



BRANCH NEWS

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March 2015

Issue #7 – 2014-2015

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MARCH MEETING

Monday, March 9, 2015

3:30 p.m. Reception; 4:00 p.m. Program

The University Club of Winter Park

Evelyn Wrench Speaker

Lee Prosser presents

Kensington Palace Revealed



Wrench speaker **Lee Prosser, PhD**, Historic Buildings Curator for Historic Royal Palaces, the organization that manages Kensington Palace, Hampton Court Palace, the Tower of London, and other royal residences, will give a talk titled *Kensington Palace Revealed*.

Lee has worked on several major projects for the organization, including the representation of Kew Palace, Britain's smallest royal residence, which was used as a retreat by King George III. His most recent work has been a major project at Kensington Palace and the opening, for the first time in 200 years, of the wonderfully preserved royal kitchens at Kew. He is currently working on a major study of historic staircases with scholar Linda Hall. He is a committee member of the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain and of the Vernacular Architecture Group, and sits on the casework panel of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

He has published widely, including journal articles and contributions to books on historic paintwork and landscape studies as well as *Kew Palace: The Official Illustrated History*. His most recent works include *Henry 500*, a book commemorating the 500th anniversary of the accession of Henry VIII, and *Kensington Palace: Essential Tales* and *Victoria Revealed*, produced to coincide with the reopening of Kensington Palace.

Program Leader: Miles McDonnell, Jr.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



My tenure as the Central Florida Branch President is rapidly coming to an end. I will retire the position on June 30. However, there is still some time for me to achieve some goals I set for myself in assuming this position. These included the areas of membership, programming, and involving more members in the committees.

My major objective was to at least maintain the membership at around 275 and perhaps grow it. The realization is that we are holding our own as members leave and others join. I continue to request that you invite friends who wish to be stimulated by our mission to join our Branch. In fact, our dues are nominal—especially when compared to other Branches, some of whom have membership fees in excess of \$100. I could not find any U.S. Branch on the E-SU website with lower annual fees than ours. Our Drey endowment and large membership enable us to maintain a reasonable fee. And as you are aware, the refreshments at our Branch events at the University Club are complimentary. Our Branch membership is a good deal.

I am happy to report that our Programs Committee has been active lately selecting the speakers and activities for the 2015-2016 season that begins in September. As I have mentioned before, the committee welcomes suggestions for future programs. Is our membership ready for an English Tea Party or a day out for Croquet on the Winter Park grounds? One annual program that is underwritten by E-SU National HQ in New York is the upcoming Wrench Series speaker. Named in honor of the English-Speaking Union's founder, the Evelyn Wrench Speaker Program sends eminent British and American speakers across the country each year to the E-SU Branches that host their presentations. Mr. Lee Prosser is the designated speaker this year, taking place March 9, 2015. See the details in this *Newsletter*.

In February we welcomed five BUSS scholars and awarded them \$7000 for costs and tuition to study in the UK this summer. Also, we conducted our Shakespeare competition in February with participation by more schools than last year. Maybe we will have the national winner this year.

Finally, I have to encourage members once again to consider participating in the operations of our Branch. We need your talents and some of your time. Start by joining one of the numerous committees. Please see me at one of the upcoming programs if you have an interest. Don't miss an opportunity to keep yourself refreshed and stimulated in the challenge to "celebrate English as a shared language to foster global understanding and good will by providing educational and cultural opportunities for students, educators and members. The E-SU seeks to nurture and enhance our linguistics heritage through nationally administered programs and outreach."

Michael Kakos, President

IN MEMORIAM

Roger Weldon Dixon, President of our E-SU Central Florida Branch from 1987-1990 and again 2001-2002, passed away on January 16, 2015. Loved by his students and highly respected by his colleagues, Roger dedicated his life to the teaching of Humanities, World History, and English. He earned his degree from Stetson University and taught for thirty-two years at Boone High School. After retiring from Orange County Public Schools, he and his wife Elaine moved to Young Harris, Georgia, to be closer to family. There he continued to teach Humanities, his favorite academic field, at Young Harris College. As a special friend of Elliot Engel, he was instrumental in first bringing that favorite speaker to our branch.



CONGRATULATIONS!

2015 Drey Scholars of Central Florida Branch

The Scholars Committee, including Linda Ammerman, Michele Der-shimer, Jan McClure, Donna Miller, Bob Pittman, Joyce Rose, and Chair Reta Jackson met in January to interview candidates for the Drey Scholarships. The high quality of the candidates impressed the committee with one member exclaiming, “How do these teachers ever sleep when they manage so many kids and activities!” A special thank you goes out to Fran Morrissey, who spent her Saturday morning as hostess, greeting each of the candidates for the scholarships and setting a friendly, welcoming atmosphere for the interview. After much deliberation, the Committee is pleased to announce our five recipients of the 2015 Drey Scholarships, which will send these Central Florida teachers to study this summer in the British Universities Summer Scholar program. Introductions follow.



