



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English

NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

OCTOBER 2005

News & Announcements

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OFFICE ADDRESS

1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20009-2512

TELEPHONE

(202) 234-4602

FACSIMILE

(202) 234-4639

WEB SITE & E-MAIL

www.esuwdc.org

esuwdc@msn.com

FLORA FRASER EXPOSES THE SECRET LIVES OF SIX PRINCESSES *An Elegant Soiree with One of Britain's Most Charming Writers*

You're invited to one of our city's most historic settings for an evening with FLORA FRASER, the author of two acclaimed biographies, *Beloved Emma* [Hamilton] and *The Unruly Queen* [Caroline]. Heir to all the narrative charisma of her celebrated mother, Lady ANTONIA FRASER, our speaker will introduce and sign copies of *Princesses*, her new book about *The Six Daughters of George III*. In this gripping account Ms. Fraser delves into the underside of a dysfunctional royal family during a regime that started incompetently



with the loss of Britain's American colonies and went on to such stunning achievements as Nelson's victory at Trafalgar (1805) and the consolidation of an empire that was to dominate the globe for a century. Though accomplished and well educated, the female offspring of a monarch who was prone to bouts of insanity were prevented from marrying. Ms. Fraser shows that they nevertheless enjoyed shocking freedom as they pursued clandestine affairs that resulted in at least one illegitimate birth.

COME ENJOY A FROLIC WITH KEN LUDWIG'S *LEADING LADIES* *A Washington Author Brings his New Play to FORD'S THEATRE*



The most famous performing-arts venue in America welcomes a playwright who took the West End and Broadway by storm fifteen years ago when he gave us *Lend Me a Tenor*, a hilarious romp that premiered in London in an Andrew Lloyd Webber production on Shaftesbury Avenue. Like KEN LUDWIG's other triumphs – a roster that includes *Crazy for You*, *Moon over Buffalo*, and *Shakespeare in Hollywood* – *Lend Me a Tenor* has long been a favorite with audiences and critics alike. Not surprisingly, it opened the way to a cavalcade of

laurels, among them Olivier and Tony citations, for its gifted dramatist. Mr. Ludwig is now back with *Leading Ladies*, a comedy about two down-on-their-luck actors who are getting nowhere until they devise a scheme that outfits them in Tootsie roles. We'll savor a presentation by such stars as Karen Ziemba. We'll then sit down for a chat with Mr. Ludwig and some of his FORD's colleagues.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 20

Performance 7:30 p.m.

FORD'S THEATRE

511 10th Street NW

Members, \$45 Others, \$50

Join Miss Manners on Tuesday, November 1

For details on that and on other *COMING ATTRACTIONS*, among them an evening with historian A. N. WILSON, see the pages that follow.

Coming Attractions

A CONCERT AT WASHINGTON CATHEDRAL BY THE CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Under the gracious patronage of **Sir David Manning**, British Ambassador, and **Lady Manning**, the world-renowned **CHOIR OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY** will visit our city in late October. Directed

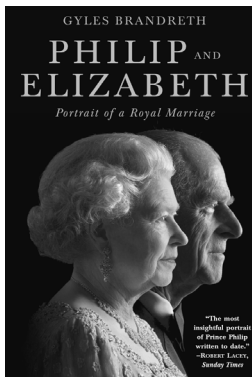


by **James O'Donnell**, these resonant singers will perform coronation music and sacred works by **Bach, Elgar, Walton**, and other composers. And thanks to the generosity of our associates at the **CATHEDRAL CHORAL SOCIETY**, who are hosting this concert as part of their

ANNUAL BRITISH CHOIR FESTIVAL, constituents of the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION** and their guests are eligible for a **20% discount** on available seats. You'll be well advised to order by **Wednesday, October 19**. When you do, please indicate that you wish to take advantage of the **ESU** offer. Prices range from **\$20 to \$60**, and tickets may be obtained now at the Society's box office (**202 537 5527**) or after October 1 at www.cathedralchoralsociety.org.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23
Performance, 4:00 p.m.
WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL
20% Discount for ESU Members

GYLES BRANDRETH OFFERS AN INSIDER'S VANTAGE ON BRITAIN'S ROYAL COUPLE



Armed with privileged access to both **Queen Elizabeth II** and her husband, **Prince Philip**, British writer **GYLES BRANDRETH** presents the first major biography of an intriguing pair whose personal affairs have remained largely hidden from public view. The author has known the Duke of Edinburgh for more than twenty-five years, and the Queen for nearly that long, and has interviewed them both on several occasions. In *Philip and Elizabeth*, his *Portrait of a Royal Marriage*, Mr.

