

English Speaking Union NewsLetter

2022

Greetings to all members of the ESU (Queensland Branch).

It's been a year of shifting fortunes. Covid started to recede, then the floods returned to afflict Brisbane again, then Covid was back for another round. In spite of all this, the Board, invigorated by the addition of new members, has not only been moving ESU(Q) back to a more recognizable pattern of events, but is also developing new initiatives. We have been able to resume our face-to-face events, which has been both reassuring and confirming of our existence and direction.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

As part of a planned series of membership changes, three members of the Board have stepped down: Ray Heffernan, Jan Heffernan, and Gary Gardiner.

Ray Heffernan had been Treasurer and then Secretary for an extended period, and was one of the bulwarks of the ESU(Q) as we have negotiated the obstacles of the last five years. His selfless energy, experience and attention to detail has helped keep ESU(Q) in good shape. He continues to be involved in the Events and Financial working groups.

Jan Heffernan has made a very large contribution to the Facebook page, which she led in its revival; and to events, where she has played a key role in re-establishing our social program after the disruptions of Covid. She continues to bring creative suggestions for speakers to her work on the Events working group.

Gary Gardiner brought unique expertise to the ESU(Q) in the area of real estate and especially commercial real estate. He filtered hundreds of possible properties on the market, and was instrumental in shaping the Board's approach to investment.

To all three outgoing Board members, our warm and grateful thanks.

EVENTS IN 2022

25 March Lecture
Emeritus Professor Roly Sussex
Topic: Of Taboos and Language Minefields
Held at Miegunyah

13 May Literary Presentation
Speakers: Annette Stoddart, Jillian Clare and
eight other performers
Topic: Wit and Wisdom. The work of three
distinguished Australian poets: Les Murray,
Bruce Dawe, Clive James
Held at 66 on Ernest

22 July Churchill Oration
Speakers: David Fagan and Madonna King.
Topic: The Final Word. How Queensland
Governors have quietly used their influence
to unite the community.
Held at The United Services Club

September 10 High Tea and Speeches
Speakers: Public Speaking Winners/Place
Getters.
Held at Miegunyah.

7 October Lecture - Dr Ashley Jones Topic:
What is the role of radio today and how
important is it to our everyday lives?
Held at 66 on Ernest.

20 November at 4pm AGM/Christmas Party -
Celebrating 2022.
Held at Miegunyah
4pm AGM
Christmas Cocktail party 5.15 - 7pm

BOARD: NEW MEMBERS

In 2022 we had special pleasure in welcoming four new members to the Board:

Professor Vicky Browning, QUT, who has also become the new Secretary.

Talisa Pariss-Proby, who is playing an important role in the public speaking and short story competitions.

Katrina Roberts, who is anchoring the website and Facebook activities and the digital side of the ESU's activities, and has been involved in the public speaking and short story competitions.

Clyde Torkington, who is involved in financial management and planning, and is currently Acting Treasurer while Julia Ponder is on secondment for her professional work to Paris.

As required by the Constitution, all Board members resign at the AGM in November. Any member interested in nominating for a position on the Board is encouraged to contact the President at president@esu.org.au

WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

New Board member Katrina Roberts is undertaking a major review of the website and Facebook. It has already undergone significant improvements, as you can see from: <https://www.esu.org.au/>

This work is ongoing.

An early initiative will be a more expansive description of Board members, their background skills, and their roles with the ESU, together with comparable coverage of our judges for the public speaking and short story competitions, and of several people who are assisting the ESU in special ways.

The Facebook page in particular is used for key publicity for the public speaking and short story competitions, and for enhanced interactive operations. This is supported by the graphic design work of Di Heidke, one of our new members. Di designs all our communication with members.

ELECTRONIC SIGNUP: EVENTS, COMPETITIONS AND MEMBERSHIP

Under the guidance of Board member Katrina Roberts, we have been using Eventbrite, an online software site, to simplify the process for members to enrol for events, and for entrants into the public speaking and short story competitions. This has substantially streamlined these processes, which in the past have required substantial work on the part of Board officials. After a review of costs and functionality, the Board has decided to switch to Humanitix for 2023, an Australian booking site which directs its profits to charity, especially disadvantaged children: <https://humanitix.com/au>

From 2023, we intend to use this software for member subscriptions as well.

We request all members to use this site when renewing their subscriptions or making bookings for events. The process is simple, and payment is by credit card. If there are any problems, please contact president@esu.org.au. The relevant links for making bookings are accessible

directly from the ESU webpages and on all event invitations.

VENUES

We are developing a small list of venues which suit the different kinds of events which we organise. So far these include the United Service Club for formal dinners, 66 on Ernest at the Southbank TAFE for speaking dinner events, and Miegunyah for cocktail and speech events. The Events working party is continuing to explore other options.

PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

The public speaking competition was held again in 2022, under the leadership of Emeritus Professor Caroline Hatcher, with support from new Board member Talisa Pariss-Proby. Thanks to support from Joanne Keune in Townsville, the North Queensland division of the competition was held again this year. As in 2021, ESU(Q) supported the Townsville winners of each of the three divisions to fly to Brisbane to participate in each Grand Final. The competitions could not be held in the Newmarket Hall, which had been impacted by the floods. The competition was therefore moved with notable success to Seven Hills Hub.

