

NEWNHAM COLLEGE

US COMMITTEE

Issue 5

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June 2007

TWO STUDENTS WIN US COMMITTEE TRAVEL AWARDS TO VISIT THE USA

Helen Lomas is the winner of our first US travel award!

In April we posted letters from three Newnham students on our website and invited the US-based alumnae to vote for one to receive \$5000* for travel to the USA in the long vacation of 2007.

The three finalists were chosen by Newnham from 14 original applicants. Our US Committee members jointly provided the funding for the award. Helen Lomas, our winner, will be traveling to Austin, Texas on August 8th to explore politics and social issues in Texas and Louisiana. Several Newnham alumnae in the area have very generously offered advice and hospitality. Committee Member Emily Clarke, Asst. Professor of History at Tulane University, for example, will be putting Helen in touch with the leadership of a local New Orleans relief organization Common Ground Collective which has played an important role in alleviating the problems of Hurricane Katrina victims. Helen will visit universities in Texas and Louisiana and hopes to investigate the structures and systems of local society and politics. She hopes to begin to understand the context in which the values and inclinations manifested by the 'red states', and President Bush have arisen. She would also like to find out directly from local sources what the social and political responses to Hurricane Katrina have been and why.

A native of Liverpool, England, Helen has never been to the USA.

* An adjustment was made in the size of the awards since the announcement on the website. The winner has received \$5K instead of \$4K and the runner-up \$1K instead of \$500. (Travel is getting expensive these days!)

Shuyang Wang is our runner-up!

Shuyang Wang, a second year Chemical Engineering student at Newnham, is the recipient of our runner-up award of \$1000. Voters were impressed by both her range of academic and extra-curricular accomplishments and her focus on her career. She is using her award to help with her travel plans to the East Coast of the USA from June 22nd to late August.

Shuyang, who has never been to the US before, will be taking an Economics course at Harvard over the summer in order to have sufficiently broad qualifications to apply to Columbia School of Journalism or the equivalents at Yale, Stanford or Princeton when she graduates in a year. Her interest in pursuing international relations and journalism (in spite of her parents both being engineers and encouraging her in that career) stems from the year following high school in Singapore in which she interned with a major media company there and "absolutely loved it". She comes from Shenyang, a city about

Her letter had a special appeal for many voters because she expressed a desire to use this chance to explore territory completely outside her experience and career trajectory. She

specialized in Archaeology at Cambridge and has just completed her Finals. Her specialty is in skeletal bio-archaeology and she has been accepted to a one-year Master's program at University College, London, for next year. Over the past two years she has traveled to Turkey, to work on an archaeological dig called Çatalhöyük, a large and very early Neolithic site on which the population built permanent dwellings from the 5th Millennium B.C. to the Byzantine era. The Neolithic dead there were habitually buried under the floors, plastered over and a new dwelling built over them, leaving an almost complete

record of human skeletal remains over an extended period of time.

In mid-June, Helen was celebrating the end of exams, training for the May 'Bumps' (she rows in Newnham's Third Eight) and picking out long gloves to go with her dress in anticipation of attending Magdalene College's May Ball (still a 'white-tie' affair). Reading about Austin in her guidebooks she was making plans to deal with the extreme heat there in summer and looking forward to exploring an entirely new part of the world. She will be writing about her experiences at the end of the summer and we will again post her letter on the website.



Shuyang in Belgium

an hour's flight northeast of Beijing, from which her family moved to Singapore when she was 15 years-old. Shuyang plays piano, guitar and a traditional, Chinese flute-like instrument called "hulusi". She is particularly excited to be able to sign up for jazz theory courses at Harvard, an entirely new musical departure for her after being trained in classical music.

