



The Nashville Speaker

The English-Speaking Union
NASHVILLE BRANCH

Volume 6, Issue 1

Winter, 2008

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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WALTER HINES PAGE SCHOLAR

The Branch is delighted to report that it will host **Carolina Benavides** during her visit to Nashville, Sunday, February 10, to Wednesday, February 13. Ms. Benavides is one of a handful of teachers to be awarded a highly coveted Page Scholarship, which will fund a two-week visit to the United States, where she will study methods for helping children with learning disabilities. Ms. Benavides hails from Argentina, where she is Head of the English Department at the Hans Christian Andersen School.

The Branch will host a reception for Ms. Benavides on **Tuesday, February 12**, from **4:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.**, at the home of Roger and Donah Burgess, **158 Valley Forge** (in Sugartree). Members are invited. Please **RSVP** to Lynne Siesser at **298-5659** or **lsiesser@comcast.net**. This is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy some South American culture.

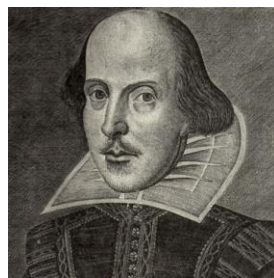
The Branch needs your help. If you can drive Ms. Benavides to various local destinations for one to three hours, on Monday, Tuesday, or Wednesday, or host a small dinner for her in your home, please call Ann Cook Calhoun at **352-3521**.

NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION



The National Shakespeare Competition has engaged more than 60,000 high school students in the last twenty years, and the Branch, together with the Nashville Shakespeare Festival, fully participates. This is our "showcase" event! The Competition kicks off from **10 A.M. to 3 P.M., Saturday, February 2**, at **Harpeth Hall School**, where the Branch and the Festival will host a "Shakespeare Workshop" for students and teachers. The Regional Competition gets underway at **9 A.M. for helpers, 10 A.M. for observers, Saturday, March 8**, at **Christ Church Cathedral** (on Broadway). Both events are highly entertaining, and members and their families are cordially invited.

Dr. Ann Cook Calhoun, our resident Shakespeare scholar, is providing the leadership, but the Branch needs your help. If you (or any family member) can help, please call Ann at **352-3521** immediately.



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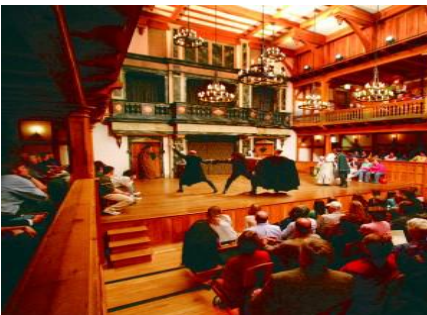
SHAKESPEARE SCHOLARSHIPS



The Branch is proud to announce that thanks to the generosity of the members, it will fund three Shakespeare scholarships this year.

The Branch will be sending two high school teachers to Blackfriars in Staunton, Virginia, and one high school teacher to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, in Ashland, Oregon. The teachers, who have not yet been selected, will be worthy of the honor. Dr. Ann Cook Calhoun is heading the selection committee.

These scholarships represent a departure from tradition. The Branch has a history of funding a British University Summer School Fellowship ("BUSS") every year, but for the *second straight year* the Branch has lacked the wherewithal to fund a Fellowship. The unfavorable exchange rate is the primary reason. A declining membership base is a secondary reason. The Branch has every intention of funding a BUSS Fellowship in the future but, in the meantime, the Blackfriars and Ashland opportunities are exciting and worthwhile.



The Branch recognizes the following members whose generous contributions have made this year's scholarship program possible:

Donah & Roger Burgess
 Ann & Gerry Calhoun
 Arlyn & Ted Cherney
 Elizabeth & Robert Collins
 Judy & Everette Davis
 Mr. & Mrs. Maclin P. Davis, Jr.
 Linda & Bobby Dale
 Joe Diehl
 Missie & Wallace Edwards
 Bill Engel
 Kate & Steven Ezell
 Genevieve Farris
 Igna & Bill Fowler
 Alma & Michael Franks
 Nancy Griswold
 Charlotte Hancock
 Jean & Dick Hart
 Phyllis & Tony Heard
 Bill Henderson
 Lucy & Richard Jones
 Dorothy Primm Joyner
 Linda & Dick Knight
 Marty & Ron Ligon
 Jean Litterer
 Alyne Massey
 Emily & Robert Mathews
 Richard Moore, Sr.
 Meredith & John Oates
 Nan & Neil Parrish
 Judith & John Poindexter
 Bitsy Riegle
 Betty & Charlie Robison
 Charlot Schaffner
 Marilyn Shields & Ted Wiltsie
 Lynne & Bill Siesser
 John Stavert
 Charlotte Summers
 Bob Traeger
 Jane & Richard Treadway
 Susan & Otey Walker
 Maclin Whiteman
 Jane & Tom Yount

Consider giving a gift membership to the ESU or a donation to the Education Fund as a way to remember someone on that special occasion, during holidays or as a "thank you" for just being a friend.

