

IT'S SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL TIME



It's that time of the year again. Amongst all the New Year resolutions which you're struggling to keep, don't forget the most important one: to renew your ESC membership for 2016.

As usual, we are planning to print the 2016 directory of ESC members, and we aim to have this available in March. Only those who have paid up by the 1st March will be included in the directory.

So don't delay – renew now and continue to enjoy the multiple benefits of ESC membership. You'll find a subscription form on the back of this newsletter.

Here are some of the activities we organised during the year: We started the year with our annual Burns Supper—always a sell-out!

We ran a silk painting workshop for the first time; after-work apéros; pot luck lunches; museum visits; summer BBQ; book club; rambles; concerts; kayaking; and the ever-popular Bonfire Night.

In addition we hold regular English, French, German, & Spanish conversation groups.

We have the creative writing group and each year we attend the Salon des Associations to fly our flag and welcome new members.

Your monthly Newsletter and the website (www.esc-alsace.org) keep members up to date with what is going on.

If there is anything you would like to see included, why not contact us and let us know your thoughts?

Email info@esc-alsace.org.

HURRY! TIME IS RUNNING OUT!



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What's Happening?

Date	Event
25 Feb	Coffee morning
4 Mar	PopArtisserie Apéro
8 Mar	Irish conversation
20 Mar	Bilingual Scrabble
24 Mar	Coffee morning
1 April	A Divine Comedy
2 Apr	Who's Afraid? Apéro
30 Apr	Writing Competition Award Ceremony

EVENT REVIEWS

BURNS SUPPER



Robert Burns (25th January, 1759-21st July, 1796)

Gatherings to pay tribute to the life and remarkable poems of ‘Robbie Burns’ take place around the world as close to 25th January as possible wherever members of the Scottish diaspora are to be found. One such gathering took place in Offendorf on the cold night of 23rd January, attracting 144 members and friends of the English Speaking Community to celebrate in true Scottish fashion, ‘Burns Supper’.



On arriving in Offendorf, a village shrouded in (Scotch?) mist, we followed the main street and saw a faint, distant light which, we thought, indicated the venue. Still unsure, however, it was the sound of the bagpipes as we entered the building that ‘spirited’ away any doubts we had. Inside, many a warm, familiar face came to welcome us and introduce us to unfamiliar faces who had, at some time in their lives, been to Scotland and experienced inimitable Scottish hospitality.

Once seated, our compères for the evening, Richard and Alasdair, did splendidly by ensuring that each event fell into place naturally. After the Chairman’s welcome, the ‘supper’ got underway with the traditional exhibition ceilidh dancing – ‘the Gay Gordons’ – and the different dances were performed to perfection.

Anticlockwise

Piping in the Haggis; In full swing; dressing the part; dancers; the Bar staff (Anglican Church volunteers); after the ‘Address to a Haggis’ (see page 19)

One of the highlights of the evening was when guests were asked to stand to welcome the Haggis. The procession comprising of the



pipers, the chef who carried the Haggis on a silver platter and the orator who would ‘Address’ the Haggis walked around the hall and the guests clapped in time, if not in tune, to the music. Once it had reached its destination, the guests seated, Alasdair, an old hand at this, recited the ‘Address to a Haggis’, which was followed by the all important ‘Toast to the Haggis’.

Of Scottish descent myself, but having spent much of my early life on the ‘Sassenach’ side of Hadrian’s Wall, I had never eaten Haggis before; now, I have and can say that it is very good indeed.

Toasts, recitals of some of Burns’ best-loved poems, traditional country dancing, laughter, filled the rest of the evening until it was time to sing ‘Auld Lang Syne’, always a moving ode. Before saying, I think, ‘*Bidh mi ‘gad fhaicinn*’, the success of Offendorf’s ‘Burns Supper’ was down to the organising committee, the compères, the Scottish dancing troupe and all those involved in making “our Burns Supper” one to remember for all of the right reasons!!

Terence Boyle



OEUVRE NOTRE DAME TOUR—30 JANUARY

Strasbourg's cathedral celebrates its 1000th anniversary. As part of the celebrations, this exhibition* explained how, in less than 30 years, it became the model of a Gothic revolution. It is thought that at its heart lays the choice of a sculptor-architect who also worked at the Chartres Cathedral: The Master of The Southern Transept, a portal regarded as the first example of Gothic architecture in German-speaking lands. Extensively damaged during the French Revolution, some of its beheaded pieces were still missing before the show.



Only after thorough research could they be recovered: the lost Head of St John, for instance, was rediscovered amongst a private local collection. Crafted to an exceptional quality, it is a prime example of the emerging Antiquity influences that pervade the Gothic style.

Determined to assemble the works of the Master and his circle, the curators faced a difficult task: a large portion couldn't be detached from the structures where they are nested, such as the Pillar of Angels. This drawback was cleverly bypassed through plaster casts and 3D animations*. We were also presented with sculptures, goldsmith's creations, stained glass and illuminated manuscripts previously scattered across public and private European collections, all shining examples of this exceptional new style.

The cathedral itself had also a place in the exhibition. Virtual reconstructions and models brought a better understanding of the different stages of construction. We witnessed an unremarkable Romanesque church metamorphosing into one of the finest examples of late Gothic architecture.