Pictured left to right: Scholarship Chair Reta Jackson, Sarah Porter, Tonya Thompson, Michelle Kee, Jill Mollenhauer (not pictured – Janine Papin)

MICHELLE KEE - Michelle teaches English IV Honors and English IV College Prep at Timber Creek High School. She was English teacher of the year in 2008-2009 and represented her school for Orange County’s Teacher of the Year. In 2011-2012 she was awarded the Big Wolf Award for outstanding teaching at Timber Creek. One of her former students said, “I learned and retained more in one year with Ms. Kee than in a succession of English courses. Her curriculum fully encompasses the essential skills that will set students ahead of the curve and her passion for education energizes the classroom...” In her essay Michelle wrote, “I’ve been waiting for this opportunity all my life: to be challenged by a daunting curriculum by expert professors. This is the kind of challenge that makes my heart race and makes my neurons fire.” Michelle has chosen to attend Oxford University and the Committee is excited for her.

JILL MOLLENHAUER - The principal of Boone High School writes, “Ms. Mollenhauer is a consummate teacher who combines scholarly and real world applications in her classroom, making her a respected and requested teacher. Her course work includes Senior English, Debate, and Advanced Placement English Language. Ms. Mollenhauer serves as Department Chair for the English department and also coaches the Boone High Debate Team.” The Committee is amazed that Jill has so many responsibilities—when does she ever sleep? She told the Committee that taking a course in British literature at Oxford is her dream and she writes, “As Curriculum Leader for Boone High School’s English Department, I am in a unique position to share my increased knowledge and support its implementation in my colleagues’ classrooms.” The E-SU couldn’t ask for a more committed educator to send off to the UK this summer!

JANINE PAPIN - Janine is the Fine Arts Department Chair at Trinity Preparatory School, where she teaches acting, musical theater performance, and technical theater. She directs five or six stage productions a year and manages the auditorium. The Headmaster of Trinity writes, “Even with a challenging school schedule of teaching and directing, Ms. Papin has continued to perform professionally as an actor, singer, and dancer. Her passion for theater has been evident through an outreach program with the Boys and Girls Club of Central Florida, offering acting classes to those students and inviting them to attend our school productions.” Janine was awarded the H. Benton Ellis Award for Excellence in Teaching in 2006 and was nominated for best actress in a musical for the role of Mother Superior in *Nunsense* 2013 and best supporting actress in a musical for the role of Beggar Woman in *Sweeney Todd* 2014. I wish I could see Janine on stage at the Globe in London this summer! The Committee can only imagine the experiences Janine will have on stage in London at the Globe this summer. Break a leg, Janine!

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2015 Drey Scholars of Central Florida Branch, continued

SARAH PORTER - Sarah teaches at West Orange High and is the advisor for the Interact Club, which has 150 students who volunteer in the communities surrounding the school. Since she worked for the Walt Disney Company, she has created a workshop program called Disney Entertains and she is the coordinator for Magic Music Days program at Disney. She is a member of National Council Teachers of English and is the Professional Learning Community leader for language arts at West Orange. Sarah writes in her essay, "While at Disney, I was instrumental in creating the 'Disney Entertains' workshop program. The Disney program seems similar to the educational programs at the Globe Theater. I am thirsty for more details and would enjoy experiencing them first hand." The Globe will provide many details for you, Sarah, we're sure!

TONYA THOMPSON - Tonya is Lake Mary High's teacher of the year 2015 and has been named an Honor Teacher by 31 Honor graduates since she began teaching at the school in 2010. She helped create curriculum for Honors Theater History, English IV Honors and College Prep, collaborated in a Professional Learning Community to create curriculum for AP literature and composition and has been the Positive Behavior Support Coach for two years. She is sponsoring an Adopt a Grandparent Club this year and mentors students twice weekly as well as serving on Lake Mary's PLC/Common Core team. Her principal writes, "As a teacher who believes she was called to this profession, she teaches her students the same way that she would expect someone to teach her own. With the knowledge that not all of her students have a strong parental figure at home, she does the best she can to fill the need for her students. 'Students who are loved at home come to school to learn, and students who aren't come to school for love.' This philosophical belief truly encapsulates who Ms. Thompson is to a 'T.'" Tonya writes, "I will create a webpage and keep a daily blog while there, so I can share experiences immediately through the written word and photos." We can't wait to read of your adventures at Oxford University this summer!

