

NEWNHAM COLLEGE

U S C O M M I T T E E

April 2006

Dear Newnhamite:

We'd like to get to know you better. There are just over 400 of us scattered across thirty-nine states. We are academics; wives, mothers and grandmothers; scientists; entrepreneurs; business executives; literary or visual artists and many other things (usually several things at once). Our Committee is exploring how to improve our communications with you and Newnham so we can enjoy our current, mutual affiliation more fully. This month's communication is part-letter, part newsletter but we will be evolving! We hope to start a simple website soon and are also discussing events in combination with other alumni groups and colleges.



Helen Goddard has kindly agreed to organize a periodic newsletter (probably to be published on the web) and played a key role in developing these articles. Please let us know your email address if you have not already. Helen and I can be reached at hgoddard@ias.edu and vjhe1175@hotmail.com. We welcome your photos, news, your opinions and suggestions. We look forward to being in touch with you.

Victoria Elenowitz (N'77), Chair.

NEWNHAM GARDENS IN SPRING

Tony Arnold, Newnham's Head Gardener for 18 years, was pleased to walk in the garden in early March to talk about the current work of his team with Helen Goddard. Magnificent carpets of flowering bulbs outside Sidgewick, under the hazelnut walk between Old Hall and Peile and by the Old Labs provide color from January to June and are testament to the planting of some 5000 new crocus bulbs each year, along with wild gladioli, and snowdrops. Fritillarias, otherwise prey to squirrels, are pot-planted in Newnham's greenhouses and dug in April. The grass in these areas is cut from August on, a regime which has gradually reduced rampant cow-parsley (Queen Anne's Lace).



Tony Arnold with Helen Goddard in March

VICTORIA HALL (1977) NEW YORK NY, CHAIR ♦ MARGARET CAMPBELL (1966) NEW YORK NY ♦ DR EMILY CLARK (1998) NEW ORLEANS LA
♦ SOPHIE CONSAGRA (CHANDLER, 1950) NEW YORK NY ♦ PROFESSOR VIDYA DEHEJIA (RAMA IYER, 1961) NEW YORK NY ♦ DR RHODA
DORSEY (1949) LUTHERVILLE MD ♦ KORI GARNER (1977) IRVINE CA ♦ HELEN GODDARD (ROSS, 1965) PRINCETON NJ ♦ ANNA IVEY
(PRASCHMA, 1992) ORLANDO FL ♦ JENNIFER LILLEY (PEARCE, 1967) FRANKLIN LAKES NJ ♦ JANET PICKERING (LEWIS, 1961) NEW YORK NY
♦ AUDREY RICHARDS (JARRATT, 1959) BERKELEY CA ♦ DR LAURA SLATKIN (1968) NEW YORK NY



Homer's snowdrop?

Scientists Plaitakis and Duvoisin in 1983 suggested that the mysterious magical herb 'moly' that appears in Homer's *Odyssey* as Odysseus' antidote to Circe's poison (postulated to be curare) is actually snowdrop. An active substance in snowdrop: Galantamine, inhibits acetyl cholinesterase and has been in use for the past decade or so to help in the treatment of Alzheimer's disease.

The avenue of hundred-year old apple trees outside Peile is sadly dying but it will be replaced by two rows of Linden trees (lime). And a new orchard has already been started round the hockey pitch which, incidentally, is more often used for soccer these days. About 30 species of apple tree have been chosen from amongst those known to have existed in the 1870s. These trees have been given in memorium by alumnae.



The colorful yellow show of winter flowering jasmine on the South walls of Clough and Sidgewick will give way in April to a sea of pink and white tulips just now showing their tips around the Margaret Merrill roses. A large magnolia between the new Library and Sidgewick, covered with soft gray buds, will shortly provide an exuberant sight to greet students on their return from Easter vacation [see April picture on the next page]. By May, the roses, a white, sweet-scented variety will be in full bloom throughout the garden. If you are in Newnham, do take time to enjoy the garden.

