



The Smith Club of Great Britain

CLUB CALENDAR

We are proud to announce a bumper schedule of events for the first half of next year. As usual, alums will receive electronic invitations to all events.

Please save the dates!

January 17: Theatre Trip to see "Loot" by Joe Orton at the Tricycle Theatre.

February 7: Second Annual Smith College Club of Great Britain Winter Dinner at the Sloane Club with a State of the College update from **Maureen Mahoney**, Dean of the College.

March: Theater Trip with pre-theater drinks and faculty talk at the home of an alum.

April 4: Tour of Oxford University's Bodleian Library with talk on special exhibit of women's works and lunch in an Oxford college. Option to stay the weekend and attend the Times Oxford Literary Festival.

April 18: Theatre Trip to see Donmar West End's "Madame de Sade," with post-theater discussion.

May 16: Tour of Kew Gardens with talk on Smith's Kew internship program followed by tea.

June 13: Tour of spectacular, private gardens rarely open to the public in Petworth, West Sussex. Lunch in private home.



JYA Students Thanh Bui, Hui Hsing Sui, and Lan Phan He at the JYA Reception (Photo by Erica Tso)

JYA Reception and Theater A Great Hit!

On October 18, more than 35 club members attended a play at the Royal Court Theater and then walked to the nearby Sloane Club for a discussion of the play followed by a reception welcoming this year's crop of Junior Year A abroad students. Joining us were: **Thanh Bui** and **Rosalie Ray**, studying at LSE; **Fatima Santos**, studying at Edinburgh (thank you Fatima for making the journey from Edinburgh to London to be with us!); and **SoYeon Park**, **Hui Hsing Sui** and **Erica Ts o**, all studying at Oxford.

The reception marked the launch of the Club's JYA initiative aimed at providing support to the 50 JYAs who will study in the UK during the year at a variety of institutions, some for just one semester but most for the entire year. In addition to holding special JYA events throughout the year, we have launched a Big Sister program. So far, we have matched up 10 alums with JYAs. They will mentor, meet up at Smith events or just be on the end of a phone for them.

The JYAs are studying a range of subjects from anthropology, to philosophy, to economics. It was a pleasure to meet all of them and talk with them about their courses, as well as hear their ideas about what they would like us to organize for them while they are here.

The theater discussion was lead by **Judy Rousuck**, long-time theater critic of the *Baltimore Sun* and a close friend of **Penny Hammar '74**. Judy, a Wellesley grad, led the discussion with consummate intelligence and grace and managed to get practically everyone volunteering valuable comments. All agreed it was one of the most inspiring events the club has had. Go to page 4 for a report on the event from JYA **Maria-Fatima Santos**

■ **Sarah Fabiny '83**, Head of JYA Program



Smith's Kew Internship Program

Smith's Kew Internship gives Smith students the opportunity to conduct research in the Jodrell Laboratory at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, a world-renowned institution whose main mission is science-based plant conservation. There has been a long connection between Smith and Kew: for example, the glasshouse at the Smith Botanic Gardens was modeled after the Palm House at Kew.

In 1994, this connection was strengthened when the Kew Internship program was founded by Paula Dietz '59 and Ian Prance, then director of Kew. In this 10-week internship, two Smith students per year have participated in a variety of research projects involving plants ranging from orchids to tobacco. Not only have they gained experience in the laboratory, but also many of the projects have resulted in articles in scientific journals.

As a former Kew Intern myself, I owe a great deal to my experience at Kew. Not only did I gain laboratory skills and experience in a foreign country, but I also discovered that research in plant biology was my passion, and my love of Kew brought me back to the UK after graduating from Smith. I am presently pursuing a joint PhD with Queen Mary, University of London, Kew, and the Natural History Museum. This year marked the fifteenth summer of the Kew Internship, and I am sure that it will continue to provide unique opportunities to Smith students for many years to come. ■ **Elizabeth McCarthy** '06



Meaghan Hall '10 and Christina Dragon '09 enjoy Regent's Park and receive their stipend checks from the Smith Club of Great Britain (Photo by Shana Worthen)

Kew Interns Talk About Their Experience

This past summer, the Kew interns were Meaghan Hall '10, Sessions House, and Christina Dragon '09, Baldwin House. Amy Brown '90, our Kew Gardens rep, presented Meaghan and Christina with checks from the Club to help them through their internships during a welcome picnic held in Regent's Park. Amy also conducted the following interview with the two interns.

