

ES & THE Newsletter

News from the English Speaking Community Club
Founded 1979

Autumn/Winter 2019/20

40th celebration issue



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The Presidential Speech delivered on the 40th Anniversary Dinner

Welcome Everyone to this ESCC Milestone Event!

This evening we are celebrating our first 40 years (1979-2019)!

We have evolved from a concerned group of expats - wanting our kids Not to lose their English language proficiency To today's Multi-National Club - focusing on social, educational, and cultural activities ... and cross-cultural pollination.

I have been president for over 25 years, and remember the discussions way back when, about "do we really need a website", and ... "What about this thing called e-mail?"

We've come a l-o-n-g way!

Today with our Board of 7 women and men, we are actively looking forward to growing, and hopefully to expanding our membership including more people in the 35-55 age group.

Just now, in the light of the Thomas Cook demise, we are even more determined to stay in tune with the times!

The number 40 is significant ... way beyond the ESCC.

It is prominent in the Holy Scriptures: for example rain for 40 days and nights and 40 days precede Easter.

40 spaces on a standard Monopoly game board.

A quarantine is a period of 40 days.

The highest number when learning to count on TV's Sesame Street was 40.

And SEK 40 was the dinner price for this evening.

I'm sure you'll agree that 40 is a GREAT number!

So ... here's to the ESCC and its next 40 years!

SKOAL!

- written and delivered by President, Peter Miller on 22 September 2019

About the ESCC

The English Speaking Community Club (ESCC) was founded in Stockholm in 1979. It is a non-profit organization oriented toward the educational, cultural, and social needs of Sweden's English-speaking community. The majority of members are from English-speaking countries, namely the U.S.A. and British Commonwealth, but the Club welcomes anyone with an interest in the English language. For complete membership details please contact our membership secretary, Peter Dulley.

About the Newsletter

The ESCC Newsletter is published throughout the year. Contributions should be e-mailed to the editor. Please include "ESCC" in the subject line. Small, non-business advertisements are free of charge to members when space is available.

The opinions expressed in the Newsletter do not necessarily reflect the views held by the ESCC, and the Club takes no responsibility for any goods or services advertised in the Newsletter.

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	Non-member	Member
1 page	1600	800
1/2 page	800	400
1/4 page	400	200
1/8 page	200	100
1/16 page	100	50

Dear Members! Please contact a member of the Board with any information/ideas about future activities and events. The next issue of The Newsletter will come out early February, so we will continue to keep our membership informed of activities by e-mail and thru our website in the interim.

Welcome, New Members!

Don't see your friends names here? Please invite them to join the Club.



A British European reflects on Brexit.

Part One (written in March 2019)

When I moved to Sweden in 1989 I considered myself to be a European; British because I was born in Britain and grew up there, and Swedish since I had been married to a Swede for 17 years and had spent part of every summer in Sweden with my family since then. I was very happy to consider myself a member of the growing EU family.

During the 1980s I was an active member of the 'old' Labour Party in my home constituency of Kingston upon Thames in south west London, even being their Press Secretary for a while, but I began to tire of the left-wing politics of Michael Foot and I became frustrated by the slow pace of change under Neil Kinnock who followed him as leader of the Party in 1983.

By the time that Tony Blair's 'new' Labour came into being in 1994 I had already lived in Sweden for 4 years. During that time, and even before that, I had realised that I wasn't really a *socialist* but a social democrat and that the politics here in Sweden suited me admirably. When I finally sought Swedish citizenship it seemed the most natural thing in the world to do.

Few Brits living in Sweden believed that the British people would vote to leave the EU in the 2016 referendum, and in the UK many people

were surprised by the result. I myself was shocked and deeply disappointed; as I have said I regarded myself as a European. I had to try and find a reason for the result of the referendum and, like many others, I quickly found a scapegoat in Britain's Prime Minister, David Cameron. Surely it was his mismanagement and short-sightedness that was to blame. How could the outcome of such a momentous (and complex) issue depend on such a close (52%-48%) result? Cameron, himself a 'remainer', said afterwards that he had not expected people to vote for leaving the EU; he, like many others (myself included), had seriously underestimated the growing alarm felt by many people concerning rising immigration in the EU and the long-standing grievance felt by many about Britain's loss of sovereignty as an EU member.

Many 'remainers' also blamed the result on misleading information and downright lies given out by the Brexit side, especially Boris Johnson, Michael Gove and Nigel Farage who were all afterwards accused of putting their personal interests above the country's. With the help of simplistic and exaggerated claims it was all too easy for them to convince a poorly-informed electorate of the advantages of leaving the EU. I feel sure that Donald Tusk struck a chord with many people when he suggested (tongue in cheek) that there

may be 'a special place in hell' for those who backed Brexit without having a plan - referring to Johnson, Gove and Farage, one assumes.

