



The Nashville Speaker

The English-Speaking Union
NASHVILLE BRANCH

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Fall, 2008

MEMBERSHIP RECEPTION

Sir Francis Kennedy to Visit Nashville Branch

The Branch is very pleased to announce that Sir Francis Kennedy will attend this year's New Members' Reception, to be held on **Wednesday, September 24**. Please see further details elsewhere in this issue.



Sir Francis Kennedy has had a long and distinguished career. For many years, Sir Francis worked for Great Britain's Colonial and Diplomatic Services. Among his many assignments, Sir Francis spent a number of years in Nigeria both before and after that nation's independence, and in the United States as Her Majesty's Consul General – Atlanta (which included Tennessee), Her Majesty's Consul General – New York, and as Director-General of United Kingdom Trade and Investment in the United States.

Following his retirement from government service, Sir Francis entered the private sector, and held several positions with British Airways, Flour-Daniel UK, Ltd, and other business organizations. In 1993, Sir Francis was appointed the first Chancellor of the University of Central Lancashire.

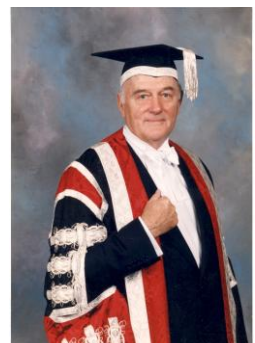
Sir Francis was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire by Her Majesty, the Queen, in 1958. In 1986, he was elevated to Commander of the OBE and was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Sir Francis has written an excellent account of his richly varied career, which he has published under the title, *Dust Suspended*.

Sir Francis lost his wife, Anne, last year. He has four children, nine grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Please join the Branch on Wednesday, September 24, as we welcome this very distinguished gentleman to Nashville. [Sir Francis is an *Evelyn Wrench Speaker*, and his visit has been arranged by the national office.]

**Look for your invitation to the
New Members' Reception on Page 2**



Our Mission

The English-Speaking Union of the United States is committed to promoting scholarship and the advancement of knowledge through the effective use of English in an expanding global community.

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YOU ARE INVITED . . .

The New Members' Reception, which is always a very enjoyable event, will be held this year from
5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Wednesday, September 24
Wessex Towers, 6666 Brookmont Terrace
*As usual, **Ann and Gerry Calhoun** will host.*

In addition to **Sir Francis Kennedy** (see companion article), the Branch will be joined by **Ricardo Beaird**, who won the Regional Shakespeare Competition (and finished in the top ten in the National Shakespeare Competition), and **Malcolm Morrison** (Montgomery Bell Academy) and **Sarah Harrison** (University School-Nashville), who attended Blackfriars Theatre (Staunton, Virginia) and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, Oregon), respectively, on scholarships funded by the Branch. They will share their experiences with us.

Superb food and drink will be served.

Please be sure to R.S.V.P.
298-5659 or [**lsiesser@comcast.net**](mailto:lsiesser@comcast.net)

Bring friends, family, and candidates for membership. We look forward to seeing everyone!

THOUGHTS AND ADVENTURES

by Dick Knight, President



Following the summer siesta, we are opening the fall campaign and we hope that we can make it as interesting and entertaining for you as possible. We collect dues in the summer and fall, and we know that if we are going to have any chance at retaining all of our members, *we are going to have to provide value.*

What we do with the dues? Seventy-five percent of the dues are remitted to the national office. That is the amount necessary to finance operations and fund national and international programs. Some of the money we remit comes back to us in the form of benefits, but most of the money is used to finance the national organization's charitable mission. Our twenty-five percent share of the dues is used to fund a number of

activities, including newsletters, the membership directory, receptions, programs, and scholarships. We hope you find value in these activities, many of which are clearly charitable and do not provide any benefit to the members . . . other than immense satisfaction!

The national trend in membership organizations is generally downward. Many of us belong to organizations that are struggling to retain old members and attract new members. Happily, we did not suffer any net erosion in our membership last year. We have a timeless and laudable mission: Promoting global understanding through English, the international language. That should give us reason to grow.