The Gothic sculptures of The Church and The Synagogue deserve a special mention; displayed side-by-side, they represent the triumph and the defeat, the new and the old, a dichotomy subtly expressed through their contrapposti, facial expressions and a tightly fitting symphony of drapes and curves. The contrite look of The Synagogue was revealed through an ingeniously placed mirror, whilst The Church looked straight to us in triumph. Both are far from the rigid, fearsome

Romanesque creatures that inhabit the Cathedral's Northern Transept.

The new sculptural vocabulary reappears on lesser works, some of them brought specially from Chartres. Others were until now kept in the museum's vaults, as part of its phenomenal collection of more than 5000 sculptures. The new aesthetic was most apparent on an exquisite polychromed sculpture of the Virgin Mary, with its long, floating skirt and the curled hair typical of Antique and Gothic images. Such colouring wasn't an isolated case, either; the curator's findings have also established a long-standing use of polychromy on the cathedral's sculptures, barely visible in some works or all together faded with time in most others.

Unlike the colouring, our guide's infectious enthusiasm never faded away. No question was irrelevant to her: she answered them all with equal care and erudite expertise. Lively and charming, Veronique walked us through the mysteries of medieval religious propaganda, optical illusions and hidden meanings. Her passionate love for art shone a bright light into a grey rainy day, making readable and vastly enjoyable an otherwise cryptic display. Some of us stayed to enjoy the concert while others left with an added spring in their steps.
Leonor Tejado-Hinojo

*This exhibition': <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x3i8grf>; '3D Animations': <https://vimeo.com/142884714>



TNS: “LES LIAISONS DANGEREUSES”



A very enjoyable evening was spent at Strasbourg’s National Theatre watching Choderlos de Laclos’ classic French tale.

Perhaps every country has such a dramatic style but

to an Englishwoman, this seemed a very grand version of a Brian Rix slapstick farce.

The repartee and spontaneity of the performances was fabulous and I could just about keep up by reading the sur-titles. I think even if the play was in English, this aid is very useful.

The stage set was remarkably simple and so the lavish costumes sparkled. Window spaces were used to capture candle-bearing ‘conspirants’ in very memorable images.

We are really lucky to have such high quality art in Strasbourg.

Sue Moller

ESC APÉRO - AU BRASSEUR



We knew this would be a popular venue, not only with ESC members, but we hadn’t quite reckoned on the frenzied merry-making of the student contingent that would inevitably let rip on a Friday night.

However, we did have a good gathering and caught up with each others’ news over some excellent home-brewed beers

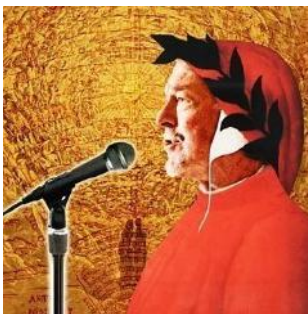
and a selection of tartes flam-bées.

Our next Apéro will be at the PopArtisserie bar in rue de l’Ail (near St Thomas’ Church).

Come along from 18.30 and let’s see how the evening runs. Sometimes we retreat to one of Strasbourg’s many restaurants afterwards, to continue the chatting sitting down, and with more good food.

FUTURE EVENTS

A DIVINE COMEDY—FRIDAY 1 APRIL



Thanks to the enthusiastic new team of helpers who have volunteered - Catherine, Mary and Leonor— plans are moving ahead swimmingly for the performance on 1 April of Mike Maran’s *A Divine Comedy*, his interpretation of the famous poem by Dante Aligheri.

Tickets for the show at the Munsterhof, rue des Juifs, are now available through the ESC website - esc-alsace.org or the ticketing website - ADivineComedySXB.bpt.me.

Tickets cost 12€ for ESC members and

Concessions and 15€ for the general public.

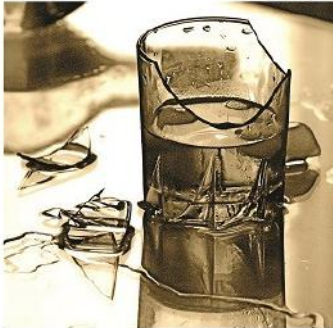
As one reviewer at the Edinburgh Fringe remarked:

‘Dante Aligheri. Lost love. A load of puppets. Whilst that may seem an odd combination, Mike Maran brings it all together admirably in A Divine Comedy: a stand-up storytelling parody of the immortal works of Dante Aligheri...’

Join us for a great night out.

WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF? - 2-9 APRIL

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?



A Tagora Production
directed by Martyn Symons
Cube Noir Theatre – Koenigshoffen
Performance dates: April 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 9th 2016

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is a brilliant scripted play by Edward Albee. Written in 1962 it was highly controversial in its time because of the language used and the subject matter.

Set on the campus of a small New England college, the play focuses on the volatile relationship of George and his hard drinking wife Martha, the daughter of the college president. George and Martha (played by Simon Palmer and Bridget O'loughlin) engage in dangerous emotional games with one another. After they arrive home drunk from a party in the early hours of one September morning, Martha reveals she has invited a young married couple whom she met at the party, for a drink. The guests, Nick and Honey (played by Martin Lee and Julia Laffranque) arrive and are instantly caught in the crossfire of a vicious row between George and Martha....

Act 1 is acknowledged by many critics and commentators as the one of the finest written in all of American literature.

The film was released in 1966 and starred Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor as George and Martha and George Segal and Sandy Dennis as Nick and Honey. All four actors were nominated for Academy awards.

This new Tagora production, directed by Martyn Symons, will be staged in April at the Cube Noir Theatre in Koenigshoffen.

