



**ESU France celebrates its 30th anniversary and the centenary of the
ESU of the Commonwealth last February 8, 9, 10, 2018.**

This festive occasion was attended by 74 members from the 4 French branches, from Dartmouth House, from UK branches and the international branches of Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, India, and the USA, who gathered together to mark the founding of the ESU of the Commonwealth and of ESU France and to honour its founder and National Chairman, Beatrix de Montgermont Keil.

Thursday, February 8th

The festivities started with a reception at the British Embassy in Paris. The guests were welcomed in the throne room by Lord Llewellyn, the British Ambassador. Beatrix de Montgermont Keil thanked the Ambassador for hosting this event and said how proud she was to have founded the French branch and to belong to this great organization that brings so many people together. Lord Boateng, the Guest of Honour and Chairman of the ESU of Commonwealth, Jane Easton and Lord Watson all gave very stimulating speeches honoring friendship and global understanding but also paying tribute to Beatrix de Montgermont Keil for her dedication to the ESU. Jane Easton also presented the programme of the week of celebrations in London, May 14-18, 2018.

Entertainment was provided by Quinn Peeper, ESUUS President, and Michael Harold, member of ESU New Orleans who brilliantly performed a Mozart sonata on the Embassy's grand Steinway.

The guests were then invited to proceed to the blue room where champagne and canapés were served in a festive and friendly atmosphere.

Friday 9th

A group of 37 met at 3.30 pm for a guided tour of Le Palais du Luxembourg built in 1635 for Queen Marie de Medici. It became home of the Senate in the 19th century. Senator Joëlle Garriaud-Maylam welcomed the participants near the Grand Staircase. The tour guides

explained the history of the building and the institutions of the Upper House. The highlights were the Conference Hall, the Golden Book Room and the Chamber.

After the tour of the palace drinks and French "beignets" were served in the Salon Beige. It was a very relaxing pause spent getting to know each other and catching up on international ESU news.

Cocktails were served in the Salon Napoleon before sitting down in the Salon Pourpre for a four course dinner with white and red wine.

Lord Boateng, Lord Watson, Valerie Mitchell, and Birte Pallesen, from Denmark, all in their speeches eloquently emphasized the close links between France and Britain and congratulated ESU France and Beatrix de Montgermont Keil. Ulla Ladau Harjulin from Finland presented a golden rose to Beatrix.

Saturday 10th

An English speaking guide conducted a party of 30 on an excellent tour of the Opera Garnier. Sitting in the auditorium in the red armchairs of the stalls to admire the beautiful ceiling decorated by Chagall and the 8 ton chandelier then walking in the 140 meter long Grand Foyer were the highlights of the tour.

Finally a small group had an informal but very friendly lunch in a typical Parisian art nouveau brasserie.

ESU France would particularly like to thank all those who came from afar and those of who were unable to attend but sent their very good wishes for the occasion. The International Council President, Margaryta Danilko, sent a message of congratulations to Beatrix and all ESU France members. She wrote: *"It is my pleasure to congratulate you on the 30-th anniversary of the ESU France! On behalf of all the international ESUs and my own behalf, please accept my warmest wishes for a memorable anniversary celebration and continued success of the ESU France!"*

Indeed, the festivities provided an excellent opportunity for all attendees to get to know each other better, to build friendships and share their common purposes of mutual understanding and global awareness.

These celebrations were a manifestation of what the ESU stands for. ESU France is delighted to have brought people together. That is really what it is all about. That is why the English-Speaking Union was set up by Sir Evelyn Wrench. His vision was about individuals coming together, and strengthening the bonds of common, shared humanity,

across the various peoples and nations of the world. And in today's troubled times, we do need to share these values.

ESU France, proud to belong to the great ESU family, will continue to spread these values and warmly thanks those who came and helped to make this such an enjoyable and memorable occasion thus giving hope for a bright future for our organization.

ESU France looks forward to celebrating the centenary of the ESU of the Commonwealth in London in May.