Those of our members who did not attend the Spring Banquet may not know that **Dr. Theodore E. Wiltsie** was elected President-elect. Thank you, Ted.

Your Board met on August 14 and much was accomplished. I am very pleased to announce that **Roupen Gulbenk**, **Susan Walker**, and **Marilyn Beesley** have been elected to

the Board of Directors. They will be eligible for election to a full four-year term next spring at the Annual Meeting. Thank you, Roupen, Susan, and Marilyn. If any members would like to serve on the Board or a committee, or host a reception, or provide any other service, please call me. We would be grateful for *any* help. (385-0848).

We have an outstanding New Members' Reception planned for September. Mark your calendars now. Your Board encourages every member to recruit at least one new member during the next twelve months. Candidates are welcome to join us at the New Members' Reception.

The ESU is holding its **Annual General Meeting** in Chicago in late October. If any members would like to attend, they should contact me immediately. I need to send the national office a list of our delegates.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to add value to your membership. Until next time, best wishes.

SPRING BANQUET

This year's Spring Banquet, held last April at the Hillwood Country Club, was an outstanding success. Sixty-five members and guests attended.

Highlighting the Banquet was the presentation by **Julius Bryant**, *Keeper of the Image*, at London's venerable Victoria and Albert Museum. Mr. Bryant presented a very interesting program on the V&A's vast holdings, and his talk was accompanied by a slide show, making the presentation even more effective.

Mr. Bryant's visit lasted three days. To occupy him, **Susan Sinclair** and **Ann Calhoun** scheduled a number of activities for him, including visits to local sites. **Nelson** and **Clara Davenport** hosted a dinner party for him at their magnificent home, *Shadowbrook*.



Gerry Calhoun & Julius Bryant at Shadowbrook



Julius Bryant & Roupen Gulbenk

Mr. Bryant was particularly interested in their extraordinary collection of Inuit art. **Roupen** and **Mildred Gulbenk** hosted a reception for Mr. Bryant, and he expressed great admiration for the lovely antiques in their home. (Please see the article about Mildred Gulbenk in this issue.) Mr. Bryant was hosted by **Bill** and **Lynne Siesser** during his stay. **Wallace Edwards** made arrangements for us to meet at Hillwood CC.

Mr. Bryant's visit could not have been more enjoyable. Heartiest thanks to all concerned! [Mr. Bryant was an *Evelyn Wrench Speaker*, and his visit was arranged by the national office.]

PICTURE GALLERY FROM THE GULBENK RECEPTION:



Julius Bryant & Marilyn Beesley



Julius Bryant & Susan Sinclair



Lynne Siesser & Linda Knight



Susan Sinclair, Linda Knight, Host – Roupen Gulbenk & Ray Burns

NOVEMBER 1, 2008 GUY FAWKES BONFIRE NIGHT

Greg and Tana Cutcliff,
5208 Redfield Drive, Murfreesboro, TN 37129

BYOB (Scotch, Wine, Beer, Sodas)

We will have a small Scotch and Wine tasting if you bring a bottle to share.

Food: Please bring side dishes, etc. for a Pot Luck, we will have grills.

Bring fireworks and sparklers if you wish.

We ask RSVP by October 15, 2008

either by email, phone, or a real sealed stamped envelope letter

To: 5208 Redfield Drive, Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

This is an evening for Eat, Drink, and be Merry. . . . and we will need help in providing all of this.