Q: Why did you want to come and work at Kew?

M: Working in an international lab appealed to me. Students come to Kew from all over the world; I was excited to see their perspectives on different issues, especially conservation.

C: Kew's mission of plants, people, and possibilities fits with my interests in people's reaction to and interaction with plants. Also, I wanted an international work experience. I did not want to be away from Smith for a long time, like a semester or a year, so a summer experience fit well.

Q: What was your first impression of Kew?

M: Kew is a welcoming community for students and its mission of research was both exciting and reassuring. I was worried that lab work would be so exacting that there would be no room for mistakes. What I have learned is that science is really trial and error and that learning is a big part of the job.

C: I was overwhelmed by the gardens and greenhouses. The environment just keeps going; there is so much to see, smell, and experience. Every time I think that I have seen everything, there is always something new blooming.

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Q: What do you research at Kew?

M: I am working with the Myrtaceae family, with a group of trees found only in Brazil. With climate change and development, the trees are disappearing. Looking at their DNA will give scientists information about other places these trees might be grown and preserved from extinction.

C: I am working on two genres in the Orchid family, *Calanthe* and *Phaius*. I am looking at DNA strings because it is postulated that the two genres are so visually similar that they have been wrongly classified.

Q: What have you enjoyed doing outside the lab?

M: I love going to museums and spending time walking in the parks. Christina and I had a day adventure with an alum in West Sussex and we will go to see the Eden Project in Cornwall in a couple of weeks.

C: I row crew at Smith so I enjoy walking along the Thames watching the various clubs on the water. I enjoy the parks and museums too. We had a good time at the picnic in Regents Park organized by the Smith Club.

A Book Signing Event *with* Polly Grose

Add Polly Grose's book signing event on October 20 to the Smith Club of Great Britain scrapbook! Polly Grose '54, a longtime, active member of the Smith Club of London, spoke to about 20 Smithies and guests about her new memoir, "A London Scrapbook." Polly's British husband, David, was an avid scrapbook maker. Polly used his scrapbooks as a means of telling her story of leaving her life in Minnesota and forging a new one in London. Polly also discussed how she wrote the book and read passages to give us a taste of the book. As she says in the book, "David taught me how to make a scrapbook, not to paste every photo from a trip; that's a photo album. A scrapbook maker selects and organizes his material around a theme."

Polly's own excitement for writing and her description of putting together her own life scrapbook inspired those there to contemplate making their own scrapbooks. It also led to a discussion of how important retaining and organizing the mementos of our lives can be in this digital age.

The evening provided a wonderful opportunity for Smith Club members of many generations to meet, discuss books, politics, and life. Polly donated the sales of the evening, £200, to the Smith Club Scholarship fund. Candy Beery '64 provided not only her lovely home but also delicious food and drink to make the evening a success! ■ Barbara Klaas '73



Polly Grose '54 signs her new book, with Susan Griggs '56, Meg Ford '80, and Cynthia Rallis '77. (Photo by Barbara Klaas)



Dona Phelan '66 and Liz Pinto '58 at Polly Grose's Book Signing (Photo by Barbara Klaas)



Smith in Europe Meets in Athens

The 15th Smith in Europe 2008 Reunion got off to a lively start in Athens in October with a reception overlooking the Parthenon arranged by the Athens organizing committee: **Despina Panagopoulou** '00, **Eftehia Katsareas** '01, **Lillian Agapalidou** '70, and **Sophia Yanakakis** '97. We welcomed alums from around Europe, including Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, England, Ireland and Estonia. The UK contingent included **Kathy Merrill** '72, **Toni Newman** '68 and **Clara-Mae Chittum** '66.

We were particularly delighted by the presence of **Charlotte Kea** '82, the President of the Smith College Alumnae Association, and Smith Classics Professor **Scott Bradbury**. And the October weather was perfect: warm and sunny, providing the perfect setting to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

The first stop on Friday morning was the National Archaeological Museum, the largest museum in Greece. Friday afternoon the bus departed for Domaine Fragou in Mesogaia, long a principal wine source for the region. Owner **Matina Fragou** gave a brief introduction to winemaking and took us on a walking tour of the premises. We then had a choice of a demonstration on the preparation of phyllo pastry and spinach pie. Our night ended with a tasty dinner.