FRIENDS OF NEWNHAM IN AMERICA STUDY ROOM

Newnham's new library is stunning: light, airy and arching and our study room is on the second floor graced with a generous bay window. It was funded by US-based alumni in 2002 and is so popular it must always be booked in advance according to Deborah Hodder, Librarian.



Our study room interior

An island of desks, each containing a foldable computer screen, forms a central conference table. It is ideally suited for groups of linguists accessing the University Language Centre via the internet or discussing foreign language films on DVD as part of the new 'European Cinema' tripos paper. Tutors hold group discussions of exam questions and librarians to demonstrate how to use computerized library catalogues and access to E-Books which are proving useful resources in overcoming the shortage of popular books needed for essays.

In May, for an inspiring moment away from study, students may look out of Study Room's large bay window into the white blossoms of the handsome magnolia tree in the courtyard outside.

SPOTLIGHT ON NEWNHAM ALUMNI

In this section we will begin to introduce Newnhamites around the US to each other. We are interested in what's happening now so please tell us what is capturing your time and interest currently, with a little detail on how you arrived here since Newnham days. Please do contact Helen Goddard (hgoddard@ias.edu) with your picture (wellies, spouses and other props most welcome!) and a little commentary.



Study Room Bay Window with April Magnolia

• FIRST HARVEST OF A NEW VINEYARD



Priscilla Higgins ('63 Nat Sci. (Physical); research student in crystallography '66-'70) is now a vintner. She retired with her husband in 2000 to a 100-acre estate in Santa Ynez, CA, planted 24 acres of red varietal grapevines in 2002 and harvested for the first time in 2005. Most of the crop was sold but Priscilla and her husband kept some syrah and cabernet franc to make wine under her own label. They have recently completed building a house on the property and now are building a website to make her wines available on the internet.

Priscilla taught elementary school science when her two boys were young, then got a Masters Degree in International Development of Education at Stanford and ran education and training for a telecommunications company until her retirement.

- **BANKING BELOW THE EQUATOR**

Margaret Campbell ('66, Modern Languages) has lived in Brooklyn Heights for over 20 years and is responsible for JP Morgan's relationship with central banks in Mexico, Central and South America, advising them in the management of their foreign currency reserves. Most central banks' reserves worldwide have grown and present interesting challenges in balancing opportunities to increase returns while maintaining conservative investment policy. She has had to learn a new language, Spanish, in the last few years and enjoys following the economic and political developments in each S. American country, especially this year with elections taking place in most of them during 2006. She also gets back to Europe for business and family. Her husband John graduated from Caius and has a computer software business. She has two sons: Iain (23), completing aviation engineering studies in Pittsburgh and Stuart (22), a Harvard graduate, now a professional cyclist racing with the TIAA-CREF cycling team based in Boulder, CO.



- **A LIGHT ON LITERACY**



Marion Blank ('58, PhD Medical Science), Co-Director of the Developmental Neuropsychiatry Program at Columbia University is an authority on how children learn to read. She has lectured worldwide on language and literacy problems and is Director of "A Light on Literacy Program". She recently published a book: *The Reading Remedy: Six Essential Skills That Will Turn Your Child Into A Reader*" (Jossey Bass, February 2006) and developed "Dr Blank's Phonics Plus Five", a complete kit for parents to teach their children literacy skills. Recently she has extended her work to enable non-speaking, autistic children to read and write.

Several volunteer organizations of Cambridge alumni and the Cambridge in America office are bringing alumni together at a wide variety of events on the East and West Coasts. You may like to contact the following websites for further information. Do send us your email address to hear about Newnham visitors to your region.

USEFUL LINKS

Newnham College official website:

www.newn.cam.ac.uk

Cambridge in America

www.cantab.org

Cambridge volunteer alumni network in NY

www.cantabnyc.org

Cambridge volunteer alumni network in DC

www.cantabdc.org

Oxbridge volunteer alumni network in Bay Area, CA

www.oxcam.org