

You wait sixty years for a *Teach Yourself* book, and then two come along almost at once!

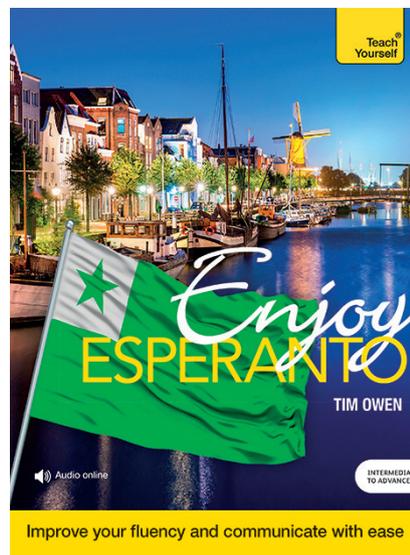
Following on from the success of *Complete Esperanto* comes *Enjoy Esperanto*, taking learners from intermediate to advanced, ending up at level C1 on the CEFR scale.

The book teaches elements of Esperanto grammar in more detail than other courses, and uses real-world Esperanto material as sources for its end-of-unit productive tasks. As with *Complete Esperanto*, each unit starts with a cultural opening, and provides thematic vocabulary which is then used in conversations as part of a realistic storyline. And yes, Sara's back, this time heading overseas to be an Esperanto volunteer for E@I in Slovakia!

YOU'LL ENJOY ENJOY

The Director for Evaluation of Learning Materials of the *Akademio de Esperanto* has seen a copy of the book, describing it as "a text for a new generation that is truly without equal. This textbook should reward the learner with a high level of competence in the language, and an in-depth knowledge of the community of Esperanto speakers. This book presents modern Esperanto as it is used and spoken around the world. I am personally delighted to see it available."

Enjoy Esperanto is available for pre-order from EAB, who are selling it for £17.50, half of the recommended retail price. Find out more at enjoy.esperanto.org.uk. ■



THE BRITA KONGRESO RETURNS IN 2022

After a three-year break, our national conference is back. You're all invited to come along to Conwy to make up for lost time!

We celebrated our 100th *Brita Kongreso*, with the help of our friends across the Channel, in 2019. 2020's in Leicester was cancelled shortly before it was due to start. Even without Covid, there wouldn't have been one in 2021: we'd pledged not to run one given that the *Universala Kongreso* was scheduled to take place in Belfast before it too was cancelled.

The 102nd *Brita Kongreso* will take place from the Conwy Business Centre, around a mile away from Llandudno Junction, from Friday, April 22 until Sunday, April 24, with optional excursions afterwards.

Nearby accommodation comes in the form of a Premier Inn around a mile away from the venue, and Llandudno boasts a vast array of seaside accommodation. It's only four miles or so away and is served by several buses each hour, as well as a handful of trains during the day. Conwy, with its spectacular castle, is only a one-mile stroll away.

REMEMBERING BILL

Our decision to host the next event in Conwy was made with Bill Chapman in mind. This is the first *Brita Kongreso* since Bill, a former mayor of Conwy, sadly left us last year, and we're delighted to be able to acknowledge him in this way.

We've booked out the entire venue (a main conference room plus four smaller ones) so there will be plenty on offer ... including opportunities to sit down with friends you've not seen in three years! As usual, a buffet will be available on the Friday evening, as will refreshments over the weekend, all of which are included in the £60 ticket price. Should Covid cause the event to get cancelled, we'll offer to refund your *kotizo*.

As the conference takes shape, we'll add information on britakongreso.org, as well as reporting in the next issue of *Update*. In the meantime, mark those dates in your diary, and bear in mind that we'll offer an excursion on the Monday, and possibly on the Tuesday, too. ■



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UPDATE



"Rico's absolutely fine and will be back next time." Last issue's was not my greatest prediction from the editor's chair.

Rico is fine, though, just preternaturally busy. Part of that is my fault: I had him in the studio at the start of the month as the lead voice actor for *Enjoy Esperanto*, and he's handing in a translation of a children's book by the end of it. The middle of the month is taken up with moving house ... and then there's the small matter of full-time work to fit in somehow, too.