I hope our E-U members are as excited as we on the committee are about such women of character and dedication going off to the UK as our ambassadors.

Reta Jackson, Scholar Chair



Sunday, February 15, 2015 Scholars' Reception

Drey Endowment Receives Thank You Notes for Education Project Grants

From the **Florida Historical Society**: "Thank you for your generous support. Thank you for supporting our book project featuring Florida's rich history through illustrations and essays."

- Chris Brotemarkle, DiAnna Runyan, and Delores Spearman

From **Orange County Public Schools, Alternative Education Department**: "Your financial support helps us to continue in our mission for and assistance of our students. The generous support of organizations like yours makes it possible for us to provide Alternative-to-Suspension sites with books to build life skills. For many of our students, this may be the first book he or she owns."

- William Tovine, Principal

Donna Miller, VP Drey Endowment

Kristina Thompson 2014 BUSS Scholar

As cliché as it may sound, my summer at Shakespeare's Globe was completely and utterly life-changing. I learned and grew not just as a teacher, but as an individual as well. There were so many times that I was out of my comfort zone, but instead of being terrified, it was exhilarating.

Several weeks before the program began, I had started to grow nervous; I was just an English teacher—what was I going to be able to contribute to a program that focuses on performance elements? But at the end of day one, after a full schedule of meeting my peers and teachers, learning the objectives, and diving right into the program, I felt relieved and excited. Although half of our company taught theater and the other half taught English, we were all connected through our love and appreciation for Shakespeare; it was the perfect group of students.



Over the following weeks, I read, acted, played, memorized, moved, watched, learned, experienced, felt, and discovered—everything I'll expect from my students as well. All of the practitioners at the Globe were so committed to our learning experience and it was evident through every activity and lesson they provided for us. They made sure we were able to connect to every aspect of Shakespeare's world. We didn't just read and act; we watched Globe plays, examined Elizabethan costumes, learned period dances, focused on our movements and voices, and experienced every inch of the Globe theater itself. Being in London, we also got to venture out into the city and see monuments and artworks dedicated to Shakespeare himself, and visit places that allowed us to have even more historical and cultural appreciation.

The most poignant moments for me during the three-week course were not in the classroom, but the times we got to see Shakespeare's plays as groundlings. Watching and experiencing two of his most famous plays (*Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*) as the common people really allowed me to connect everything we learned during the program. Being a groundling helped me to open my eyes to Shakespeare's decisions and intentions when it came to his plays; his goals were not just to write interesting stories, but to allow his audiences to *become* part of the stories. I still get chills thinking about Marc Anthony's character appealing to us, the Roman people, after Caesar's death. I can still see the blood from when Caesar was stabbed inches away from me, and the intensity in Cleopatra's eyes as her character took her last breaths. As a groundling, the words from Shakespeare's plays were real; they were no longer just letters on a page, but rather emotions and actions. The Globe stage itself represents the lives of the stories, as every inch of the stage is covered in scratches, dents, and stains from the action that has taken place there over the years.

After seeing such amazing productions on the Globe stage, I was worried about my own performance on stage. How would I ever live up to the people that had performed there before me? But the moment I stepped onto the stage for rehearsals, I immediately felt a calming sense of relief. I began to focus on how fortunate I was to have this experience, and to follow in Shakespeare's own footsteps. After three weeks of instruction, performing was no longer scary. The structure of the program itself was scaffolded so well that we learned the skills necessary to perform Shakespeare without even realizing it was happening. That night on the stage, when we performed *Julius Caesar*, magic happened. The story, text, characters, emotions, movements, actions, and meaning all merged together. We were united as a company of actors, no longer weighed down by the title of "student" or "teacher." It is that exact sense of magic that I am so excited to experience with my students this year, and in years to come!



The English-Speaking Union

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E-SU PROGRAMS 2014-2015

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- ☺ Apr. 13 - Mtg. at the University Club
- ☺ May 11 - Mtg. at the University Club

**A WARM WELCOME TO OUR
NEWEST MEMBERS**



* *Dr. and Mrs. Neal Phillips*

**THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
CENTRAL FLORIDA BRANCH
Membership Application**

I wish to become a member of the English-Speaking Union, Central Florida Branch. A check for my dues is enclosed.

Please send a check for \$45 (single membership) or \$60 (couple membership) to the **English-Speaking Union, PO Box 758, Winter Park, FL 32790-0758.**

Name and Spouse's Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Phone, Fax, and Email _____

Visit the E-SU Central Florida website at www.esuus.org/centralflorida for more information.