In 2022 the judging panel of Caroline Hatcher, Lesley Irvine and Annette Stoddart was augmented by Pam Greatorix, David Cockburn, and new Board members Talisa Pariss-Proby and Katrina Roberts. We are very grateful for the generous volunteer support of this team of adjudicators. The grand finals were held on 17 May (Intermediate), 2 June (Junior), and 11 August (Senior). Three of the finalists presented their speeches at the High Tea at Miegunyah on 10 September. The winners can be found on the Website: <https://www.esu.org.au/> and there are photos and descriptions on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=english%20speaking%20union%20queensland>

Very positive feedback from teachers, parents and students from across SE Queensland suggests that the ESU Secondary Schools Public Speaking Competition is quickly becoming the premier Queensland school public speaking competition. It will hopefully be extended to the Toowoomba region for 2023.

ROLY SUSSEX SHORT STORY COMPETITION

The winners of the 2021 ESU Roly Sussex Short Story Competition have been posted on the website, together with their winning entries:

<https://www.esu.org.au/2021-roly-sussex-short-story-competition/>

The ceremony for the 2021 competition is awaiting a response from Government House, who have been busy with matters arising from the Queen's passing.

The 2022 competition was announced with extended publicity through the website, Facebook and a network of other writers' organizations. It will close on November 6. This year there will be two judging panels, one for the Open Division and one for the Secondary Schools Division. The new chair of judges is David Fagan. New

Board members Talisa Pariss-Proby and Katrina Roberts will be contributing to the Secondary Schools Division judging, together with Brian Clarke, a very experienced editor and writing trainer from King's College at The University of Queensland. Entries are being handled through Eventbrite, thanks to Katrina Roberts.

This year Emeritus Professor Peter Little will not be chairing the judging panel. On behalf of the ESU we thank him warmly for his warm and judicious contribution.

REAL ESTATE AND INVESTMENT

After many setbacks in 2021, and a heavy volume of work for Gary Gardiner and Richard Macedo, we have finally purchased a commercial property at 2/109 Chalk St, Lutwyche. The tenant is a hairdressing business.

Our Vice-President, Richard Macedo, has represented us during the long legal process. The Board is very grateful for his expert and tireless contribution to this arduous process.

We have engaged Raine and Horne to manage the property for us, since this is a new initiative for the Board.

We look forward to a stabilized situation with regular income from the rental which will allow us not only to support our established activities, but also to secure administrative support for the Secretary, and to help with the management of the public speaking and short story competitions. In addition, we will be looking to new initiatives, especially involving broadening the footprint of ESU(Q) outside SE Queensland, and in the area of activities involving younger people.

BOARD COMMITTEES for 2022

There are a number of working committees supporting the Executive:

Events committee

Chair: Caroline Hatcher

Members: Vicky Browning, Jan Heffernan, Ray Heffernan, Role: to prepare forward plans of events, and to plan and manage events

Public speaking committee

Chair: Caroline Hatcher

Co-coordinator: Talisa Pariss-Proby

Role: To plan and manage the competition, including liaison with Joanne Keune and the Townsville chapter.

Short story committee

Chair: Roland Sussex

Member: Talisa Pariss-Proby, Katrina Roberts

Role: To plan and manage the competition.

Finance committee

Chair: Clyde Torkington

Members: Treasurer Julia Ponder, Ray Heffernan

Role: to advise the Board on managing the financial affairs of the ESU, and to investigate options for the investment of the funds (somewhat over \$400,000) which remain in the bank after the real estate purchase. The Board has accepted their recommendation to invest the funds with Morgans, and negotiations are under way to

finalize the arrangements. This will help stabilize and consolidate the ESU's financial position and prospects.

Membership committee

Chair: Roland Sussex

Members: Robert Goes

Role: To manage the membership list and subscriptions, and to expand the member base, especially into younger members.

In addition, several special portfolios cover key areas of the ESU (Q)'s work:

Digital technology and delivery (especially web page and Facebook) Katrina Roberts

Design and graphics

Di Heidke

Proposed day workshop on public speaking, 2023

Talisa Pariss-Proby

Real estate issues

Richard Macedo, Robert Goes

COLLABORATION WITH COGNATE SOCIETIES

We have begun organising meeting- sharing arrangements with cognate societies, to enable broader access in both directions. So far we have completed this arrangement with the Communication and Speech Performance Teachers (Inc.), and are exploring further collaborations. Details about the other societies' events, and arrangements for how to book events, will be available on the website.

SURVEY

We are circulating a survey to test members' views on our events, activities and communications. The survey will be emailed to you, and will also be available on the website. Please do give the Board feedback on what you think.

2022 AGM and CHRISTMAS PARTY

For your diary: The annual AGM will be held on 20 November at 4pm at Miegunyah. Invitation coming soon.

VALE BILL PEARSON



Members will share my sadness at the passing of Fr Bill Pearson, our Honorary Chaplain. Bill was a person of exceptional warmth and human caring, and a fine friend and supporter of the ESU. I attended the funeral, a full Requiem Mass, on behalf of the ESU at All Saints Anglican Church on Wickham Terrace on 8 March. I sent his family condolences on behalf of the members of the ESU.

LOOKING AHEAD

We hope that the public health situation with respect to Covid will allow us to move progressively back to our regular pattern of events.

***Emeritus Professor Roland (Roly) Sussex
OAM, FQA, Chevalier des Palmes Académiques
President, ESU (Queensland Branch)***