

# NEWSLETTER

THE SMITH COLLEGE CLUB OF ATLANTA, INC.

FALL 2010

## BONNA DAIX WESCOAT '76: NEW WORK IN THE SANCTUARY OF THE GODS ON SAMOTHRACE AND THE LEGACY OF PHYLLIS WILLIAMS LEHMANN

NOVEMBER 16, 2010 AT WHITE HALL, EMORY UNIVERSITY

On November 16, Atlanta-area alumnae and their guests will have the opportunity to attend a fascinating talk and slideshow by Bonna Daix Wescoat '76, an associate professor in the Art History Department at Emory University, about her recent work involving the excavations on Samothrace, a Greek island in the northern Aegean Sea. The Winged Victory of Samothrace, discovered (well, most of it) in 1863 by a French archaeologist and now in the Louvre, is the most well-known artifact from the site. Also on the island, the Sanctuary of the Great Gods provided a nexus for important Hellenic and pre-Hellenic religious ceremonies. A particularly unique aspect of the initiation rituals at Samothrace was their openness. Generally, slaves, women, non-Greeks, and children were not permitted to join in these ceremonies; however, at Samothrace, the only condition for participation was to be present in the sanctuary.

Smith College's connection to Samothrace begins with Professor Phyllis Williams Lehmann, who is famous for having found the hand and fingers of the Winged Victory. She devoted her life's work to Samothrace and wrote extensively about its ancient architecture. Wescoat's road to the Greek island began in Lehmann's class; incidentally, her mother also studied

under Lehmann during her own years at Smith. After Wescoat's first semester with Lehmann, the class nervously cooked dinner for their formidable but beloved professor. Years later, Wescoat discovered that her mother's class had done the same



Winged Victory of Samothrace

thing and had been equally terrified that they would have nothing to talk to her about outside of class. Lehmann was also known for her proverbial hollow leg and habit of turning empty bottles on their sides and

declaring them "dead soldiers," Wescoat relates. Inspired by Lehmann, Wescoat headed to Samothrace during her first year in graduate school and has now excavated there for many years herself. She will share with us both her experiences with Lehmann at Smith and those more recent explorations, which center on understanding the initiation into the mysterious cult of the Great Gods.

Initiates were promised salvation at sea and the chance to "become a better person in all ways" once the ceremonies were complete. New technologies are helping Wescoat and her colleagues to decipher the mysteries of the ceremonies and rituals that took place: a current project includes recreating the Sanctuary of the Great Gods in a 3-D digital model, making it possible to trace the path of the prospective initiate.

Please join us at Emory University's White Hall to hear more from this accomplished local alumna. Wine and light refreshments will be served (and perhaps some bottles turned on their sides after the talk).

### WHERE:

Room 103, White Hall, Emory University

### WHEN:

Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 7:30 p.m.

### RSVP:

By November 12, attending only, online at <http://tinyurl.com/SCBonnaWescoat> or to Nancy Gallagher at 404-327-7888 (leave a short message with your name and phone number and/or email address).

### COST:

Free; light refreshments will be served.

Questions? Send an email to [AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com).

## SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR ANNUAL HOLIDAY TEA - JANUARY 9, 2011

Planning is underway for the Smith College Club of Atlanta's annual Holiday Tea! Traditionally our largest event, the Tea is held at the home of an Atlanta-area alumna and is a wonderful opportunity for Georgia Smithies to relax, socialize, and enjoy delicious food and drinks. Amy Murphy '80, who hosted more than 60 Georgia alumnae

at last winter's Tea, says, "What a pleasure it is to host this gathering! The club's officers made the event totally stress-free, providing beautiful invitations, all the delicious goodies and a gorgeous arrangement of flowers, which I got to enjoy for days afterward. But filling my home with the energy of Smith women was the best

reward. What an amazing group we are!" If you're interested in sharing your home for this year's Tea (or any of our other upcoming events), please email Anya at [AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com). We will once again be collecting new or gently used children's books for the YWCA Shelter for Abused Women.

# OFFICERS

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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

As the leaves begin to turn here in Atlanta, it's hard not to think of Northampton in the autumn and the promise of a new year at Smith. With the help of a great leadership team, I think we've got some pretty exciting things in store which will bring some of the best of Smith to Atlanta.