I had a socially distanced late lunch with him once we were out of the studio and, feeling guilty about his workload, mentioned my suspicion that he wasn't particularly looking forward to squeezing in *Update*. So here I am for another issue, trying to assuage my guilty feelings!

So, let's look at what's new ...

NOJEF CLOSING DOWN

Several years after Bill Chapman made EAB members aware in AGM 2016 that the trustees of the Norwich Jubilee Esperanto Foundation intended to gift the charity's investments to EAB before winding it up, we're finally at the finishing line. I'll go into more detail about NoJEF in *La Brita Esperantisto*: I think it will suffice here to record that EAB will now be taking on and expanding NoJEF's role, and that NoJEF transferred a whopping £614,776.15 in cash and investments.

MONTREAL IS AWAITING

Whilst the *Virtuala Kongreso* was running, UEA broke the news that it's now possible to sign up for the 107th *Universala Kongreso* in Montreal.

Since the UN and UNESCO have designated 2022-32 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, the organisers have given the UK the theme: "Lingvo, vivo, tero: Jardeko de Indiĝenaj Lingvoj".

The UK will run from the 6th to the 13th of August 2022. UEA members from the United Kingdom can get their ticket for 190€: non-members pay 240€. Those prices increase by another 50€ after December, and then again after March, so you might want to book early. Find more details at uea.org/kongresoj.



NEW BOOKS AVAILABLE

We've added some new titles to the offering of our bookshop, including our own reissue of Marjorie Boulton's *Okuloj*, a collection of 13 short stories, and children's book *La plej eleganta giganto de la urbo*.



We've also brought a stock of other material: new learners will benefit from *Stranga Malapero*, a colourfully presented story based in Corsica and graded at CEFR level A1. On the other end of the spectrum, fluent Esperantists can enjoy Tim Carr's new poetry collection, *Bukedo por Heba*, which joins his previous collection, *Yvonne*, on our shelves.

And those of you who have progressed from learning to teaching Esperanto are in for a treat: the updated *Manlibro pri instruado de Esperanto*, edited by Katalin Kováts with contributions from 16 authors, is in stock, spanning 352 pages.



Bear in mind that you can fit up to 2kg into a package before the delivery cost increases, so don't be shy when ordering: you effectively make postage free on the next few books you add to your order, which you can place at esperanto.org.uk/store, where you'll find plenty of other titles in stock. That doesn't yet include the wonderfully luxurious *La domo ĉe Pu-Angulo*, I'm afraid: we're getting it printed overseas to keep the costs manageable, and our colleagues there are very busy with running various events and moving office to a new town. It's also the reason why we haven't been able to get *PMEG 2020* back in stock for a while. Fingers crossed, their pressures will relieve soon.

... AND FINALLY

- EAB has provided a grant of £500 to assist with the development of a language-learning board game, *LinguaPolis Esperanto*: linguapolisgame.com

- Bill Chapman was UEA's *ĉefdelegito* for the UK since the 1980s, and I gave my own name as a temporary replacement after he died. If you've been an UEA member for at least two years, are fluent in Esperanto, and would like to volunteer for the role, please contact me for a chat.

- EAB's new landlord asked whether we would be willing to consider an offer to surrender the lease on Esperanto House, which has 80 years to run. Having to act in the charity's best interests, the trustees asked me to confirm that they would. There hasn't yet been any offer received.

That's all from me for another issue of *Update*. I'll hedge my bets this time: Rico should be back in the next. ■

Tim Owen

RESULTS OF POSTAL BALLOT

Elections were held by postal vote this year because the restrictions on gathering in public meant that it was not possible to hold an AGM. Members all received ballots with *Update 93* and had around two weeks to return their ballots before April 18. The votes were counted by Viv O'Dunne and Bill Walker.

Votes for the trustee candidates for 2021 through to AGM 2022, with votes FOR/AGAINST/ABSTAIN:

• Simone Davis:	48 / 1 / 1
• Edmund Grimley Evans:	49 / 0 / 1
• Clare Hunter:	49 / 1 / 0
• Anna Langley:	46 / 2 / 2
• Lajo Miller:	47 / 1 / 2

All five candidates were duly elected, and Edmund Grimley Evans, the sole candidate for presidency, took over the role from the retiring Ian Carter. Ed Robertson also stepped down after ten years' service.