However, in retrospect I now wonder if the 2016 referendum result should really have come as such a shock when one considers how uncomfortable the British people have felt inside the EU ever since Britain joined in 1973. It was just two years after joining it that Britain had its first referendum about staying in the European Community, as the EU was then called. This came about because the Labour Party under Harold Wilson had voted at its annual conference in 1975 by two to one, in favour of withdrawal. In the event the 'remainers' won with a substantial majority (67%-33%). During the following 40 years, including the period of my own involvement with the Labour Party, Britain's membership of the EU (called the Common Market up until November 1993) was always a contentious political issue and many people in Britain rejected the ideas expressed in 'An Ever Closer Union', a book that came out in 1994. For my part I found this to be an inspiring book when I worked on training courses for EU interpreters here in Sweden, in the 1990s. On balance I think the Labour Party has been less enthusiastic about EU than the Tory Party although Mrs Thatcher never really wanted to get closely involved with it! One of the main disagree-

Continues on the Back Side

40th Birthday Dinner

40th Birthday Dinner



We sat down across from Maarit and Bob Faeder,

probably the best-dressed man in the room talking to a stunning, dark-haired lady at the next table. Parviz Kamjou got up to say a few words. Unfortunately, I couldn't hear him since he was speaking to the center of the dining room and we were sitting behind him. We saw Peter Dulley, preoccupied at another table and Lars Olsson shared a table with William Farlow, our club treasurer.

I can't remember seeing so many ESCC members under one roof at any one time. It was like walking into a vaguely remembered past with so many familiar faces whose names I couldn't quite place any longer. There were 43 of us.

Bruce and Amiee Lambert were sitting next to us, both Valerie Olsson and Anita Coté-Irestrand came over to say hello, I saw John

Joel Kaufmann whom I haven't seen in a dog's age was chatting with a lady sitting opposite him. Katarina Warman and Toni Olander shared a table with two ladies, faces familiar, names forgotten

The Clarion Tapto, probably possibly the only full-service hotel in Gärdet, laid out a buffet feast and the room was crowded, happy and noisy. Our president, Peter Miller stood up and welcomed everyone to the club's birthday party. Folks lined up at the drinks counter to buy their bottle of this or that to help wash the food down.



McManus in earnest conversation at another table and Paul Lappalainen,

Iain Lauder and Kristina Löfven whom we met on the ESCC cruise some weeks earlier were quietly sitting at the far end of the dining room sipping their drinks possibly mulling over the hubbub around them.

I think a good time was had by all. At least no one went home hungry, least of all the author of this minor report.

David Kushner



'no one went home hungry, least of all the author of this minor report'

Events in the ESCC Pipeline

**We are busy planning interesting and fun events for our members.
Keep an eye on the website for information about these events:**

We have our reoccurring Film and Talks on given Sundays.

Pub evenings, walks and other well visited events.

Make sure you check our events calendar on our website for the latest updates.

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

WELCOME TO THE 40th Annual ESCC THANKSGIVING WEDNESDAY NOV. 27th 2019 BETWEEN 6 -9 PM

CLARION COLLECTION HOTEL TAPTO JUNGFRUGATAN 5

Where we will enjoy a Thanksgiving fest for 175:- and after work beverage prices!
Please sign-up with me so that we can secure seating as the evening can be share with other turkey lovers!

Seasons Greetings

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IT WAS A GRAND CRUISE

By David Cushner

You couldn't have asked for better cruising to celebrate our clubs' 40th birthday. Hiking down the passage-ways of Silja Lines new terminal we met our treasurer and cruise director William Farlow conversing with Janet Dunkerley-Archer near the entrance

Fourteen ESCCers came on board as passengers and celebrants. We ran into Joni O'Neil looking for her cabin and Peter Dulley who came on board with his ex and good friend Inga also checking the door numbers. We found our cabin, tried to enter with

the key cards assigned to us but, we remained standing with our luggage at our feet pulling the card in and out of the key slot and only getting a red flash in return. Finally, Shoshana left me as luggage guard and got an attendant to show us how it's done. The lock was a bit tricky, the card had to be pulled in and out super-fast and eventually the green flashed, the door opened, and we were finally in our own cabin with a full view of Värta Hamn through the large window.