Hope you got our email blast about the Fall Social at Mezza restaurant on October 13, which provided a fun kick-off to the club year. I also recently sent out an email with info about "Bon Appetit," a Julia Child Operetta at Cook's Warehouse on November 4 to benefit the Atlanta Opera. It's not an official club outing, but since it's a tribute to one of Smith's most beloved alums, we thought you'd like to know about it. If you didn't get these emails, be sure to update your email address at <http://alumnae.smith.edu>.

That's just the start. Bonna Daix Wescoat '76 has graciously agreed to talk about her excavations at the Sanctuary of the Gods on Samothrace, following in the footsteps of legendary Smith professor Phyllis Williams Lehmann, in a slideshow/seminar on November 16. See the cover story for more details.

And whether or not you're a book club regular, you'll want to save the date for the December 5 meeting. The book is *Gone With the Wind*, but we're also planning to show *Change in the Wind*, a new documentary produced by Andrew Young about Mitchell's enduring friendship with Morehouse College President Dr. Benjamin

E. Mays and her anonymous support of scholarships for dozens of promising African-American medical students. We're hoping revisiting the Pulitzer Prize-winning book and watching the documentary will trigger a dynamic discussion of racial stereotypes and Mitchell's legacy as the club contemplates the possibility of a public program at the Margaret Mitchell House highlighting Mitchell's Smith connection in 2011, which marks the 75th anniversary of *Gone With the Wind's* publication. See page 4 to sign up for book club emails.

Look for a postcard in December with location and details for the popular holiday tea on January 9, 2011. Next year, we're also looking into hosting another Smith professor through Smith's Faculty Speaker Program and are happy to take suggestions. A list of professors and topics is available at <http://alumnae.smith.edu/cms/?clubs=faculty-speaker-program>.

Finally, a gentle reminder that your dues are the reason we are able to put on alumnae events in Atlanta. They also support the book awards and the high expense of printing and mailing the newsletter and invitations. Because those costs are rising, we hope you will forgive us for raising dues slightly for the first time in well over a decade. The new rates are on the dues form on page 3.

Hope to see you at a Smith College Club of Atlanta event soon!

-Anya Martin '85

[AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com)

## FIRST ANNUAL SMITHNIC A SUCCESS!

On July 11, over 50 Georgia Smithies of all ages gathered at the home of Cara Saylor Polk '65 (who deserves a big thank you!) to celebrate summer, meet prospective students, and welcome the class of 2014. Michelle Clarkin, development officer from Smith, gave a short talk about the history of the Margaret Mitchell Scholarship Fund and a silent auction raised over \$250 for the fund. Many thanks again to all who contributed an item or bid on one, paid dues, provided food, and otherwise made it a great day! If you have photos of the event that you'd like to share, please send them to [AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com).



Current and prospective students with our hostess, Cara Saylor Polk '65, at the Smithnic.

## CLASS OF 2014

The Smith College Club of Atlanta is pleased to welcome the following members of the class of 2014 from Georgia:

Warner Robins High School:  
Kelsey Jane Cummings, Bonaire  
Tallulah Falls School:  
Sharon Durkan, Alpharetta  
Mill Creek High School:  
Soo J. Kim, Dacula  
Paideia School:  
Nandi Camille Marumo, Atlanta  
Mary Lamar Reilly, Atlanta  
Claire Elizabeth Riordan, Atlanta  
North Atlanta High School:  
Ashley Jamia Tolbert, Lithia Springs

If you're interested in helping prepare exam-time care packages for these students, please email [AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com) and let us know what you'd be willing to contribute (baked goods, money for mailing, time for assembly, etc.)

## LOCAL ALUMNAE NEWS

During her time at Smith, **Kamina Pinder '93** was a campus leader active in promoting diversity and multiculturalism and one of the founders of UNITY, an organization composed of the eight campus cultural groups. She was recently an invited speaker on the keynote panel at Smith's Student Leadership Conference, with the theme "Global Engagement Starts at Smith."

**Charlise Lyles '81** was recently named a finalist for the National Association of Black Journalists Echoes of Excellence commentary award for a magazine with circulation of 1 million or less, based on pieces written for *Catalyst Ohio*, an urban education magazine she co-founded over ten years ago.

Welcome a brand-new, Smith alumna-owned business to Atlanta! Founded by **Megan E. Gardner '98**, Plum District features daily deals and discounts to local and national businesses. Visit <http://plumdistrict.com> for more information.

THANK YOU TO ALL  
2010-2011 CLUB MEMBERS!