Performance dates:

Saturday April 2nd *

Sunday (matinee) April 3rd

Thursday April 7th

Friday April 8th

Saturday April 9th

For more information please contact Martyn: Martynpaul@aol.com

SPECIAL INVITATION

* **for ESC members:** The ESC invites Members to a free pre-show aperitif (crémant and light nibbles).

Please send a short email to esc.events.67@gmail.com to confirm you wish to attend the apéro - and following the ordering of your tickets, of course.

* **Saturday 2nd April only, from 19h until 20h25** *

FILM REVIEW: CAROL DIRECTED BY TODD HAYNES



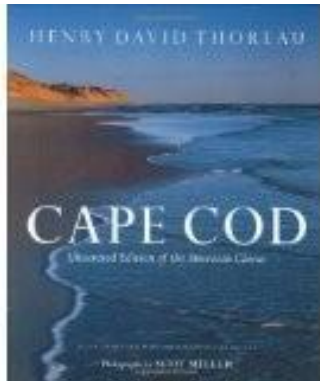
The story starts just before Christmas 1952 in a New York department store with a chance encounter between well-to-do sophisticate Carol (Cate Blanchett) and innocent shop-girl Therese (Rooney Mara). The former has come to accept that marriage to a man, ignoring her true nature, was a mistake, while the latter, an aspiring photographer, is dissatisfied in her relationship with the persistent Richard.

The subsequent story is simple: a blossoming of the relationship between the two women while the menfolk stand by bewildered, hurt and angry. Bitter, escalating divorce proceedings are resolved by a moving plea for a humane resolution of the custody of her beloved daughter by Carol. And, after a period of estrangement, Therese recognises that her path to happiness lies with the older woman.

What makes the film completely compelling is the quality of the acting, a terrific screenplay and the sumptuously photographed, meticulous period detail: all homburgs, cigarettes, chrome bumpers and wood panelled restaurants.

A highly recommended film for grown ups.
Mike Wraith

BOOK GROUP REVIEW - CAPE COD



Twelve members gathered for the January meeting at Dany's, where she, with co-host Frank, served us scrumptious food, some of it Cape-Codian.

I had settled my choice on Henry David Thoreau's "Cape Cod", thinking it would tie in both with the December climate conference in Paris and the current immigrant crisis. After all, this was a man who, in

the mid-19th century, realized that nascent capitalism was leading Americans farther West, with more territories to conquer and, consequently, more Natives to slaughter. As he saw parts of his beloved Massachusetts forests fall victim to clear-cutting in order to satisfy the growing need for firewood and construction timber, he, consciously or unconsciously, decided to head to the easternmost tip of the area, where the bodies of poor immigrants that have been washed ashore greet him. It is as if he was setting out to show all the deaths necessary to the birth

of a nation. At the same time, he immerses himself in an environment where humans, animals, the sea and the shore search for some sort of viable modus vivendi.

Reactions to the book varied widely. While some were enchanted by the author's unique ability to render the emotions of a true Nature-lover, the sudden spurts of dry, unexpected wit or the way his narrative forces the reader to slow down rather than turn the pages in avid anticipation, a few, quite understandably, were put off by his style. They found the lengthy enumerations of the names of animal and plant species fastidious. The book also contains many repetitions, due in part to the account having first been published in magazine instalments.

As we were leaving, one of the participants confided to me that, even if "Cape Cod" isn't a thrilling read, it certainly makes one want to learn more about Thoreau and the world-view he sets forth in his writings. Surely such curiosity is commendable.

Judith Jung-McMacken

BOOK GROUP REVIEW: *SNOW FALLING ON CEDARS*



'Snow falling on cedars' is a compelling and gripping 1994 award-winning novel written by David Guterson. It is a fascinating story set 13 years after the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbour on an island off the northwest coast of America.

It is a masterpiece of suspense structured around the trial for murder of an American citizen of Japanese ancestry, combining a densely atmospheric courtroom drama with memories of life in the pre-war period. A key question is to know whether it is possible, on a tiny island like San Piedro, to receive a fair trial in the post-war anti-Japanese atmosphere of tension and suspicion.

As the trial progresses, rich interlacing stories of people trying to make sense of what the war had done to their lives, are revealed within a tightly knit web of relationships: each character's choices and experiences are deeply linked to others. Betrayal, passion, jealousy and racism are woven into the life of the insular community.

The author is strongly committed to exploring how some subtle forms of negative prejudice interfere with a fair and objective scrutiny of the evidence. Deep suspicions drive the jurors piecing together the story to be more likely to incriminate the accused rather than give him the benefit of the doubt.

The misunderstanding of Japanese cul-

tural differences such as lack of facial expressions is explored. Thus the defendant's instinct to maintain composure and stillness while unshared experiences and unhealed psychological wounds remain hidden, misleads others as to his inner life.

Masterful story-telling keeps the reader in suspense to find out if the truth will be finally brought to light.

Among the many questions raised by this complex story:

Is it possible for a 'just society' with free will and independent choice to exist, or will the impact of our human past and generational inheritance always dominate?

Is this kind of storyline repeated throughout history, including in the present day?

Is love able to transcend the mistrust, prejudice and defensive reactions which seem inevitably to surround cultural differences?

In a nutshell, this novel has much to recommend it. Through the rich analysis of a prosecution story the author helped me gain a deeper understanding of human nature and the complexity of our world.

Christiane Lehmann

Editor's Note:

Yes, dear reader, this month you get two book reviews for your money. We keep being one month behind with the reviews so this month you get a short-cut to two books. Coincidentally, one is about the American east coast and the other Canadian west coast.