Brandreth reveals that Her Majesty and her spouse are sharply contrasting personalities who have nevertheless forged a partnership that serves both them and their subjects well. Illustrated with Prince Philip's family photographs as well as with pictures from the monarch's royal collection, this engrossing book will engage a large, appreciative readership with its candor, authority, and flowing narrative. Mr. Brandreth is much admired for his work as a novelist, as a children's author, and as a media figure, with **BBC** radio

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25
Cash-Bar Reception, 6:15 p.m.
Dinner, 7:00 Program, 7:30
1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
Dinner and Program, \$30
Program Only, \$15

and television programs that have ranged from *Just a Minute* to *Have I Got News for You*. A former Member of Parliament, he has published a memoir, *Breaking the Code*, that one reviewer praised as "by far the best political diary of recent years." London talk-show host Michael Parkinson had similar remarks about *Brief Encounters: Meetings with Remarkable People*, saying that Mr. Brandreth's "interviews are superb; nobody does it better." Copies of the author's latest publication will be available for purchase and for inscription.

MISS MANNERS' GUIDE TO EVEN MORE EXCRUCIATINGLY CORRECT BEHAVIOR

We request the pleasure of your company at a luncheon with "the wonderfully wicked and irrepressibly high-handed Miss Manners," also known as **JUDITH MARTIN**, "who reveals etiquette to be something at once more essential and more sublime than the problem of the salad fork or the thank-you note." The quoted phrases belong to Francine Prose, writing in *Elle*, and they remind us that the brilliant stylist who is thought by many to be our nation's most extraordinary journalist "has helped transform etiquette from the realm of society matrons to a tool for everyday life" (*Time*). Drawing from recent letters, essays, and illustrations, many of which have



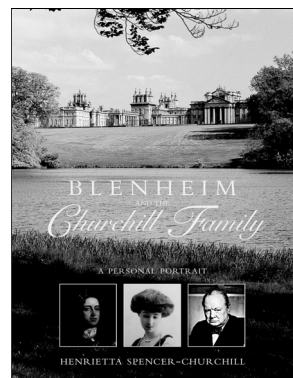
appeared in her syndicated column, Ms. Martin has updated a classic bestseller to offer what the publisher of *Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior* describes as "an indispensable manual for navigating life from birth to death without making a false move." She'll discuss and sign copies of this handsome volume. In response to questions from the audience, she'll also comment on her many other publications, among them two novels that have evoked comparisons with Jane Austen.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 1
Cash-Bar Reception, 11:30 a.m.
Lunch, 12:30 p.m. Program, 1:00
1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
Lunch and Program, \$25

A VICARIOUS TOUR OF BLENHEIM WITH LADY HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL

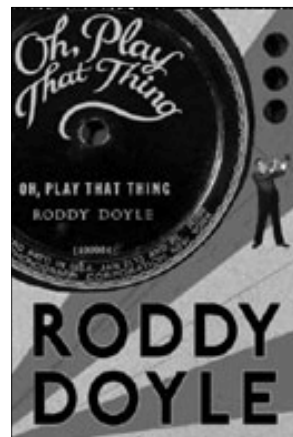
In what should be a gathering to cherish, **Lady HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL**, Sir Winston's cousin, will discuss and display highlights from her illustrated literary excursion to *The Ancestral Estate of One of England's Most Venerable Families*. As she leads us over the imposing grounds and into the ornate corridors of a palace that has long been a destination for Anglophiles, she'll examine the relationships between a monument of British heritage and the fascinating men and women who both shaped it and were in turn shaped by it. A reward from Queen Anne to the first Duke of Marlborough, **Blenheim** is considered by many to be the United Kingdom's

finest example of baroque architecture. It is most widely recognized, of course, as the setting for a legendary Prime Minister's nativity. From his study there during the darkest days of World War II, an indomitable leader supervised and imparted courage to the embattled forces of a civilization whose very survival was at stake. But the home we associate with Churchill has also borne witness to a panoply of other vivid characters, among them the forebears of Princess Diana and of Consuelo Vanderbilt, an American heiress who captured British high society as Duchess of Marlborough.



HENRIETTA SPENCER-CHURCHILL runs a successful firm in London, and she is the author of *Classic Interior Design*, *Classic Design Styles*, *Classic Entertaining*, and *Classic English Interiors*. She will provide rare glimpses not only of the personalities who made Blenheim what it is, but of features of the estate that are not open to view by ordinary tour groups. Copies of *Blenheim and the Churchills* will be on hand for this occasion, and their eminent author will be happy to sign them.