### Margaret Mitchell Circle

Jaye Hensel '77  
Mary Hinkel '73

### Sustaining Members

Nancy Gallagher '87  
Cara Saylor Polk '65

### Contributing Members

Shola Oni '97  
Nikki Radford '04

### Members

Lynn Budell '69  
Cheryl Watson Cooney '02  
Caitlin Gill '02  
Kristin Halloran '02  
Charlise Lyles '81  
Anya Martin '85  
Cynthia Schlag-Morneweck '90  
Rebecca Rousselle '96  
Carol Walker '62

\*paid 7/1-10/25/2010

## BOOK AWARD UPDATE

In 2010, the Club presented 12 awards to students from Georgia high schools - three more than 2009, thanks to the help of alumnae donations. If you have a school in mind for potential inclusion next year, please contact Mary Hinkel at [hinkelfamily21380@earthlink.net](mailto:hinkelfamily21380@earthlink.net).

## SMITH ADMISSIONS

Our Alumnae Admissions Coordinators are looking for volunteers to help with interviewing prospective students and other admissions-related activities. If you're interested, please email Kamina Pinder ([pkamina@hotmail.com](mailto:pkamina@hotmail.com)) or Charlise Lyles ([lcharlise@aol.com](mailto:lcharlise@aol.com)).

## SECRETARY NEEDED!

Do you want to get more involved in the Smith College Club of Atlanta? If you're interested in building a more active and connected Smith alumnae community in Atlanta and throughout Georgia, send an email to [AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com](mailto:AtlantaSmithClub@gmail.com). The Club is currently in need of a secretary, but there are always other opportunities for involvement!

## JOIN THE CLUB! 2010-2011

There are several levels at which you can support the Smith College Club of Atlanta or sustain your current membership. Please fill out the form below, and send with a check payable to The Smith College Club of Atlanta, Inc. to **Jenny Miller, 743 Myrtle St. NE, Atlanta, GA 30308**

- |  |      |  |      |   |       |
|--|------|--|------|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recent grad (2006-2010) | \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing member | \$60 | <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Mitchell Circle           | \$150 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basic member            | \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining member   | \$90 | <input type="checkbox"/> Book award (\$35 each or \$ _____) |       |
|  |      |  |      | <input type="checkbox"/> Margaret Mitchell Fund (\$ _____)  |       |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation year: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Save the green! Check here to opt out of receiving a paper newsletter; please double-check your email address above.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## 2010

### OCTOBER

- 13 Smith College Club of Atlanta Fall Social at Mezza
- 9-12 *Autumn recess*
- 22-24 *Family weekend*
- 26 *Otelia Cromwell Day*
- 28 *Sherrerd Teaching Prize Ceremony*

### NOVEMBER

- 16 **Bonna Daix Wescoat talk at Emory** (see page 1)
- 24-28 *Thanksgiving recess*

### DECEMBER

- 5 **Book club meeting:** *Gone With the Wind* with a screening of *Change in the Wind* (see note, this page)
- 14 *First semester classes at Smith end*

## 2011

### JANUARY

- 3-22 *J-term: Learn something new this month!*
- 9 **Smith College Club of Atlanta Holiday Tea.** Save the date! Details to come.
- 24 *Second semester classes at Smith begin*

# BOOK CLUB

The Smith College Club of Atlanta's Book Club typically meets on the third or fourth Sunday of each month at a member's home. The next meeting is on Sunday, December 5, when the club will discuss *Gone With the Wind* by Margaret Mitchell.

Aspiring to be a medical doctor, Mitchell was excited to attend Smith College, but her mother's sudden death in the flu pandemic of 1918 meant she was only able to attend for one year. The Pulitzer Prize-winning book and the Oscar-winning movie have provoked controversy as having perpetuated damaging racial stereotypes, but Mitchell recently has been discovered to have shared an enduring friendship with Morehouse College President Dr. Benjamin E. Mays. She anonymously supported scholarships for dozens of promising African-American medical students. Her Smith legacy lives on in the Margaret Mitchell Scholarship which also has provided tuition assistance to students of all races.

Even if you've only seen the movie, please join us for what will be a lively and provocative discussion. Please note: this meeting will start at 2 p.m., one hour earlier than usual, to allow time for a screening of *Change in the Wind*, a new documentary produced by Andrew Young on Mitchell's Morehouse connection. If you'd like to add your name to the book club email list, please contact Cynthia Schlag-Morneweck at [cmorneweck@gmail.com](mailto:cmorneweck@gmail.com).

## VISIT OUR WEBSITE!

Find upcoming events, contact info, membership forms, and more at <http://alumnae.smith.edu/smithcms/atlanta/>



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