BOOK GROUP CALENDAR

The group's next book is a play, Alan Bennett's 'The History Boys'.

It will be discussed on the night after this newsletter is published, so the review will follow in March.

You are very welcome to join the group. Contact: esc.events.67@gmail.com

MEMBER PROFILE - PETER GUNNING

Ireland's Outgoing Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe

This month your editor has somewhat adjusted her remit for the Member Profile in order to invite Peter Gunning to tell us something of his diplomatic life. He has worked for the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs for 41 years: Strasbourg is his last posting, and so it seemed an ideal opportunity to look back with him.

Although not strictly an ESC member, through him, the Irish Permanent Representation was able to sponsor the recent Yeats Remembered event, for which the ESC is extremely grateful. It was a really great night (see December 2015 newsletter for a taste).

When you sign up to be a diplomat, you cannot know where you will be posted and whether you will arrive when the host country is on the brink of war or famine, an earthquake or a revolution.

Well, Peter has managed quite a scorecard: Soviet Russia; Iran with the Shah and the Revolution; a social whirl amongst multitudinous Irish communities in Chicago; Egypt in the time of Mubarak; Spain with Juan Carlos and Basque unrest; Brussels as the EU expanded from a manageable 15 to 25 members, changing the whole nature of the Union; and finally, after several postings in Ireland as well, he came here to Strasbourg. It is hard to imagine the range of insights and skills one must have after such an array of experiences, when one is mixing at diplomatic level, but also bringing up a young family and getting out to see the country.

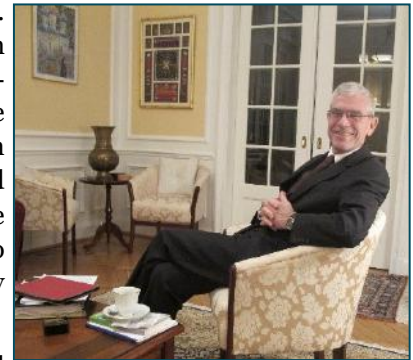
So, how does one become a diplomat? I would have supposed one might take Political Studies or Law but, as a teenager, clearly Peter was not tunnel-

visioned about his future. Following his Master's in Organic Chemistry at University College, Dublin, he found himself working in a research laboratory and felt it was not quite the sort of room he wanted to work in for the next forty years.

His university degree had required him to study Russian or German (as these countries produced many important scientific papers) and Peter found Russian quite suited him. He took exams for the Irish civil service and was accepted both for the home-based and Foreign Service and, without looking back, he signed up for the latter. After two years of learning the ropes in Dublin, he got his first posting to Moscow, remarkably actually putting his Russian to use immediately.

The Anglophone circuit was quite close-knit there, and it wasn't long before he met Mary, an American girl practicing her Russian in Moscow as au pair for an American family. Whilst she returned to the US, Peter was sent on to Iran where she joined him. They married, rather remarkably, in a Catholic church in Teheran, shortly after the Revolution where amongst other excitements, crowds had stormed westernised hotels, seizing all the alcohol bottles which they smashed in the streets and sending the drinks down the drains.

Overnight the country became strictly Islamic. There is still a measure of tolerance however and nearly 40 years later, the same Dominican priest who married them, Father Paul Lawlor, runs St Abra-



Tea in the Gunning Residence, decorated with souvenirs of Peter's postings

MEMBER PROFILE CONT.

ham's church there.

During the American Embassy hostage crisis in 1978, Peter and other diplomats were allowed to visit three American colleagues who found themselves trapped in the Teheran Foreign Ministry ballroom where they had to stay for 444 days! Peter brought books to relieve their frustration.

At first other cultures and religions were welcome, but soon restrictions increased. Nevertheless, it was and is a beautiful country with cultured, richly intelligent people and colourful, healthy cuisine.

A stint in Dublin followed, dealing on the Middle Eastern desk and then a 180° swing to Chicago, a great place to be Irish Consul General, where he was invited to the Saturday night gatherings of the Galway Men, the Kerry Men, the Dublin Men, typically for prime rib, corned beef and cabbage. The great city of Chicago provided a comfortable life one could give in to, but the pendulum swung again and he returned to Dublin to work on EU matters, and having restocked his portfolio, he was off to Brussels.

It was impossible to talk without touching on all sorts political issues, which was not of course the purpose of the interview. However, with Britain agonizing over whether to leave the EU or not, it was interesting to hear the Irish perspective on the issue.

Whilst many British people feel that Europe is a drain on its resources with a return of unpalatable rules, Ireland's accession to the EU helped it emerge from the shadow of its neighbour, Britain, and develop relationships with the wider world in its own right. Thus Russia and China became clients where for centuries Ireland had relied on the custom of British markets. Becoming 'European' was a great step forward for Ireland.

He found Brussels a vibrant city, with easy

access to many delightful places. The work was tough and in 1996 Ireland took the Presidency so, as assistant to the ambassador, Peter's plate was seriously full. Four years later, the family uprooted again, in every possible sense, and landed in Cairo - hot, noisy, poor, overcrowded (16m inhabitants *in* Cairo) and, in parts, very wealthy and packed with history. Education in the British International School was excellent, and the children made many interesting friends. Peter was now Ambassador, and the social power of that position gave the family rich experiences. However, there was plenty of work since he had responsibilities in Lebanon, Sudan, Syria, Jordan and the Irish military contributed to the peacekeeping force in the Golan Heights, Lebanon and Damascus: Ireland was seen to be making a valuable Middle Eastern contribution.