Tana: 615-631-0225; Greg: 615-631-5824; cutcliff@comcast.net

Directions: www.midtnscots.org

DINING IN STYLE AT SHADOWBROOK:



Ann Cook Calhoun & Lynne Siesser



Monnie Gillum with Mildred & Roupen Gulbenk



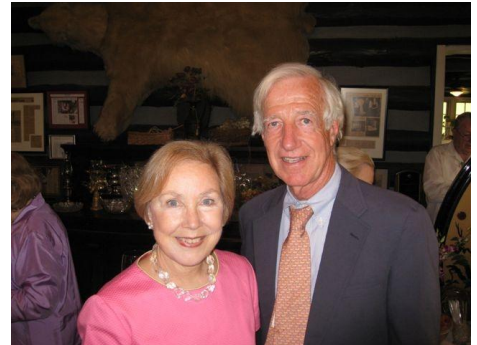
Susan & Otey Walker



Lynne Siesser and Ted Wiltsie



Martin McNamara & Phyllis Heard



Ann Marie & Martin McNamara



Dining at Shadowbrook



Host, Nelson Davenport describing their Inuit Art



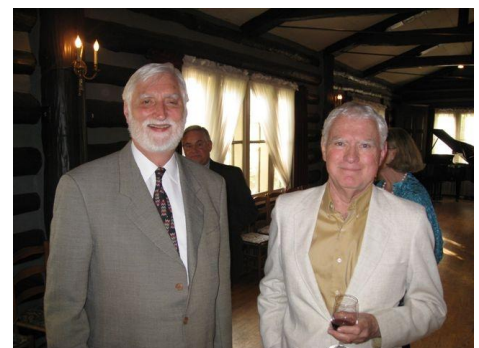
Ed Gillum, Thomas Dring, Joan Campbell & Marion Couch



Ann & Gerry Calhoun, Julius Bryant & Dick Knight



Marilyn Shields-Wiltsie & Jean Litterer



Bill Schwartz & Bill Siesser

Mildred Joy Cowan Gulbenk (1925 – 2008)

One of the Branch's most loyal and staunch supporters, Mildred Gulbenk, died on Sunday, July 6. Her death is an incalculable loss to her family, her friends, and to the Nashville Branch.

Mildred was a lady of many talents. As a youngster, she was an equestrian and a floral designer, a skill that she practiced her entire life. Mildred graduated from Ward Belmont Conservatory with a major in voice and studied at The Julliard Opera School. She sang in several local choirs.

Mildred was an outstanding community volunteer. She served as president of Belle Meade Plantation, Belmont Mansion, and Cumberland Heights Friends. She worked tirelessly on behalf of Cheekwood Horticultural Society of Middle Tennessee, The Nashville Symphony, Opera Guild, and many other organizations. She was a member of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem and held the Chevalarese Grand Croix.

Mildred was an anglophile. She visited England more than fifty times. She was an expert in English history, castles, cathedrals, and country homes and gardens. Mildred earned the Order of the Golden Shell for completing pilgrimage routes from Canterbury to Roselyn Chapel in Scotland and to France (Paris, Amiens, and Toulouse), and then on to the Holy Land and Jerusalem.

Mildred (together with her husband, Roupén) was a grand entertainer. She hosted a number of dignitaries in her home, including former British Prime Minister Margaret (Lady) Thatcher who, in turn, entertained Mildred in her Parliamentary offices. Roupén and Mildred hosted Nashville Branch activities on many occasions.

Mildred was a founding member of St. George's Episcopal Church, a member of the Sojourners Bible Class at First Baptist Church, and an ordained priest of the Apostolic Catholic Church of Antioch. She was a member of numerous clubs and societies, including the English-Speaking Union.

Mildred is survived by her husband, Roupén, two daughters, Mary Cowan and Anne Cain, a son, Donald Cowan, Jr., and many other relatives.

Mildred will be missed by everyone. She was bright, lovely, charming, and gracious.



Mildred & her grandson

Volunteer opportunities with the English Speaking Union.

Host a tea or reception Host an overnight guest Present a program
 Suggest a program Assist at an event Serve on the Board
 Make telephone calls Provide transportation Serve as an officer

Please volunteer to Lynne Siesser Hm: 298-5659 Wk: 936-1457 lsiesser@comcast.net

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE NEW MEMBERS' RECEPTION, SEPTEMBER 24

Call Ann Calhoun at 352-3521

Set up

Bring hors d'oeuvres

E-mailing the Newsletter

Would you be comfortable with the newsletter being e-mailed to you?

Let us know by contacting Lynne Siesser
lsiesser@comcast.net

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