In Memoriam

The Branch is sad to report the death of longtime member and trustee *emeritus* Edwin Anthony Heard, Jr., after a long and courageous battle against Parkinson's.

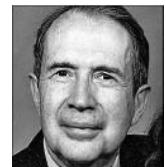


Mr. Heard's life was full of achievement. He attended New York's Collegiate School and graduated from New York's Trinity School, where he was class valedictorian, in 1944. Mr. Heard attended Princeton University, where he was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and upon graduation he accepted a commission in the United States Navy.

Following naval service, Mr. Heard embarked on a career in banking, insurance, and investing, rising to the highest levels in the executive management of several major firms. He also served on numerous boards, and gave freely of his time, talent, and treasure to dozens of non-profit organizations. Mr. Heard enthusiastically supported the ESU's British University Summer School Fellowship ("BUSS").

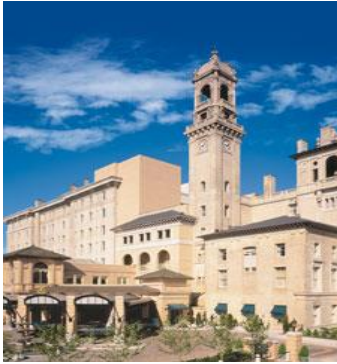
Mr. Heard is survived by his wife of 59 years, Phyllis Gregory Heard, who is a member of our Board of Directors, a son, Edwin Anthony Heard, III, and a daughter, Elizabeth Heard Gambee, and five grandchildren.

Memorial contributions may be made to First Presbyterian Church of Nashville, Doctors Without Borders, or to the charity of one's choice, including the ESU - Nashville Branch, 2009 Overhill Drive, Nashville, TN 37215-3414.



Farewell, Tony. You will be missed.

JAMESTOWN, CHURCHILL, AND SHAKESPEARE HIGHLIGHT 2007 AGM



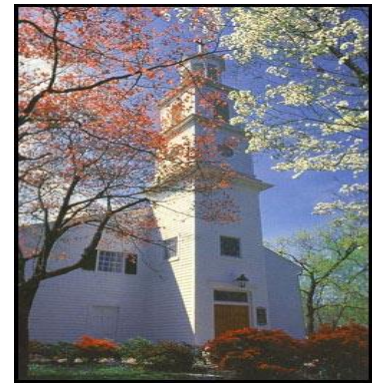
The ESU of the United States (ESUUS) held its Annual General Meeting last fall in Richmond, Virginia, at the famous Jefferson Hotel. Ann and Gerry Calhoun, Phyllis Heard, and Dick and Linda Knight represented the Branch.

The Meeting was unforgettable and flawlessly executed. The Richmond Branch rolled out the red carpet. Members and their guests were treated to the most extraordinary hospitality and entertainment.

A Shakespeare Festival kicked off four days of official events. Dr. Ann Cook Calhoun participated in an innovative panel discussion, "Shakesfear and How to Cure It." Dick Knight assisted the Richmond Branch by organizing a Churchill Symposium that included Sir Winston's granddaughter, the Honorable Celia Sandys, Allen Packwood, Director of the Churchill Archives Centre at Cambridge University, and Dr. James W. Muller, a Churchill scholar and a distinguished professor from the University of Alaska.

Another of the Meeting's memorable events was an after-dinner presentation of scenes from *Twelfth Night* by the English Theatrical Society of St. Petersburg, Russia. The players were Russian high school students performing *in English!*

There was much more. Programs on the settlement of Jamestowne (with an "e" on the end), Virginia's Native Americans (including tribal music), and the English-Speaking peoples offered something for everyone. Sunday services were held at St. John's Church, where Patrick Henry delivered his famous challenge:



Give me liberty, or give me death!

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held in Edinburgh, Scotland, in September. Members are urged to watch their mail for additional details. Prince Phillip will open the ceremonies.

THOUGHTS AND ADVENTURES



Dick Knight, President

The *Speaker* has returned, and we hope you like it. It is your newsletter, so please let us know how to improve it. If you would like to write an article for an upcoming edition, do not hesitate!

Our printing press has been busy. We have published a recruiting brochure and a membership directory, and each of you should have received a copy.

If not, please contact

Lynne Siesser at 298-5659 or lsiesser@comcast.net

This year, we have attracted 23 *new* members. Our challenge is to retain them, year after year. Please let us know what we can do to increase the value of your membership.