Meanwhile, Peter was trying to aid Irish beef sales in Cairo, where he was assured they could not risk BSE due to their high standards: he then walked through the souk, and wondered at the fly-infested joints hanging in the open butchers' stalls.

The next swing was back to Brussels, the 2004 Irish Presidency and the expansion of the EU from 15 to 25 members. Then on to Madrid, where Peter was Ambassador to the Royal Monarchy: it was time to learn Spanish and he also learnt of the many links Ireland and Spain have – not only Catholicism and a long history but also common fishing waters; military architecture in Ireland in readiness for the Spanish Armada; and a huge annual influx of Irish tourists. 'You see all aspects of life as a diplomat' commented Peter, reflecting how, in contrast to the heady social whirl, a good part of the embassy's work is about travellers' welfare and, more seriously, about visiting nationals in gaol, dealing with fights, theft and injuries. All one's citizens are entitled to assistance.

MEMBER PROFILE CONT

There was also an opportunity to share insights from the Irish peace process in relation to the Basque disquiet and their search for independence.

So, back to Dublin as head of the EU Division and when that Division morphed, he came to Strasbourg as Permanent Representative to the Council of Europe (CoE). Peter has been pleased to discover how well informed Ministries in Ireland are about the CoE's work – he cited Justice, Education, Jobs and Enterprise.

He also valued the CoE's influence on intractable issues, such as decriminalising homosexuality, access to abortion (in limited cases) and the provision of free legal aid. I queried the influence of his signature to the Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence which I noted he signed last November: he explained that the countries are linked together under the Istanbul convention and would support each other in checking the standards are maintained and in information and best practice exchange and this would benefit his citizens as well as those in the other signatory countries.

A standout event during his mandate in Strasbourg was the visit by President Michael D Higgins to the council of Europe in January 2015. In a very well received speech to the Parliamentary Assembly, President Higgins looked back at Ireland's experience as a found-

er member of the organisation and highlighted how current Irish interests and concerns in the international human rights area dovetailed with the instruments and activities of the CoE.

Now Peter is on the brink of retirement, I wondered what his plans were. Apart from of course visiting his grandchild in Chicago (they really did love it there!), travelling for leisure and other typical retirement treats, Peter hopes that his depth and breadth of knowledge will be of assistance back home in Ireland, as and when they are required. It sounds to me as though the retirement is going to be as full as the day job!

Lastly, I wanted to know how he blended in to countries and then wrenched himself out again: Peter said curiosity and interest in other countries was essential but he always remembered he was Irish, and that he was in this country thanks to Ireland. He knows his roots are in Dublin. Sounds like a good formula.

Editor's Note: Next month we will be meeting the outgoing UK Permanent Representative, Matthew Johnson.

*Do let us know if you would like to suggest a suitable interviewee for this column:
esc.newsletter.67@gmail.com*

STORY: “SCHOOL” BY SUSAN NORMAN-FLECK

As they cycled across the square Louis was surprised to see a large group of students pooled in front of the school.

“Are the Germans late opening school for us? Gauleiter Wagner won’t be happy with that” quipped Pierre.

Louis stopped dead and got off his bike, causing Pierre to ride clumsily into him.

“Look”

“What?”

He followed Louis’ stare and fell silent.

Under the low lying late autumn sun in the clear blue sky, a flag with a swastika was clearly visible flying over their school. Louis’ gaze moved down and he gasped. A huge banner was draped across the front of the elegant rose pink building proclaiming “Oberschule Erwin von Steinbach”

“What the...”

Louis dropped his bike and rushed to join the growing group at the entrance. He started to scan the notice posted on the door, urgently, in terror. He felt sick, his breath left his body as though he had been punched. He stared at the notice in disbelief; he needed to sit down, he was growing hot and he felt his palms becoming sweaty.

The incoherent, agitated babbling around him seemed suddenly to be coming from a distance and he

felt weak and nauseous. As well as the change in school name, he read, starting from today all lessons would be taught in German.

“But I don’t speak German” Louis’ panicked thoughts echoed the words he could hear from others nearby. “How will I understand anything?”

Before he could read any more, the head teacher arrived.

“Boys, boys, come now. Time for all this later. Follow me”

He marched them unceremoniously into the large hall where others were already waiting, talking loudly, some crying – even the older boys, Louis noted with increasing alarm.

-Where is Pierre? Merde I’ve lost him. He looked around in panic, and pushed back towards the door to find his friend.

The head banged on the lectern and silence fell.

In a voice devoid of all emotion, the head explained that as of the previous night, the school was under German command. Its name had been changed to reflect this: all lessons from now on would take place in German; the teachers were going to attend a ‘Gauschule’ in Offenburg to learn the skills necessary to teach to German standards; French was now forbidden - inside the classrooms but also among the pupils in the corridors and playgrounds.

Cont overleaf

This is an extract from a project to write an historical fiction novel based on true life experiences. The story follows the fictional main character Louis, 14 at the beginning of the novel, as he matures and comes to terms with the horrors of daily life during the occupation of Alsace by the Nazis between 1940 and 1945.

“SCHOOL” CONT

At this point a babble of indignant rebellious talk broke out amongst the frightened youngsters; no way would they talk German to their friends, they didn't even know how; they must hoist the French flag immediately. Somewhere in the room 'La Marseillaise' broke out and Louis was thrilled to hear that everyone joined in almost unanimously. He felt his spirits lift slightly, felt shivers run down his spine, and joined in the singing. Together they could do something ...