On the ballot was a second subject upon which members were asked to share their views. The draft minutes of the 2019 AGM were circulated with *Update 89* in advance of the planned 2020 AGM, which was later postponed and then cancelled. Members were asked in *Update 89* to submit significant changes to the EAB office by a certain date. Since no changes were submitted, it might be reasonable to assume that the 2020 AGM would have therefore voted to accept the minutes

substantially unchanged. The second vote, therefore, asked members to express whether they would prefer those draft minutes to be considered approved, discussion held off until AGM 2022, or whether they had no preference. The results were:

- Approve the 2019 draft minutes: **37**
- Discuss in AGM 2022: 0
- No preference: 13

Thank you for expressing your opinions and for the resounding collective vote of confidence in EAB, and congratulations to Anna Langley, who has joined a harmonious, supportive team, where she's fitting right in. ■

TRUSTEE NOTES FROM MAY

We're practised hands at Zoom now, and so there were no problems when it was time to start our meeting at 10:00 on a Saturday morning in May. All the trustees, except for Lajo Miller, who had civic responsibilities tied to a local election, were present, as were Viv O'Dunne and me.

We had a novel problem to tackle at the start: Edmund Grimley Evans's resumption of the presidency, which he previously held from 1999 to 2004, meant that there was no longer a vice-president. We had a bit of discussion about the nature of the role and whether to leave it vacant before the trustees chose to appoint Simone Davis to it.

TREASURER

Clare Hunter presented the charity's investment profile from October 2020. The trustees noted that they walk a bit of a tightrope: they cannot pursue ever more stringent ethical investments to the financial detriment of the charity. Ultimately, all were happy with the current profile, which excludes things which we imagine would be universally shunned, such as arms, tobacco, and child labour, but doesn't go as far as some other funds in excluding items such as contraception, which would likely be considered unethical by only a small proportion of the general public. Clare recapped that she had sold the investments with BlackRock, netting a gain of £61k, and had invested the proceeds, along with a £50k surplus in the current account, into CCLA's global equity fund.

I updated the trustees on the hand-over of the Norwich Jubilee Esperanto Foundation's assets to EAB. The NoJEF trustees had recently completed the transfer of ownership of NoJEF's EdenTree fund to EAB, which EAB will keep as a separate account so as to be able to report more easily about how the money from NoJEF is being put to use: the EAB trustees have pledged to their colleagues in NoJEF to report this in EAB's accounts for at least ten years. Clare informed the meeting that she will add an earlier cash donation of £58k to this fund, and I added that the paperwork to cash in NoJEF's holdings with CCLA was being processed.

We all took a look at the income and expenditure figures for the five months until the end of March, noting that the pandemic meant that spending in the core areas of activity was unnaturally low. Not running in-person courses or a conference will have that effect, unfortunately.

Clare noted that the AGM customarily sets subscription rates and appoints the examiner. In the absence of the AGM, the trustees had chosen to leave both unchanged. The trustees acknowledged that Clare and Viv were very satisfied with Dains LLP, who have been the independent examiners for several years, but asked Clare to tender for an examiner for next year just for diligence's sake. Dains charges around £1800 for the audit, throwing in drawing up the accounts free: that's far less than the £4k we used to pay to our

previous auditor. Beyond money, there's also familiarity with the niches associated with EAB, such as *UEA-kontoj*; it's feasible that a one-man band could charge even less than Dains does, but then you lose all that knowledge, on top of the uncertainty of not knowing whether you're getting the same thoroughness. One for Clare to handle. I think, as is this year's audit: Clare suggested that depending on how the stock market behaves on a particular day, it might be the case that EAB hits a threshold which triggers a requirement for a full audit. I suppose it's a nice problem to have!



Anna Langley contributes during her first trustee meeting.

OFFICE

Viv recapped some major electrical problems which had occurred shortly before the meeting, necessitating getting the new landlord involved, and then me when the previous step wasn't progressing as one might hope. Esperanto House's electricity comes from Estoril, the large house on the site: we traditionally pay a proportion of the overall bill. Some damage had occurred, resulting in a partial loss of power. My conversation with the landlord resulted in the suggestion that EAB install its own meter to record exactly how much power we were using, which would be a cheaper alternative than undertaking work to receive a direct supply: Western Power suggested that bringing in the diggers to do that would cost in the region of £2-3k!