At Cambridge Shuyang is involved in the Newnham JCR, the Hill Walking Club and the Chinese Cultural Society. Just recently, she joined Newnham's "Anonymous Players" and helped with lighting and sound for another student's translation of a German play performed in Newnham's Old Labs. Shuyang tells us that the Old Labs are now in great demand having been refurbished as a performance space in the past few years. There are now frequent performances there by both student and traveling troupes from as far away as Japan. Shuyang will visit various cities, including New York, during her stay through the end of August. Alumnae in Boston and New York have very generously offered to host her in various ways during her stay.

* * * * *
 Special Note: Our third finalist, Miriam Ogden who impressed a great number of voters with her dedication to the medical field and her extremely well-executed proposal for travel unfortunately fell ill in May and, being unable to predict whether she would be sufficiently recovered to take a trip to the USA this summer, withdrew her letter. By mid-June she was well on the way to full recovery. All three candidates' proposal letters are available on the Archives page of the website. Follow-up letters will be posted in September.

SEVEN US EVENTS HELD IN TWO MONTHS

- Newnhamites in the US got together with record frequency this spring at events on the East and West Coasts. Dame Patricia Hodgson visited Boston, New York, San Francisco and Saratoga, California. Thanks to the great generosity and hospitality of Antonia von Gottberg, Margaret Campbell, Vicky Elenowitz, Marianne O and Jane Perera (who hosted in their homes or offices) groups of ten or so alumnae and their partners enjoyed animated and warm conversation with Dame Patricia about all aspects of women's education.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Vicky Elenowitz (N'77), Elizabeth Traugott (N'91), Gabriel Firth (N'77), Margaret Weitkamp (N'57), Susan Mayall (N'52), Marianne O (N'84), Principal Patricia Hodgson (N'65) and Susan Koenigsberg (N'42) at Marianne O's office in San Francisco.

- In June, Mary Beard, renowned classics Professor and Fellow of Newnham, gave a lively tour of the Getty Villa in Malibu, California. Her talk was filled with novel insights including many on the theme of the Roman triumphal procession, the subject of her latest book. This event was organized by Cristina Gonzalez (N'99), who was also studying at the Getty, with our office in New York. Sandy Garcia of the Getty Villa kindly arranged the tickets. A group of around 20 Newnhamites and other Cambridge alumnae ate lunch together with Mary at the Getty and then toured the Villa in the afternoon.

- Star pharmacologist Jenny Morton, Fellow of Newnham and Director of Studies in Medical and Veterinary Medicine met with Newnhamites in New York on June 19th and talked about her work on Huntington's Disease. Jenny has one of the largest units in the world working on this catastrophic disease now known to be caused by a single gene. She began working in this area after hearing a woman speak of nursing her mother-in-law, husband and her three sons through a disease which combines the symptoms of Parkinson's, Alzheimer's and multiple sclerosis over an extended period of years of suffering. Her laboratory is next door to the hospital treatment center for Huntington's so insights pass back and forth between the basic researchers and the doctors and families of patients suffering the disease. Jenny's team is an object of great interest and hope in the world of Huntington's and received a grant of over \$2 million last year from High Q Pennsylvania foundation devoted to finding a cure for this dreadful illness.



Pictured clockwise from top left: Sue Rudd (N'64), Heather Palmer (N'57), Anna Ivey (N'92), Yingjie Liu (N'01), Sarah Gould (N'77) and Antonia von Gottberg (N'88) at Antonia's home in Boston.

Newnham girls celebrate Boat Race victory by Nathalie Chapman in Cambridge

Newnham celebrated a proud day when four of its students represented Cambridge in the annual Henley races on April 1, 2007. Following a day of stormy weather, Cambridge triumphed over Oxford in the Women's Boat Race. A strong north-east breeze caused rough waters on the Thames, forcing the organisers to shift the start of the race downstream; shortening the course to 1500 metres from its usual 2000 metres. The race was plagued with drama after the Oxford crew collided with Blondie during warm-up and holed their boat. Oxford then rigged their reserve boat, only to be hit with a broken rudder several strokes into the race.