Suddenly, as if from nowhere, a gun was fired and German soldiers rushed into the hall. The room fell silent as the terrified children cowered, trying to make themselves invisible. Louis retreated further into the centre of the crowd. He felt ashamed but was terrified of attracting attention.

He wanted to make a stand,

speak out; do something, anything to show he would not give in to this. But he could only bring himself to stand hiding amongst his friends.

“Coward” he muttered.

Throughout the day it became evident to pupils and teachers alike that the changes imposed by the new German rule would be swiftly and efficiently put into place. No one knew who to turn to; some of the teachers and even some friends were clearly happy about the changes and supported the new regime, others tried to show their disgust and opposition.

Jean-Luc, (now re-named Hans), had drawn a French flag which he displayed on his desk. The rest of Louis' class had watched in horror as a German soldier appeared as if by magic and dragged Jean-Luc away.

The ESC's Creative Writing Group - now under the sobriquet Strasbourg Writers' Stammtisch - meets regularly to discuss its members' creations. Sue's story comes from a collection of 40+ stories that we are publishing in 2016, entitled 'Blood, Sweat and other Outpourings'.

Cost is not yet known (under 10€): if you are interested in buying a copy, please contact esc.events.67@gmail.com

INFORMATION & ADVERTS

Coffee Mornings

Next Coffee Mornings
All Thursdays

25 February
24 March
28 April
26 May
30 June

9h30 to 11h30

L'Escale Centre Socio-
Culturel de la Robertsau,
78 rue du Dr François,
Strasbourg- La Robertsau

Come and catch up with ESC members and visitors at our monthly coffee mornings at l'Escale!

The Escale community centre (address left) is our regular home and has good parking facilities whilst it is within a five-minute walk of bus routes 6, 15A and 30.

The coffee morning is always held on a Thursday morning between 9.30 and 11.30 and is free. We are always pleased to

see friends, visitors and potential new members.

For further information, contact Jo Crowe at info@esc-alsace.org



PODCASTS: WINDOW ON THE WORLD

Dear ESC members,

If you haven't yet cottoned on to podcasts, I'd like to encourage you to use them. Most of us have devices of some sort to listen to music

wherever we happen to be, but you can also listen to English radio programmes (as well as other languages) when on the move and outside the Wifi zone.

Podcasts (recorded radio programmes) have been around for ten years or more but have recently become easier to access. The name comes from combining i-pod and broadcast. To obtain them you need a computer, tablet, smartphone or MP3 player.

First, install an application (app for short), a software programme designed to perform a specific function. Search Apple or Android websites for details. Ask a friend to help if necessary.

Then go to a radio station and click on "Podcasts". If for instance you want to listen to the BBC, select www.BBC.co.uk/podcasts and find a programme either by one of the many BBC stations (including Radio Scotland, Wales and Ulster) or by genre.

Click on "Subscribe". Don't be put off by the word, they are usually free of charge and you can have as many as you like.

The application will check and download all future episodes automatically. Or you can transfer them (download) to your device individually. You can listen to a whole list of your chosen programmes, wherever and whenever you like.

I'm sure you'll be dazzled by the fantastic choice on all subjects. Don't miss out!

Theresa Collet
(with thanks to M-H who got me going)

NEW- PHOTO COMPETITION - A different look at Strasbourg

How well do you know this city you inhabit ?

Find a place, an object, a work of art (an architectural detail perhaps), a piece of wall, that is not immediately identifiable, but in a public place (not your backyard !) photograph it and send it to esc.newsletter.67@gmail.com. The most original photo(s) will be published.

The caption(s) will be revealed in the following newsletter, but meanwhile you can send in your guesses to the address above.

The entries will be shown at the last coffee morning of the season, and the participants will be able to vote on the best one, which will win a prize. Here is something to start us off. Where is it?

NEW - BRIDGE, ANY-ONE? - OR CHESS?

Does anyone know of a group who play bridge or chess in English? If so could you please pass on their contact details to Lois.

In the case that there is no group, would anyone be interested in setting up such a group with me?

An English-language games-playing group to meet regularly, to play bridge and/or chess (for adults).

Thanks, Lois (0642202915)

e-mail: emceredig@yahoo.com



SEEKING A FRENCH-SPEAKING FAMILY FOR AN EXCHANGE.

A 10-year old German boy, living in Luxembourg, would like to stay during holidays, in exchange with a French boy or girl same age staying in Luxembourg. His school language is English and he'd like to improve his French, as next September, half of his courses will be held in French.

Contact: Hannelore Bolon :

lolo.bolon@wanadoo.fr - 0388966840

NEW - ANYONE FOR A SWIM?

Christine Doppler wonders if anyone would like to join her for a regular swimming 'meeting', a bit like an apéro in a swimming pool!

She is suggesting 17.30 on a Friday evening. Entrance to Municipal baths is 4.40€ or 30€ for ten sessions.

Email Christine at doppler.christine@yahoo.fr to discuss possibilities.

YOGA CLASSES FOR KIDS WEEKLY

In Strasbourg, in ENGLISH!.

