber, then the frightful edges of Bone Black.*

*Ian McDonough*

*Winner,*

*Published adults*

**Upcoming Events****WORLD MEMBERS' CONFERENCE 2008**

■ We are delighted to announce that we have two additional speakers for the Conference who will deliver a session on Shakespeare. We are very lucky to have Professor Stanley Wells and Dr Paul Edmondson, who are world experts in this field.

Professor Wells is Chairman of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Vice-Chairman of the Royal Shakespeare Company. He has written many books about William Shakespeare and is Associate Editor of the New Penguin edition of Shakespeare. Dr Edmondson is Head of Education at The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, an Honorary Fellow of The Shakespeare Institute, and an Honorary Fellow of The Society for Teachers of Speech and Drama.

The Closing Dinner will take place at Murrayfield Stadium on the final night of the Conference, Thursday 18th September. The evening will start with a drinks reception followed by a special 90th Anniversary Dinner to celebrate the founding of the ESU. The evening will end in traditional Scottish style with a ceilidh. You are very welcome to invite friends along to what will certainly be a very special event.

Bookings for the Conference have been coming in from all over the world, and it is a great privilege and opportunity for all ESU members in Scotland to play host to our friends from the global family of the ESU. It will probably be

at least another 20 years before we have such a chance again.

As you already know, the programme we have put together is quite outstanding. Apart from the new Shakespeare session mentioned above, we have speakers of the calibre of Sir John Bond, Chairman of Vodafone; Professor David Crystal, possibly the world's greatest authority on the English language; Lord Robertson, former Secretary-General of NATO; Sir Christopher Meyer, Chairman of the Press Complaints Commission and former Ambassador to the United States; and Sir Bob Worcester, founder of MORI polls. And this is just a sample of our speakers!

This is a once in a lifetime chance to hear, over just three days, here in Scotland, this world-class group of speakers covering matters ranging from the future of the Transatlantic relationship to the role of English in global communications.

But it is much more than that. We have the priceless opportunity to showcase the best of Scotland to our ESU colleagues from around the world, and to discuss how best the ESU can spread its message of global understanding and friendship across our shrinking yet fractured planet. The ESU's work is of real significance, make no mistake, and this Conference gives you the chance to influence the future direction of the organisation.

Perhaps above all, though, we should remember that this is the ESU's Members' Conference. What a great chance this is for us all to make new friends from all over the world – and to meet old ones again. The social programme in the evenings will be one of the highlights of the Conference, culminating, as already mentioned, in the 90th Anniversary Dinner on the closing night. Obviously you, as members, cannot afford to miss out on this – but please mention this to non-ESU friends and colleagues as well. With such a terrific programme the chances are they will be interested in coming to some or all of the Conference sessions, or to evening dinners and receptions.

It is vital that all ESU members in Scotland participate in the Conference as fully as possible. If you haven't already booked your places, a booking form is enclosed with this Newsletter for your convenience – or you can book on-line through the website, [www.esuworld2008.org](http://www.esuworld2008.org)

If you have any questions at all about the Conference programme or the arrangements we have made, please feel free to phone John or Suzanne in the office at any time.

## **CALL SERVICE**

■ The 74th annual Call Service took place on Monday 26th May. This year the address was given by Mgr. Michael Regan, the Dean of St Giles, and wreaths were laid by, among others, the Lord Provost, the US Consul, Lisa Vickers, the Presiding Officer, Alex Fergusson MSP and the Lord Advocate Elish Angiolini QC.

We were particularly honoured this year by the fact that Graham Somers, an American D-Day veteran, laid the wreath on behalf of the US armed forces.

The Service was followed by lunch in the ESU Gallery.

## **MASONIC TALK**

■ On 21st May Pauline Chakmakjian, a London Branch committee member, gave a fascinating talk on the history of Freemasonry in Scotland. This was combined with a guided tour of Freemasons' Hall in Edinburgh, conducted by Bob Cooper, the Curator of the Hall.

The small group of members attending learned much that was surprising and new about the past and present of Freemasonry, in a friendly, informal atmosphere.

Our thanks to Pauline and Bob for such an enjoyable and informative evening.

## **EDINBURGH BRANCH SPEECH FORUM**

■ This year's Edinburgh Branch Speech Forum will take place at the ESU Gallery on Friday 13th June at 6.30pm. 15 young people from schools across Edinburgh, the Lothians, Fife and the Borders will be speaking on the topic: Birds don't sing in the winter, so why should we?

The Speech Forum is always a lively and entertaining event, with sparkling contributions from all the youngsters taking part. It has been a highlight of the Branch's programme for many years, and we hope that as many as possible of you will come along to lend it your support.

## **ESU AGMS**

■ The date for the national AGM of ESU Scotland will be settled in the very near future, and formal notice will be sent out once this has been done.

It had been hoped to hold the AGM on 19th June as well, but unfortunately several of the Office-Bearers and SNC members will be away then, and the Committee feel it is important to hold the AGM at a time when they can all be there, so that the membership can have the chance to meet them and raise any issues they may have.

The Edinburgh Branch AGM will be held at the ESU Gallery on Thursday 19th June at 3pm. Please do come along to this - the formal notice is enclosed in this newsletter.

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

### **May**

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

■ Saturday 31st May  
**Juniors Debating Final**  
*1.30pm - 4.30pm Scottish Parliament*

### **June**

■ Friday 13th June  
**Falkirk Speaks Finals Day**  
*All day from 9am*  
*Falkirk Municipal Buildings*

■ Friday 13th June  
**Edinburgh Branch AGM**  
*6.30pm*  
*23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh*

■ Thursday 19th June  
**Edinburgh Branch AGM**  
*3.00pm*  
*23 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh*

### **July**

■ Thursday 3rd July  
**Atholl Crescent Debating Society** in partnership with The Adam Smith Institute.  
*Time TBA*  
*The Caves on Niddry Street.*

### **September**

■ September 15th - 18th  
**ESU World Members' Conference**

# 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](http://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](http://www.esuscotland.org.uk)  
Conference website:  
[www.esuworld2008.org.uk](http://www.esuworld2008.org.uk)

### DIRECTOR

John A. Duncan  
[director@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:director@esuscotland.org.uk)

### ADMINISTRATOR

Evelyn Banna  
[secretary@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:secretary@esuscotland.org.uk)

### ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Suzanne Ensom  
[efl@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:efl@esuscotland.org.uk)  
[development@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:development@esuscotland.org.uk)

### SPEECH & DEBATES OFFICER

Rob Marrs  
[debates@esuscotland.org.uk](mailto:debates@esuscotland.org.uk)

© 2006 ESU Scotland. All rights reserved



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.