We acknowledged that Esperanto House was unlikely to fit in with the long-term plans of the developers who have taken over the site of Wedgwood Memorial College, particularly since a property agent representing the new landlord had contacted me shortly before the meeting to request that we meet at Esperanto House. Since it's possible that they'll make us an offer to surrender our lease, Viv and I will look into the local property market to get a feeling about what our options could be.

PUBLISHING

I'd distributed an update prior to the meeting on our new strongest area of activity, including books which were

currently being printed, in the process of being translated, and publishing rights obtained or being requested. There was quite a bit, some of which you'll have seen announced since then.

Simone, Edmund and I had met up on a couple of occasions prior to the meeting to discuss how we could get competent translators working with EAB so that we can increase our publishing output, expanding from children's books into titles ideal for newer learners, the sort of books that you might expect to find on sale in an airport or train station. We've sketched out the idea of a translation competition, with an additional track for emerging talent. We'll announce that later in the year once we've acquired some appropriate publishing rights.

We're not leaving children's books behind, though: they'll be a steady part of EAB's publishing into the future, and I signed contracts for seven more children's books shortly after the meeting closed. They're all very similar to the Donaldson/Scheffler ones which we've put out in the past couple of years with one crucial difference: they don't contain rhymes, making the translators' job far less arduous.

Edmund informed his colleagues that he had obtained the rights to publish modified versions of *Akademiano* Donald Broadribb's translations, and I added that EAB would soon acquire Bill Chapman's copyrights. The paperwork has since been signed: thank you, Pat!



Edmund Grimley Evans chairing as president for the first time since 2004.

EDUCATION

It's been a long time since we ran in-person courses, and one member had asked me whether *Somerlernejo*, scheduled for August, would see our return to Barlaston. None of us felt back in May that we could make such a decision: Esperanto House really isn't a place where one can practise social distancing, and we didn't know how the land would lie several months down the line. Given that I'd just sent out a notification that the *Universala Kongreso* had been cancelled, it didn't seem sensible to be in the avant-garde, and so the trustees

decided to play things safe, opting for an online session with Ed Robertson.

Having noted that a recent session of *Lernu Plu* had had several no-shows, we returned to a previous discussion about introducing a refundable charge in advance of the course. Several different aspects were discussed, both for and against the idea, and ultimately the trustees concluded that there wasn't an obvious solution: you can't really advertise a "free" course if you're then going to ask for payment without risking coming across badly, after all. I'm afraid that we'll just have to continue to appeal to people's consciences when Viv contacts learners to confirm that they're still coming, pointing out that tutors are volunteers and an empty space could have gone to somebody else. It's not ideal but in the real world tutors do unfortunately face no-shows.

We moved on to discussing our correspondence courses, noting that a sub-committee was established a few years ago to look at revamping our taster offering: with one thing and another, there's not been much in the way of progress, and two of the three people comprising it aren't trustees anymore, so that group was disbanded and task put aside. Ian Carter's retirement means that our correspondence courses are now largely operating from one tutor's efforts: Viv informed us that Ian had been doing comparatively few and that take-up has been down as of late, as new enquirers tend to prefer *Complete Esperanto* when presented with options, so we will hopefully avoid overburdening that busy tutor.

We then considered advanced courses. EAB hasn't actually offered one of its own but has acted more as a middleman, taking a £100 fee from participants for a private correspondence course and then passing on £95 to the external tutor. We'd received several complaints lately about slow response times, including having to issue full refunds, and so the trustees decided that this course would no longer be promoted as "EAB's advanced course". Edmund had seen the forthcoming *Enjoy Esperanto* and was happy for EAB to endorse it ... but that doesn't change the fact that it's a redirect to a self-study textbook rather than providing support to learners. We concluded, then, that we should probably have more discussion about supporting learners online. Simone Davis and Anna Langley will be looking into this with me.

I mentioned to the trustees that Katalin Kováts had informed me that the CEFR exams were going to be offered at C2 level and that it would soon be possible to take them online. That's great news but it does rather bring into question the value of EAB offering its own unaccredited exams, particularly since we promote and offer financial support to candidates taking the official ones. We'll come back to this later.