SATURDAYS: 3 - 6 years 9.30am
7 - 10 years 11:15am

To sign up and for more information,
please contact Denise Donnio:

denyogastories@gmail.com



A small but enthusiastic group of Irish speakers are up and running with an informal get together through the medium of the Irish language (Ciorcal Comhrá). The idea is to have a relaxed, 'no pressure' environment to converse in Irish, welcoming all levels from absolute beginners to native speakers. All are welcome / beidh fáilte mór roimh gach duine!

Next date: Tuesday 8th March at Le Michel,
20 av de la Marseillaise from 6.30pm.

For more information:

moloneylinda@yahoo.com

English language teaching assistant for the IUT Robert Schuman (Illkirch) who seek an English language teaching assistant for their computer studies department, from September 2016. Candidates should be native speakers and have spent 4 years in university education (bachelor US). Some teaching experience preferred. 10 – 14 hours per week on a one-year renewable contract.

Applications (letter and CV in English) should be sent to:

Cathie-Anne Schneider - c.schneider@unistra.fr or by post to 72 Route du Rhin, 67400 Illkirch

NEW - BILINGUAL SCRABBLE !!

If your language skills are adequate in French and English, and you love to play scrabble, have you never been frustrated at not being able to use a foreign word (French or English) when you have all those 'w', 'h', 'y' that are difficult to use in French, or 'q', 'j' in English?



Here is your chance! It's great fun and good exercise in both languages.

Our first event will be held on Sunday 20 March, from 2 pm, at Catherine Manini's home You can bring your own board, as well as something to nibble on, sweet or savoury. The hostess will kindly provide soft drinks. Please register at esc.events.67@gmail.com to join us. The more, the merrier !

Catherine MANINI, 26 rue de la Première Armée, Strasbourg

Tram C or D, Buses 15, 14, 24, stop at Etoile-Bourse or Porte de l'Hôpital

Car parks : Place de Lattre de Tassigny, Parcus Austerlitz or Saint Nicolas

CONVERSATION GROUPS

French Conversation

The French conversation group is held on Wednesdays at Va Piano, Les Halles.

You are all welcome.
For forthcoming dates
and info contact: Colette Jandrok at
03 88 20 21 17 fredericka06@yahoo.fr

Spanish Conversation

17 rue de Verdun, Strasbourg.
Contacts for details of the next meeting:
Alicia Verdier tel: 03 88 60 72 86
or Colette Jandrok 03 88 20 21 17

English Conversation

7 rue des Ducs, Cronembourg, Strasbourg
Contact Frederick William-Smith for details
of the next meeting.
frederickthscribe@gmail.com
Phone 03 88 27 70 10

German Conversation

Contact Bernard Greiner for details of the
next meeting.
bernard.greiner@numericable.fr
Phone 03 88 66 32 06

Incredible Deal!



Car for Sale 2015 VW Golf

16,500€ Mileage: : 9,500km. New July 2015.

In perfect condition, accident-free, garaged underground.

Model: 1.2L TSI "Trendline 5P" (4 doors + hatchback).

Colour: Limetone gray metallic.

Engine: 1.2L gas-turbo, 105 horsepower. Great mileage with surprising power.

6 speed manual, with automatic hill-hold

Upgraded touch screen audio ("Composition Media") with Bluetooth, CD, USB, Aux input.

Also includes: A/C, cruise control, safety features (ABS, ESP, airbags, fatigue detection, etc.), fold-flat rear seats, fog lamps, emergency spare tyre, etc.

This car new costs over 23,500€ with included options. We purchased it 8 months ago but are moving back to the US and must sell.

A lucky new owner can take advantage of a great deal!

Call Matt Tupper at
mrtupp@gmail.com or 06-66-21-72-20

Newsletter Publication – Next deadline for March 2016 Edition: Sunday 13 March 2016

We'll publish your announcements/advertisements each month, space permitting and limited to 100 words.
Advertisements will be repeated twice only and please let the Editor know by the first of the month if you need your ad repeated.

This service is free to ESC Members, non-members €40, which should be included with submission. Items for publication should be in English.

Please forward items by e-mail to: esc.newsletter.67@gmail.com

ESC Email contacts:

info@esc-alsace.org

secretary@esc-alsace.org

esc.newsletter.67@gmail.com

esc.events.67@gmail.com

ADVERTISEMENTS

Au Pair position sought

Sandra (17), is Polish living with her family in Italy. She seeks a summer job in Strasbourg from 15 June to 15 August 2016, to broaden her horizons.

She would like to stay with a family with children.

Sandra speaks fluent Italian and Polish, good English and quite good French. Sandra, whose family we know well, is most reliable and conscientious.

If interested please call me for further information: Birgit Meyer, Strasbourg

Tel: 0388 36 1991 or:
birgitmeyer2@gmx.de

Tuscany: beautiful villa to let:

12 km south of Siena: country-maisonette (19th C villa), 6 large and bright rooms which are nicely furnished, two floors, sleeps up to 7-8: hall, big Cantina (former wine cellar), extra large living room, summer kitchen (with dishwasher), two bathrooms (washing machine), extra WC, sunny courtyard, lovely garden and forest.



Available from mid-March till November. Cool rivers, lakes and hot thermal springs in the vicinity; 50 km to the sea, beautiful landscape, picturesque towns and tranquil hills. **From 490 €/week.**

For information: Birgit Meyer: 0033 388 36 1991

Email: [Birgitmeyer2@gmx.de](mailto:birgitmeyer2@gmx.de) or:
www.bella-tuscany.net

Also available: lovely apartment for 2 persons with garden and terrace 420 €/week.



