

MHEAC SPRING NEWSLETTER

Connecting Alumnae Across Europe

Welcome Message

A Word from the European Council Chair

Welcome to the latest issue of our newsletter!

After two years marked by lockdowns, masks, quarantines, and all sorts of restriction, we were all looking forward to celebrating a spring filled with hope, freedom, and peace. Tragically, nothing could be less true. While I write this, we

are all horrified by a brutal conflict which is so close to us in Europe and which is proving more devastating and crueler than we could ever imagine.

Our hearts cry, and we all do what we can to help, in words, writing and deeds. Keeping our faith in solidarity, sharing, and tolerance helps to feel a bit better, and the friendship and support that our network can offer is also important.

The events in Ukraine clearly impacted the work of the team organizing the 16th European Alumnae Symposium and shed a different light on the discussions about the symposium program. The team, of which I am proudly part, remains optimistic, but we know that our discussions about **"Building a More Just Society"** will be strongly influenced by the current events. We are working to offer a program that will enable all attendees to explore relevant issues together with a group of amazing panelists from all over the world, but also allow for fun and camaraderie.

Despite the restrictions of the past few months, we are again able to cover an array of exciting recent events, which cater to alums and students from around the globe. Together we celebrated alums' creativity in our "Uncommon Cameras" photography competition and explored the fascinating culture of Turkey. We welcomed the Year of the Tiger, listened to award-winning writers, visited historic vessels, baked delicious cakes and cookies, and shared thoughts and concerns in our weekly M&C calls, a much-loved initiative that recently celebrated its 2nd anniversary. Together we also mourned the sudden loss of Prof. Western, a much-respected member of the Mount Holyoke faculty.

More events are already scheduled for the months to come. It will be good to see old and new friends without the separation of a screen and to make plans for a mini-reunion in The Hague in the fall.



Enjoy this newsletter and continue to reach out to your MHC friends: a warm MHC smile and comforting shoulder can always make a difference in our lives.

Silvia Maulini '80

Chair, European Alumnae Council

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2022 European Alumnae Symposium

Peace Palace - Courtesy of Carnegie Foundation

Save the Date: 16th European Alumnae Symposium

“Building a More Just Society” - October 14–16, 2022 - The Hague

The 16th Mount Holyoke European Alumnae Symposium is scheduled to take place on **14-16 October in The Hague**. Known as the city of peace and justice, The Hague is the fourth U.N. city and **home to the International Court of Justice**, housed in the well-known **Peace Palace**. The city is known for its outstanding museums and will offer the perfect setting for this gathering.

Save these dates in your diary and get ready for an exciting weekend of Mount Holyoke fun and intellectual stimulation, which will offer all participants an exciting opportunity for interaction with Mount Holyoke alums and students from all over the world.

[Weekend Overview:](#)

Friday, October 14: Afternoon optional tour of The Hague, including a visit to the Peace Palace and the Panorama Mesdag. Welcome dinner in a building built by famous Dutch architect H.P. Berlage. For those arriving on Thursday, a visit to Madurodam on Friday morning is a possibility and on Sunday to one of the various museums or an excursion to Delft (reachable by tram).

Saturday, October 15: A full day of presentations and discussions led by international experts and alums. Sessions will address the role of intergovernmental organizations, educators, and environmental specialists in helping to build and maintain a more just society. The day will close with a festive dinner and a silent auction.

Sunday, October 16: Discussion groups and small-scale workshops. The event will close at noon.

Georgia Regnault '64, who heads the organizing committee, is very much looking forward to the event: *"We are working hard to pull together a stellar group of speakers and panelists, which will include top international experts and diplomats, as well as several alums. We are living in difficult times, and I hope that the presentations and the discussions held during the Symposium will allow us all to explore some of the issues that challenge us, but also to unwind and rediscover the warmth of true Mount Holyoke friendship."*

Make your plans to join us October 14–16 in the Netherlands. Registration details will be announced by the end of May.

The Dutch alums team is working full steam ahead to deliver another amazing symposium, but they are fully aware of the uncertainties still created by the war in Ukraine and the aftermaths of the Covid pandemic. The organizing team will continue to monitor the situation very closely and modify plans as needed.

For more information: mhc.thehague2022@gmail.com

Follow us on Instagram: @mhc.european.alumnae.council

Uncommon Cameras

What a wonderful world!

The winner of the **Uncommon Cameras**, the photography competition run by the European Alumnae Council and the Mount Holyoke Global Alum Alliance, was announced in December 2021, and **Nadia Heath's winning photograph "Fly Like a Bird"** embellished the European Council end of the year online greeting card.