VIV GETS RECOGNISED

We lost Viv for our final session but for a very good reason: she was being recognised for services to the parish during the pandemic!

You'll see from the front page that the

trustees asked us to set up a conference for 2022. This decision followed on from discussions acknowledging that attendance has been in consistent decline for decades. It's not the end of the world if EAB ends up having to subsidise the event given its fortunate final position, as long as it's clear that the conference provides charitable activity. Look to see more overtly educational components as part of the programme, then!

We had a discussion about what changes we might need to make with the aim of increasing participation. I mentioned that when I put together a programme, I often think it must look unenticing to ordinary people expected to come between workdays that the Sunday morning is given over to an AGM. There's the argument, of course, that this particular planning makes it easier for the AGM to be quorate but, as Clare pointed out, EAB's quorum seems high when multinational firms she's audited require as few as two or three members present. And since an AGM is only lawful if members are given 21 days' notice, it isn't the case that a low quorum gives scope for AGMs to be held on the sly. Holding an AGM separately to free up time in future conferences might be worth considering. Perhaps we can all discuss it in Conwy.

Edmund Grimley Evans summarised the three incomplete library catalogues that have been started over the previous twenty years. Further library-related discussion resulted in Edmund, Lajo and Anna forming a new sub-committee to report back in future meetings. ■

SOMERLERNEJO WITH ED ROBERTSON IN AUGUST

What is it that makes Esperanto different from any other language? Well, don't say "easy" or "simple", because Esperanto is as rich as any other language, even if there are shortcuts like a measure of regularity, and regular word-building affixes. But you need to have learned some grammar too, to avoid ambiguities, and to make utterances easier to decipher. Some bits of that are harder work than others, even in Esperanto.

But if you already speak Esperanto, you already know that. So what will we do together at *Somerlernejo*? We will revise some of the bits Zamenhof forgot to make easy, in passing, but we're interested in broadening skills as well as deepening, and touch on other stuff that requires more discussion than memory or practice.

There is more to Esperanto than the language: there is the culture of the

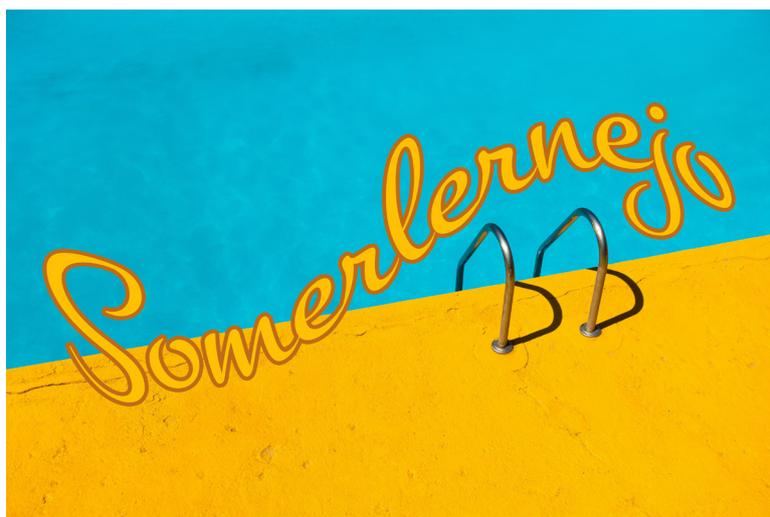
Esperanto community, there is their literature, and there is the history of how the language developed. Was Esperanto

our understanding of how language works that there still were back then.

This class will be entirely in Esperanto, and you'll get the chance to exercise your actual or incipient fluency, and get together at least virtually with other learners and speakers, and practise in anticipation of (hopefully!) in the not too distant future, when it is safe to do so, being able to return to actual physical get-togethers rather than mere virtual ones. So what will we be actually doing? Yes, there will be translation activities, and exercises on grammar points, and we'll also be looking at how Esperanto copes with style. ■

Ed Robertson

Somerlernejo will be held online on Saturday, August 28. Sign up at esperanto.org.uk/events/somerlernejo.



immaculately conceived in 1887? Certainly not. That was a long time ago, and societies were different from what they are now, not to mention the gaps in