The race finally got under way with



Cambridge showing the sharper stroke. The two crews remained almost level until the halfway point before the lighter Cambridge edged a half-length lead. Oxford was unable to level the boats despite several pushes, and Cambridge took the victory, their second in six years. Rachael Jefferies, a second year Newnham Nat. Sci. student, and Jenny Reid, a final year Newnham geographer, proved their worth in the boat and were said to be delighted with the result.

"It was a brilliant experience!" Rachael Jefferies said. "Because of the conditions it was a classic case of working together, and using our technique to our advantage."

SPOTLIGHT ON NEWNHAM US ALUMNAE

SINGLE MOTHER SUCCESS



Margaret Weitkamp's (N'57, History) parents were determined she should have a better education than they did. She came from a working class family in England that sacrificed much for her to attain her education. With the encouraging words of her grammar school headmistress who suggested she might be able to attend university on a scholarship she applied and was granted a state scholarship. She felt very fortunate that those monies covered all her college expenses.

After Newnham she spent a year at Hughes Hall and then married an American medical student. They moved to Rochester, NY and lived there for two years where she taught at a local high school. They then moved to Madison, Wisconsin where she became a copy editor for the University of Wisconsin Press. Although she wanted to continue teaching, she lacked the necessary credentials. They next moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan where she continued working for the Press. There she also gave birth to her daughter. It was also there that she divorced and as a single mother found herself needing a higher paying job. She began her career in the affordable housing field and spent the next thirty years doing a mixture of hands-on management, training and consulting. Moving to Northern California she worked for the National Housing Law Project and the California Housing Partnership. Margaret's last, and she says, most enjoyable job involved running the Affordable Housing division of American Baptist Homes of the West where she and

her staff built and operated housing for the elderly – using local and federal government grants and loans and obtaining rent subsidies to make housing affordable to local residents. She retired in 2000 and continues to live in Kensington, California.

Margaret's daughter Emma Weitkamp followed in her footsteps by going to Newnham. After attending Reed College for her undergraduate work she obtained a Ph.D in Biochemistry at Newnham (1987). She married an Englishman and lives in Wiltshire, where she is a Senior Lecturer at the University of the West of England and is raising three children.

INTERNATIONAL IMMERSION

"My name is Erin Leigh Gardner and I was born on June 15, 1982. I'm from Palo Alto, California, went to Palo Alto High School, attended Stanford University for my undergraduate studies and graduated with a BS in Civil Engineering - Environmental Specialty. I studied Environmental Design in Architecture at Cambridge starting Oct. 2005 and completed my thesis.

Ideally, I would like to be an environmental designer. My interests include (obviously) the environment, literature, philosophy, feminism (but not the scary kind!), boogie boarding, walking and friends. I lived in Japan for a year and a half (one year in high school with a host family and half a year with the Stanford Center in Kyoto, three months of which were in Tokyo working for a Japanese steel manufacturer). I enjoy Japanese calligraphy, LOVE the food and keep in touch with my friends over there. I also went to India with my Cambridge course to work on an urban redevelopment project (for a month). I studied Spanish for six years and still enjoy practicing very occasionally (having unfortunately lost most of my ability). I am slightly embarrassed to admit that I am also known to my friends as an authority on hair products."

June 2007 update: Erin will be working with Buro Happold Consulting Engineers PC (in Oxford Circus London). She writes:

"I'm going to be a Graduate Engineer working on the 'Sustainability and Alternative Technologies' (SAT) team. Buro Happold is a consulting firm that offers services mainly in structural and mechanical engineering, but also houses quite a few specialty disciplines such as fire engineering, blast engineering, sustainability consulting, computational analysis and modelling, plumbing engineering and a few others. The sustainability group sometimes works on projects in conjunction with other disciplines in the practice, usually structures and mechanical, but also can take on projects with other firms in order to provide sustainability consulting."