On Saturday Professor **Bradbury** spoke on the "Meaning of the Parthenon from Antiquity to the Present." We then went on to the stunning Benaki Museum where we had a guided tour.

The early afternoon was free so that we could enjoy Athens at our leisure—lunch at Kolonaki,

shopping, a tour of the Acropolis, visits to other museums, etc. Those of us who felt more energetic could choose to participate in one of the three historic walking tours of Athens, led by local alums.

At the gala closing dinner several alums entertained us with a capella singing including a solo performance about Smith life, written by a Smith alum many decades ago.

The Reunion ended with the business meeting on Sunday. Of most interest was the location our next Reunion in 2010. Wherever it is, we look forward to meeting up in two years' time! The Smith in Europe group was founded 40 years ago to maintain connections among alums across Continental Europe. It maintains a website and meets every other year.

■ **Eftehia Katsareas** '01
Despina Panagopoulou '00

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JYA Maria-Fatima Santos Reports on "Now or Later" Theater Event

"Just travelling to London from Edinburgh where I am studying was an overwhelmingly exciting adventure, and the Smith JYA event exceeded all expectations! I don't think there could have been a more appropriate theater choice than "Now Or Later," a play about a U.S. election—both because we were in the run up to the most exciting election ever, and also, because of the personal chords it struck.

On the night of the US election, the Democratic candidate struggles with his son, John Jr., to mend the damage of some controversial photos taken of himself and statement that John Jr. has made in reference to Islamic culture and religion. It becomes an inner struggle within John Jr. uncertain how to balance his own values—personal freedom of speech, his need to affirm his autonomy, and a new understanding of public responsibility.

We come from a tradition of women with conviction—women who do not easily compromise our ideals—and it's a constant challenge to balance reality and that conviction. "Now Or Later" reminds us of that challenge.

Having the discussion and reception afterwards was a great way to get acquainted with Smithies that we may never have had the pleasure to meet otherwise. It makes me proud to understand that I come from a tradition of women with such passion, a passion that each woman has turned into such a unique and different form. It's also great to see that some things never change—for example that Jordan House was always the party house!

Thank you to all who organized the event, and thank you all alumnae for such a stimulating discussion after the play. It was a pleasure for all of us JYAs!"

■ **Maria-Fatima Santos**



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Penny Hammar '73
Liz Pinto '58

LETTER *from* Your Club Treasurer

Dear Club Members,

I am pleased to introduce myself as the new Treasurer of the Smith Club of Great Britain, and I am delighted to join a dynamic group of alums to help the Club continue to provide a rich program of events for alumnae and students in the UK.

The Smith Club of Great Britain is outstanding in the level of participation we achieve, the quality of events we provide and the support we give to Smith students studying in the UK. Our 250 or so members receive news and invitations to events, and the aim of the Club is to include all members in a wide variety of social, cultural and educational settings.

In order to insure that we have the resources we need to achieve our aims, we will be introducing four levels of suggested, though not mandatory, dues based on a sliding scale next January:

- **Junior Year Abroad, other students and Alums 40 years out or more: None**
- **Alums 10 years out or less: £15**
- **Alums 10 years out or more: £25**
- **Grécourt Circle: £65**

The Grécourt Circle is a new membership category for members who wish to contribute more to support the Club. Grécourt Circle members will be invited to a special reception during the year, typically featuring a leading faculty member or distinguished alum, at an exclusive location.

Your dues will be used to support JYAs and our Kew interns through the Kew internship stipends and through subsidizing the cost of Club events for them throughout the year. **However, we want everyone to participate in the Club so if you do not choose to donate, you are still a member, you will still receive news and invitations, and we are still glad to have you!**

I love how one alum described the mission of the club: “to keep interesting and worldly women interesting and worldly through shared social and cultural experiences.” To this end, I thank you, on behalf of the board, in advance for your donations and I look forward to seeing you at events throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,

Martha Fray '74

Treasurer of the Smith Club of Great Britain