

THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION OF DENMARK

Creating Global Understanding through English

Patron: H.E. Alexandra Christina, Countess of Frederiksborg

NEWSLETTER

November 2023

Dear ESU Members,



The Festive Season is fast approaching, and our next coming event will be a Christmas Cheer lunch on **Sunday 3rd December at 12noon.**
We have booked seats at the popular **Værtshuset Sankt Peder.**

They serve a wide variety of Danish smørrebrød/ dishes at reasonable prices.
You can see their menu on <https://www.sankt-peder.dk/menu>
The ESU will provide a glass of wine/beer.

We look forward to seeing you and enjoying hyggelig English conversation.

Date: Sunday 3 December at 12noon

Venue: Værtshuset Sankt Peder,
Sankt Pedersvej 2, 2900 Hellerup. (approx. 10 minutes' walk from Hellerup Station)

RSVP: 25 November to Birgitte Wern on wern.birgitte@gmail.com

Please note that reservations after that date are binding.

October Events

2 October

Sankt Joseph Institute (one of our member schools) hosted an exciting debate day for 9-10th grade students with judging assistance from ESU PSC finalists.

5-8 October

Birte Steer Pallesen attended the ESU International Council Meeting in Paris accompanied by Eleanor Bomholt who stepped in at the last minute for Birgitte Wern. This was an opportunity for international ESUs to report on activities and exchange ideas working towards greater international interaction and understanding.

17 October

ESU members who attended the matinée performance of Harold Pinter's "The Dumb Waiter" enjoyed some fine acting from Lars Mikkelsen and Ian Burns and a lively Q&A session with the actors after the performance.

25 October

ESU members were warmly welcomed to the **U.S. Embassy** on Dag Hammarskjölds Alle where we were addressed by H.E. Alan Leventhal, United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Denmark, and given an insight into his priorities as ambassador. Ambassador Leventhal shared with us his experiences and interest in visiting high schools (including some ESU member schools) in Denmark. He stressed the importance of education, international relations, educational exchanges and research as well as other issues including trade relations, political security and the safety of citizens. We are exceedingly grateful to H.E. Alan Leventhal for giving us such an informative and inspiring presentation, and our sincere thanks go to him and to the U.S. Embassy.

IPSC Advance Notice

The ESU Headquarters have confirmed that the 2024 International Public Speaking Competition will take place in London from Monday 13 May to the evening of Friday 17 May. The winner of the Danish national finals will represent Denmark in the competition.

5 March: PSC Danish Semi-final

The ESU Public Speaking Competition semi-final will be held on the afternoon of Tuesday 5 March. Ordrup Gymnasium have kindly offered to host the event. They will also host a second semi-final on Monday 4 March should one be required. The date for the finals (early April) is yet to be confirmed.

Each competitor will be invited to speak for 5 minutes on the theme:

“ A great leader can change the world in an instant “ This is also the theme for the Prepared Speech Heats at the International Speaking Competition in London. Schools may enter two students aged 16-20 for the semi-finals. Please note that ESU school membership is required.

The RSVP deadline for registration will be 1 February 2024 on esu.denmark@gmail.com but you are most welcome to confirm interest as soon as possible. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any queries. We look forward to hearing from you.

The International Public Speaking Competition is a fantastic experience, as Magnus Saarde this year's Danish winner discovered. Please see Magnus's report attached to this newsletter.

Motions for 2024 ESU AGM

We should like to remind you that **Motions for the 2024 AGM** must be submitted in writing to Birte Steer Pallesen, Chair, ESU-DK on esu.denmark@gmail.com by **31 December 2023** at the latest.

BOARD MEMBERS

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IPSC 2023: A Spectacular Experience

My name is Magnus Fauerholdt Saarde.

I am 20 years of age and I graduated from my gymnasium this summer. During the month of May this year, I competed in The ESU International Public Speaking Competition in London.

I arrived on Monday along with 30 other participants. Some were exhausted from their 12-hour long flights from East Asia, others - like myself - had only been on their way for a few hours. But what we all had in common was the anticipation bordering on anxiousness for the real day to begin. Heading into the early May evening we all met up at Dartmouth House, the ESU headquarters. Stepping into Dartmouth House and being met by staff and other participants, all neatly and professionally dressed, was without a doubt daunting at first. My initial thought when entering the Churchill room where all the participants were gathering "I am out of my comfort zone, and I am not posh enough to be here". But nevertheless, I gathered up the courage to start speaking to the other contestants.

Suddenly an hour had gone by in what felt like the blink of an eye. What I quickly realized in my conversations was that everyone - like myself - was eager to learn and socialize and that everyone in the room - to no surprise - was extremely adept at communicating. So even though I felt way out of my comfort zone I quickly found myself enchanted and soothed by the company I found myself in.

During the days that followed I would fall increasingly in love with the event. The staff who were so eager to help and who were endlessly hysterical. The beauty of Dartmouth House and the rest of London, even commuting with the tube was a blast, because I did it with 30 peers who all came from different parts of the world, and had different and exciting backstories and cultures to learn from. We talked about everything under the sun. Everything from speaking competitions to family traditions, party culture, education, and our futures. No topic was boring because the input from everyone was so different. But during the week it also became evident that even though we had vastly different cultures, traditions, and lives, we were also very much alike. To find that the human experience I had in its purest form was very similar to that of my room mate from the Philippines. It was so interesting and, in some ways, comforting.

It was clear that the week was fashioned in such a way that the participants got as close as possible. So even though the foundation of the week was the exciting competition, the real star of the show was being with the people you got to bond with and learn from. We held speaking workshops where we got to spar with one another, give pointers, and try out new ideas. We made mini competitions trying our hands at the disciplines we would be competing in the following Thursday and Friday.

When the learning part of the day was over, we went sightseeing, museum walking and explored London. We also went to see a play by Agatha Christie called "And then there were none" at Central Hall. All of this was again a good opportunity to get to know your fellow contestants even better.

Finally arriving on Thursday, all 30 participants arrived at Dartmouth House, all eager to give their speeches, but of course a little anxious as well. At this point, the talk between contestants started to die out as everyone found their own place in Dartmouth House to go and get their last practice in. We were then divided into our heats, where the competition we had all been waiting for, would finally begin. And boy was it tremendous to hear so many great speeches from undoubtedly some of the finest young speakers in the world.

The following day the 5 finalists were revealed and were met with roaring applause. We then went directly over to the British Institute where the Finale would take place. At this beautiful venue, an audience consisting of parents, ESU officials, and other interested parties awaited us. The last speeches were given and the winner of the 2023 IPSC was found. After the finalists and the rest of the ISPC contestants had received their medals, the entire party went back to Dartmouth House for a final celebration. Here I got to speak with everyone involved in making the ESU work. I spoke with judges who gave even more feedback and I spoke to the parents of other participants. After the celebration, the contestants were free to enjoy the rest of the evening on their last day. We then explored London even further and had all types of fun.

The next morning was of a melancholy nature because no one involved was ready to say goodbye to all the lovely people they had got to know so well during such a short time. Nevertheless, I packed my bags and checked out of the hotel with a lump in my throat, but also with the feeling that this wasn't a final goodbye, because I knew that I had made lifelong friends that week.

I want to extend my sincerest and most appreciative thank you to the ESU and everyone involved in making the speaking competitions a reality for the incredible opportunity. It is sure to be an experience that I will never forget.

-Magnus Fauerholdt Saarde