US Alumna Newsnibble

Patricia Higgins (N'63 Nat. Sci. Physical - featured in our spring 2007 newsletter) has now released her vineyard's very first vintage (2005 syrah and cabernet franc) at the Santa Barbara County Vintner's Festival to good reviews. Her vineyard's website is www.cimarone.com. If you are in California you can order the wine from the website or pick it up in Solvang and Los Olivos but those in other states will have to wait until next year to sample her creations.



DAUGHTERS AND LAW

Elisabeth Traugott (N'91, Social & Political Science) graduated from Newnham in 1994. She writes:

"I am one of the lucky few Americans who spent time at Newnham as an undergraduate. Originally a junior-year-abroad student from Mt. Holyoke College in South Hadley, Massachusetts, I successfully lobbied my director of studies and the College to let me stay on to finish my degree - I could not bear to leave the beloved (Newnham) gardens and my new friends behind!

"After a year at Leeds, earning an M.A. in Literature, I moved to Northern California where I worked for a year or so at a small newspaper covering city politics. I then went to law school at Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco, graduating in 2001. I spent a year clerking for a federal judge and then came to Morrison & Foerster LLP, where I currently practice civil litigation, representing companies in commercial disputes, including intellectual property matters. Along the way I married my Cambridge boyfriend (James Rickett, Gonville & Caius '91) and had twin daughters, now 20-months-old. Though I now live half a world away, Newnham and Cambridge are always with me, binding me across an ocean to friends and wonderful memories. I am so grateful for the experience."



INTRODUCING THE US COMMITTEE MEMBERS: ANTONIA VON GOTTBERG



Antonia von Gottberg (Banks) spent three years at Newnham from 1988-91, reading for an Undergraduate degree in Engineering Science. While at Newnham, Antonia spent a year as Secretary of the JCR, at least partly because it meant she got to choose her third year room at the top of the ballot! Antonia has very fond memories of sitting on the window seat of the ground floor bay window room in Sidgwick looking towards Peile, sometimes working and often enjoying coffee with friends after they came back from rowing.

After Cambridge, Antonia spent a year at MIT on a Kennedy Memorial Scholarship and completed a Master's in Chemical Engineering. Antonia was intending to return to the UK to work in industry when that was finished, but she met her husband Fred, who is originally from Austria, while at MIT. She quit her job in England six weeks after they starting dating, got engaged a few months later and married a year after that – not necessarily a good career move, but in this case it worked out well.

Since graduating, Antonia has worked in the membrane industry with particular focus on treating water and wastewater. She has traveled all over the world to work on projects including seawater desalination, water reuse and disinfection of surface water. Currently, Antonia is Technical Director at Koch Membrane Systems.

Antonia lives with her husband Fred, and two sons Max (4½) and Theo (9 months), in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She recently joined the US Alumnae Committee. Antonia still keeps in touch with several friends from Newnham, but would be delighted to hear from others who remember her.

MEMORIES OF WHITSTEAD



Voracious gas fires gobbling shillings at alarming rates; ubiquitous cold and damp; terrible, post-war food relieved by an occasional feast of good tea and delicious local cream; the kindling of lifelong friendships and the unfolding of long term academic interests and confidence in the company of world famous minds (Einstein, Wittgenstein, Plath, Schlesinger...). These are the common threads of "Memories of Whitstead," compiled by Rhoda Dorsey (N'49) and Sophie Consagra (N'50). This collection of letters and photographs from 12 "foreign" students lodged at Whitstead between 1950 and 1980 and now living in the USA, gives rich, personal accounts of the joys and tribulations of being a young academic woman, and a "foreigner" in Cambridge over the past 50 years. These women have achieved much in their lives and this booklet gives a wonderful flavor of what it was like when they and their equally celebrated contemporaries were still finding their paths and friends. If you are interested please contact the Newnham Committee.



NEWNHAM COLLEGE

U.S. COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

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Also visit our website at www.newnhaminamerica.org