Français-Parler—A2/B1 level

French language course in Lyon - 23-30 April 2016



At Centre Jean Bosco

Classes (am), activities (pm), half board in single room with shower and wc.

Price: 750 €/person (all inclusive)

Contact français.parler@yahoo.fr

Tel : 06 89 12 94 48

Alphabet Road

offers special programmes during the school holidays with themed 2-hour workshops and fun activities - painting, cooking, sports, music etc.



Children aged 3-10 with any level of English are welcome to come, even complete beginners! Your children will be having so much fun, they won't even realize they're learning English!

Check our website: www.cours-anglais-strasbourg.fr

Alphabet Road - The English Workshop

2 rue Saint-Quentin, 67000
Strasbourg

Tel: 09 80 79 74 75

06 62 10 48 73



The Anglican (Episcopal) Church in Strasbourg

Holy Communion each Sunday, 10:30 am at the
Eglise des Pères Dominicains.

Contact the Chaplaincy on

03 69 57 40 03

anglican.chaplaincy.strasbourg@gmail.com

or visit website, www.saintalbans.fr

Trinity International Church of Strasbourg

Sunday service at 10:00 at the Foyer (Fellowship Hall) of
the Eglise St. Louis,
12 rue du Cygne.

www.trinitystrasbourg.org

**Bilingual International School of Strasbourg
(BISS)**

For full information, please contact the school at
Tel: 03 88 15 28 00

Fax: 03 88 15 28 09 or contact@lucieberger.com

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I have developed a clamping/tensioning tool which makes tubular hose clamps and also binds objects of different shapes and packages of greater diameters. This tool adapts to using different diameters of wire and is versatile, simple to use and is manipulated manually.

With every purchase you get 3 metres of 1 mm stainless steel wire, enough to make several repairs. This means that the tool will have paid for itself even after its first use!

So for all those looking for unique and innovative presents, look no further! Simply click on website www.monoutil.fr to discover more.



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Crèches bilingues de proximité

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06.16.41.12.96

JOB ANNOUCEMENT

Is English your first language ?

Are you fun and dynamic ?

Do you enjoy playing with small children ?


Baby Trees nurseries are looking for candidates who are native English speakers and who are interested to work with 0 – 3 year olds. No qualification or experience required.



La plume
de Victor

Victor had
a feather

Fern Powell-Samman
Illustrations : Gilly Gobinet

les éditions
de l'officine 

Includes audio cd. Price 10E. ISBN: 9782-35551-192-9

ADDRESS TO A HAGGIS

BY ROBBIE BURNS

- A TRANSLATION



Fair and full is your honest, jolly face,
Great chieftain of the sausage race!
Above them all you take your place,
Stomach, tripe, or intestines:
Well are you worthy of a grace
As long as my arm.

The groaning trencher there you fill,
Your buttocks like a distant hill,
Your pin would help to mend a mill
In time of need,
While through your pores the dews distill
Like amber bead.

His knife see rustic Labour wipe,
And cut you up with ready slight,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like any ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm steaming, rich!

Then spoon for spoon, the stretch and strive:
Devil take the hindmost, on they drive,
Till all their well swollen bellies by-and-by
Are bent like drums;
Then old head of the table, most like to burst,
'The grace!' hums.

Is there that over his French ragout,
Or olio that would sicken a sow,
Or fricassee would make her vomit
With perfect disgust,
Looks down with sneering, scornful view
On such a dinner?

Poor devil! see him over his trash,
As feeble as a withered rush,
His thin legs a good whip-lash,
His fist a nut;
Through bloody flood or field to dash,
O how unfit.

But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his ample fist a blade,
He'll make it whistle;
And legs, and arms, and heads will cut off
Like the heads of thistles.

You powers, who make mankind your care,
And dish them out their bill of fare,
Old Scotland wants no watery stuff,
That splashes in small wooden dishes;
But if you wish her grateful prayer,
Give her [Scotland] a Haggis!

This is a translation of the Gaelic poem that Alasdair Hunter declaimed to the haggis at the Burns Supper - see ceremony photo on page 2.



ESC Subscription Form 2016

Annual Fees: Family/Business: €30. Students/Au pairs: €12

Membership runs from 01st January to 31st December.

For further information about payment email
 "contact.esc.alsace@gmail.com"

	Surname	First Name	Nationality
Member 1 (Records will be maintained in this name)			
Member 2			
If your details have not changed, just tick hereo Otherwise, please complete as necessary.			
Address	House number, Street	Postcode	Town
Telephone Number		Mobile Number	
Email Address(es)			
Children			
Name	Year of Birth	Name	Year of Birth
Is this application for a:	New Member <input type="checkbox"/>	Renewal of last year's membership <input type="checkbox"/>	Past ESC member <input type="checkbox"/>
If you have given us an email address we will automatically send you the newsletter by email. If you do not have an email address, or prefer to receive a printed copy please tick here. <input type="checkbox"/> Postage is one of our highest costs - please consider this option carefully.			
Completed application forms should either be given to the Membership secretary at an ESC coffee morning, or posted, with your cheque made payable to "English Speaking Community" , to: Mike Wraith, 7 rue Lovisa, La Robertsau, 67000 Strasbourg If you have used our new Paypal option would you please enter the reference here: _____			
IMPORTANT: We will only ever use your contact details to send you information about the ESC or ESC events. We will never sell, lend or pass on your details.			
For administrative use:			
Entered on DB <input type="checkbox"/>	Date		
Fee paid: €	Date	Chq #	