As we go to press, 26 *old* members have not renewed. We will try to recapture these memberships, and that means giving these former members a good reason (or reasons) to rejoin. We think we can do that.

The fall season opened last October with a reception for our new members. Ann and Gerry Calhoun were superb hosts, and the camaraderie, food, and refreshments were outstanding.

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Volunteer opportunities with the English Speaking Union. 1/We would like to assist with:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make telephone calls | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Host a tea or reception | <input type="checkbox"/> Host an overnight guest |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Present a program | <input type="checkbox"/> Suggest a program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assist at an event | <input type="checkbox"/> Serve on the Board |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serve as an officer | |

**Please send this information to: Lynne Siesser, 2009, Overhill Drive, Nashville TN 37215-3414.
If you have questions, call Lynne at 298-5659 or at work 936-1457**

YOU ARE INVITED TO A RECEPTION

TO MEET

CAROLINA BENAVIDES

OF ARGENTINA

2008 WALTER HINES PAGE SCHOLAR

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2008

FROM 4:30 P.M. TO 6:30 P.M.

AT THE HOME OF ROGER AND DONAH BURGESS,

158 VALLEY FORGE
(IN SUGARTREE).

MEMBERS ARE INVITED.

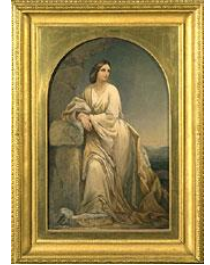
PLEASE RSVP TO LYNNE SIESSER AT 298-5659 OR
lsiesser@comcast.netTHIS IS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY TO ENJOY SOME
SOUTH AMERICAN CULTURE.

SPRING DINNER TO FEATURE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM

The Branch's annual spring dinner will be held on Thursday, April 24, at the Hillwood Country Club. Mark your calendar now. You will not want to miss it! Details will follow later this winter.

Julius Bryant of the Victoria and Albert Museum (London) will present a lecture and slide program on this famous museum, focusing on its architecture, paintings, and photographs.

The Branch needs your help. Mr. Bryant and his wife, Barbara, will be spending at least two nights in Nashville. If you have any interest in hosting the Bryants in your home one or both nights, please contact Lynne Siesser at **298-5659** or lsiesser@comcast.net.



The Grand entrance to the V & A on Cromwell Road

UPCOMING EVENTS

Hamlet: A Production of The Nashville Shakespeare Festival, January 17 through February 2, at the Troutt Theater on Belmont Boulevard. Call 255-2273 or log on at nashvilleshakes.org for additional information and reservations.

Shakespeare Workshop: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday, February 2, at Harpeth Hall School.

Page Scholar Reception: Tuesday, February 12, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., at the home of Roger and Donah Burgess, 158 Valley Forge (in Sugartree)

Shakespeare Regional Competition: Saturday, March 8, at Christ Church Cathedral (on Broadway) 9 A.M. (for volunteers) and 10 A.M. (for observers)

Spring Dinner: 6 p.m., Thursday, April 24, at the Hillwood Country Club

Thoughts and Adventures *continued*

The Branch has continued its tradition of black-tie dinners. Last May, Brian Monteith, a charter member of the Scottish Parliament, presented a rousing dinner program on former British Prime Minister, Baroness (Margaret) Thatcher. Last November, Gwyn and Trevor Slade spoke to us about their lives as Anglican rectors in South Africa. Gwyn also described the orphanage she operates, which provides a permanent home for more than 800 children. The Branch contributed \$100 to further Gwyn's efforts at the orphanage. Since we were meeting right after Veterans' Day, I asked the veterans to raise their hands. Well more than two-thirds of the gentlemen and at least one of the ladies responded, most of them veterans of World War II and/or the Korean War. God bless all of our veterans!

Linda and I had the good fortune of attending the Annual General Meeting in Richmond, last November. (Please see the companion article elsewhere in this issue.) If I ever thought the ESU was a "dinner club," I don't think so now.

I was astonished to learn that more than 2 *billion* people speak English and that at least one large, public high school in Japan speaks English *only*! English is being taught throughout

mainland China. I learned that ESU branches are sprouting everywhere, most often in Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe. Rumania has recently chartered its first ESU branch, and Linda and I had the honor of meeting its officers. As members of the ESU, we - all of us - are involved in a movement that is truly international in scope. What a privilege!

We schedule many events, and most of them are free. If you are not participating in local events, *give them a try*. You will find something you like. And, we could really use your help. If you have any free time on your hands, **please let us hear from you**. Contact Lynne Siesser (298-5659), Ann Cook Calhoun (352-3521) or me (385-0848). Pick up the telephone now while you are thinking about this (or return the "volunteer" sign-up sheet that appears elsewhere in this newsletter).

Until next time, the best to you and yours.

Dick Knight, President

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