Come, let's go down and have dinner the wife advised. As we passed down through the Panorama deck, we were stopped by a yellow belt barrier in front of what looked an emperor-size bed standing on deck. We looked up and saw that a rope and a trapeze had been released. A few moments later a very talented young pair of acrobats climbed up the rope and high above our heads using the trapeze created complicated figures in the air – not much swinging but lots of twisting and turning. hand



to the terminal's electronic entrance portals. Janet told us that she has just re-joined the club. William was greeting the incoming members who had found their way to Värta Hamn so as to board the *Serenade* one of the ferry lines finest ships. Frankly, I haven't been aboard a Silja line ferry for a very long time and my first experience when we came on board was the huge six deck high atrium that forms the central spine of the vessel. The sight is almost overwhelming, a bit space-age, the glassed panorama elevators running up and down, the hundreds of cabin windows that look down on what is essentially a smart fashion street with shops selling high-end clothing, electronics, gifts and, toys. Here and there, inserted among the hanging clothing is a coffee shop or a small wine boutique with side-walk-style tables.



holds and grips. The thing below them was probably an inflatable air mattress put there for their safety.

In the dining room, the ESCC had its own table, there we met Ingegerd Andersson and Leif Heidenström. We joined the crowds at the huge buffet where the counters, figuratively,

ant but and the crowd split each to its own. A strong but brief rain hit us at about midday. Obviously, the sight-seers in the city had to run for cover but we sat snugly in a nearby café and hardly noticed the rain as it passed over the city.

The departure from Helsinki late in

Kushner, Ronja Walden, Joni O'Neil, Iain Lauder and Kristina Löfven, among others, grabbed front row seats to be right up front.

Parting the next morning at breakfast. Once we came into the Värta Hamnen again and the door to the quay



sagged with food. As the ship passed through the Stockholm archipelago, we chatted and met with old friends, some of whom we hadn't seen in a few years. Iain Lauder and I entered into a heated political discussion about Brexit and the EU. Boris Johnson and Donald Trump were also ready targets but, it was all verbal. Connie Nordlund, sitting with her husband Göran, got up from the table and began taking photos of our whole crew.

The six hours in Helsinki were pleas-

the afternoon was entrancing. The islands and the fort Suomenlinna or Sveaborg as the Swedes call it passed by below our top deck as if they were pieces on a chessboard. The weather was brilliant and every island detail shone like amber in the sea.

That night, after dinner, a brilliant, sexy, flashy, and exciting troupe of talented young Argentinian tango dancers, who danced to a furious tango beat offered us a Broadway/West End quality show. William, Shoshana

opened, the group departed each to our various homes in different parts of the city like pigeons to their roosts. It was a lovely cruise and a wonderful way to initiate the club's 40th.

David Kushner



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The Back Side

ments she had with her Chancellor and deputy Sir Geoffrey Howe was over Britain's relationship with the EU.

This leads me on to the situation today, just three weeks before the deadline for Britain to leave the EU on 29 March. Today is Sunday and on Tuesday, in two days time (12 March), the so-called 'meaningful vote' on Theresa May's deal with the EU will take place in the House of Commons. If it is carried Britain will leave the EU on 29 March under the terms of the negotiated 'soft Brexit' (divorce) agreement. No further voting on this will then take place. At long last, after 2 years of tortuous negotiations, the Brexit nightmare will be over, at least for the time being. I say 'for the time being' because if the Northern Ireland 'backstop' cannot be permanently sorted out during the 2-year transition period, a violent conflict could easily break out again in Northern Ireland between those that want to remain in the UK and those that want Ulster to become part of a united Ireland. A 'hard' border between Ulster and the Irish Republic complete with a fence and checkpoints is simply unthinkable to anyone who knows anything about the 'troubles' that engulfed Ulster in the 1960s and 1970s and continued up until the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. So the result of Tuesday's vote depends very much on whether or not May can come to the House with a practical (& permanent) solution to the Northern Ireland 'backstop' problem—something that has proved to be elusive so far. If May wins the vote it will seem like a miracle, bearing in mind that 230 MPs voted against her deal when it

was voted on in January.

If, as expected, May's deal is rejected on Tuesday there will be a subsequent vote on Wednesday, the following day, when MPs will be asked to vote for or against a hard (no-deal) Brexit. If this is carried then Britain will leave the EU on 29 March without an agreement with the EU. If it is defeated there will be another vote on Thursday for or against an extension to article 50 which if granted by the EU would give the House of Commons more time to reach a consensus on Brexit. This would include the option of a so-called People's Vote (a second referendum).

Submitted by Peter Dullely

Part two in the next issue.

**** EditorNote ****

The Brexit article does not reflect the Clubs opinion. It's printed as a submission from a member.

Please do remember to check out our new website www.escc.se.

And when you do that, please make sure we have your correct e-mail.

You can use the "contact us" form on our website to send in your updated e-mail, and when you do that, please do leave me (the editor LEE) any comments or suggestions that you might have that will help us build a better information platform for you and all our members.

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