IRISH WRITER RODDY DOYLE BRINGS HIS LATEST NOVEL TO AMERICAN AUDIENCES



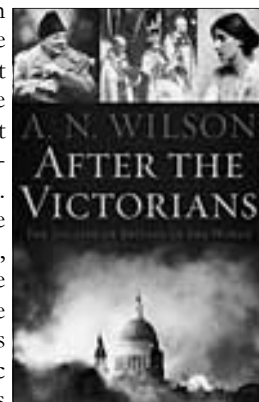
It has been five years since RODDY DOYLE won the hearts of readers and critics alike with Henry Smart, the fearless hero of his bestselling novel *A Star Called Henry*. Released to enthusiastic notices, this volume took its place on several best-of-the-year lists, among them those in the *New York Times Book Review* and *Publishers Weekly*. Like its immediate predecessor, *Oh, Play That Thing* is a prodigious, energetic, sexy narrative, set in Mob-infested New York and Chicago and in Oklahoma during the heyday of Louis Armstrong, with richly textured language and a number of exquisite surprises. Among Mr.

Doyle's previous contributions to our pleasure are *The Commitments* (a novel about a working-class Dublin rock band that became even more endearing when Doyle's witty dialogue transferred to the silver screen in an offbeat film), *The Snapper*, *The Van* (a finalist for the 1991 Booker Prize), *Paddy Clark Ha Ha* (which won the prestigious Booker award and became an international bestseller), and *The Woman Who Walked into Doors*. A Dubliner, Mr. Doyle has

written for the stage and for cinema and television and has contributed stories to such periodicals as *The New Yorker*. Copies of *Oh, Play That Thing* will be on hand for purchase and for the application of authorial graffiti.

A. N. WILSON'S SURVEY OF BRITAIN'S MISFORTUNES AFTER THE VICTORIANS

The distinguished historian whose last book, *The Victorians*, scaled the heights of the British Empire, has now completed his story of its aftermath in *After the Victorians*, a panoramic overview that takes us from the death of Queen Victoria in 1901 to the dawn of the Cold War in the early 1950s. A. N. WILSON offers riveting depictions of the savagery of World War I and of the world-altering upheaval of the Communist Revolution. He describes Britain's role in determining the destiny of the Middle East. And he casts a bright new light on World War II, showing that the United Kingdom played a central part in defeating Germany but paid a severe price for its hard-won victory. The nation would emerge from the war bankrupt and fatally weakened, sidelined from global politics, while America rose to prominence as the hegemonic world power. Among his other talents, A. N. Wilson is a prolific novelist and biographer. In the words



of William H. Pritchard, writing in the *Chicago Tribune*, he is "incapable of writing a dull sentence," and he appears "to have

read everything of pertinence to his vast subject." Reviewer Michael Dirda of *The Washington Post* concurs: "Whether he's discussing religious doubt or cholera, the Crystal Palace or Darwinism, pre-Raphaelite painting or the Crimean War, Wilson sweeps the reader

along in this magnificent contribution to popular scholarship." After his presentation, the author will be delighted to inscribe copies of *After the Victorians*.

YOU CAN EXPERIENCE RECENT ESU EVENTS ON C-SPAN OR ON THE WEB

We're happy to note that our September 20 luncheon with former *Time* correspondent BONNIE ANGELO will appear in the near future on C-SPAN2's weekend *BOOKTV* service. This will be the ninth ESU WASHINGTON gathering in the last five years to be made readily available to audiences around the nation (and in some cases around the world), and we're always glad to hear from ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION friends in distant locales, telling us that they've had an opportunity to enjoy them. For Web links to offerings such as the inaugural ALISTAIR COOKE MEMORIAL LECTURE, a BBC celebration that took place in July at DARTMOUTH HOUSE in London with Senator John McCain as speaker, visit the *Calendar* page at www.esuwdc.org.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2
Program, 7:00 p.m.
CONCORAN GALLERY OF ART
500 17th Street NW
Members, \$18 Others, \$22

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10
Cash-Bar Reception, 6:00 p.m.
Dinner, 7:00 Program, 7:30
1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
Dinner and Program, \$30
Program Only, \$15

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9
Cash-Bar Reception, 6:15 p.m.
Dinner, 7:00 Program, 7:30
1526 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE
Dinner and Program, \$30
Program Only, \$15



THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
OF THE UNITED STATES

Creating Global Understanding Through English
NATION'S CAPITAL AREA BRANCH

1604 New Hampshire Avenue NW Washington, DC 20009-2512

Since 1920, when it originated in response to a parallel organization that had been established two years earlier in Great Britain, the English-Speaking Union of the United States has sought to foster social and cultural cohesion through the resources and traditions of a language that has become increasingly indispensable as a means of international communication. Through a diverse array of offerings, some of which are shared with audiences around the world through radio and TV, the national capital's ESU endeavors to advance a noble mission.

A Salute to Kitty Carlisle Hart

On **MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, AT 7:00 P.M.** we'll join the **CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART** for a special conversation with one of the icons of American entertainment. For 15 years **KITTY CARLISLE HART** charmed us as a panelist for TV's *To Tell the Truth*. Her work as a singer and as an actress has included roles in feature films (with stars like Bing Crosby and the Marx Brothers), on Broadway, at the Met, and at Feinstein's, a Manhattan cabaret in which she is currently celebrating her 95th birthday. Tickets for this tribute to an incomparable ambassador for the arts are only **\$25** for ESU registrants. We expect them to go very quickly.

Thanks for Your Generosity

Everyone associated with the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION** is enormously grateful for your willingness to facilitate its offerings with your support. The **ESU** now girdles the planet, with a prestigious London address at **DARTMOUTH HOUSE** near Berkeley Square, and those who take part in any of its local, regional, and national communities are nourished by a vibrant global network.

In an effort to keep our readers alert to the broader dimensions of the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION**, we now offer everyone who affiliates with the **ESU** at the **Contributor** level or above a colorful periodical, **ESU NEWS**, which comes out six times a year from our headquarters in Mayfair. If you're not yet receiving it, you may upgrade your membership with a call to **(202) 234-4602**.

Through an enticing assortment of edifying events, and through such enterprises as an annual **SHAKESPEARE COMPETITION** for secondary-school students, a variety of **FELLOWSHIP AWARDS** to encourage substantive exploration in academic and artistic settings, and a volunteer-based tutoring service, **ENGLISH IN ACTION**, for those who aspire to better command of a discourse that is not native to them, **ESU WASHINGTON** is dedicated to extending a precious legacy. To help sustain this legacy, all you need to do is supply the information requested in the form at right and submit it by post, phone, fax, or e-mail. Below are the **ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION's** present membership categories.

ASSOCIATE (Individual \$35, Dual \$45)

*Event notices, local and national
ESU member publications*

SUBSCRIBER (Individual \$75, Dual \$100)

*All ASSOCIATE-level benefits plus 1 coupon
for a regular ESU event (that is, an
event priced at \$40 or less)*

CONTRIBUTOR (Individual \$125, Dual \$150)

*All SUBSCRIBER-level benefits plus 1 additional
coupon to be used at a regular ESU event
plus 6 issues a year of ESU NEWS*

DONOR (\$250)

*All CONTRIBUTOR-level benefits plus 2 additional coupons
to be used at regular events and 1 coupon for a special
occasion (that is, one priced at more than \$40)*

BENEFACTOR (\$500)

*All DONOR-level benefits plus 4 additional coupons to be used at
regular events, 1 additional coupon for a special occasion,
and recognition in selected print materials*

PATRON (\$1,000)

*Free admission for 2 persons to all regular events,
4 coupons for use at special occasions, and
recognition in selected printings*

SPONSOR (\$2,500)

*All PATRON-level benefits plus free admission for up
to 4 additional guests at all ESU gatherings*

Response Form

I wish to make a tax-deductible donation to the ESU of \$_____ to support its educational and cultural endeavors. I wish to ___renew or ___enroll in the English-Speaking Union at the \$_____ level.

For **October 6 (Fraser)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$15, ___ at \$20.

For **October 20 (Ludwig)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$45, ___ at \$50.

For **October 25 (Brandreth)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$30, ___ at \$15.

For **November 1 (Martin)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$25.

For **November 2 (Blenheim)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$18, ___ at \$22.

For **November 9 (Doyle)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$30, ___ at \$15.

For **November 10 (Wilson)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$30, ___ at \$15.

For **December 5 (Hart)**, please reserve ___spaces at \$25.

My check for \$_____ to The English-Speaking Union is enclosed.

Charge ___MC_Visa_____(___/___).

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone, Fax _____

E-Mail _____

Member rates for ESU events are available to anyone affiliated with BABA, CantabDC, LSE Alumni, the RSA, RSC America, The Shakespeare Guild, the Washington Society for Churchill, the Woman's National Democratic Club, and various other organizations that collaborate with the ESU.

Visit us online, and check for calendar updates, at www.esuwdc.org.