The competition was an extraordinary success: **53 alums from 24 countries and five continents**, representing graduating classes from 1963 to 2021, answered the call to share recent, favorite pictures. The **122 photographs** submitted had the power to show us how excitingly diverse and yet similar our community is. Varied passions and

interests, as well as different geographic and cultural backgrounds, are linked by the same uncommon curiosity and love for life and for all that surrounds us.

All entries and their supporting backstories are still accessible on Instagram [@mhc.european.alumnae.council](#) and the 13 finalists and winner are also visible on the [MHEAC website](#).

Interview with Claudia Palmira '95, one of the five judges of the Uncommon Cameras photography competition

What was your biggest challenge judging the content for this competition?

The photography was so incredibly varied and delectable, it was a challenge at first to visually organize the ideas. Even within the themes of the competition, the photographs had a diverse range of subjects and concepts.

How did you approach the process and what were you looking for in the pictures?

In my profession as a designer and artist, I am constantly assessing visual content. For this process specifically, I was intent to feel the soul of the photo and its photographer. This came through subtle details, color, light and shadow in the composition. As judges, we had an internal system of rating the photographs so that we could keep track of our assessments.

What did you enjoy the most on this journey?

Besides getting to see the beautiful expressions of Mt Holyoke women through photography, the collaboration with the other alumnae judges was wonderful. It was uplifting to be part of such a savvy and intelligent group, and make some new connections.

Super Winner of Uncommon Cameras

Alumna Spotlight: Nadia Heath '80

*Nadia Heath, a proud Mount Holyoke alumna, class of 1980, is the **Super Winner** of the Uncommon Cameras photography competition. Read more about what inspired her to enter the competition & the **influence of Mount Holyoke** on her life in this latest interview in our 'In the Spotlight' series."*

Can you tell us a few words about yourself?

I graduated from Mount Holyoke in 1980 with a degree in Romance Languages and Literatures (French and Portuguese). My British husband, Edwin, and I live in a rural cottage on the Orkney Islands of Scotland. Since I retired from my career in child protection administration at the start of the first Covid lockdown, I have had more time to enjoy gardening, volunteering, music, walks with my husband and cat, and snapping photos with my iPad.

What inspired you to participate in the competition?

I saw the photo competition announcement on the Mount Holyoke European Council website. The Chair of the Council, Silvia Maulini who is my classmate, encouraged me to enter. I was inspired to showcase the stunning scenery of our island home and to share the joy of our free-spirited cat, Banjo. With so many phenomenal photos in the competition, I was truly surprised and thrilled to have been a finalist and ultimately the "super winner".

What's one challenge you faced over the years and how did you manage to overcome it?

During a family reunion in Ohio, where I grew up, our family friend told of her disappointment that, at the last minute, she couldn't attend her 75th Mount Holyoke reunion because her niece could no longer accompany her. My sister, who had been a Mount Holyoke head resident my senior year and I took on the challenge to get her to the reunion! I used Mount Holyoke online resources to research reunion classes and alumnae who were planning to attend from the Cleveland area. The very first alumna we contacted readily agreed to help by reaching out to our friend, arranging flight seats together, and accompanying her all the way to the reunion. The Alumnae Association was also delighted to facilitate the attendance of one of the few class of 1931 members attending reunion. They sent a limo to the airport and arranged for a student to support her during the weekend. Our friend had the time of her life, her reunion photo was published in the Quarterly, and she continued to cherish memories of her Mount Holyoke experiences until her death, at age 104. **It just goes to show that nothing is too great a challenge and that, by pulling together, Mount Holyokers can make dreams come true.**

Did you have a vision of your life when you were at Mount Holyoke? How did that vision change over the years?

While I was a student at Mount Holyoke I thought a career with a UN agency or international non-governmental organization would allow me to use my language skills and pursue my interest in foreign affairs, social justice, and human rights. I was raised in a multicultural family (Dad was a Palestinian refugee and Mom was an American academic and activist), I spent a year as an AFS high school student in Brazil and did my junior year abroad in Paris, so I had a world vision that was nurtured by the **culturally diverse Mount Holyoke community**. Since I moved to Orkney nearly 40 years ago, my vision has changed to focus on more local employment opportunities and activities, however, I haven't lost my interest in the world.

What is your most fond memory of your time back at MHC?

There are so many fond memories of Mount Holyoke - the stunning campus, stimulating classes, singing with the choir, elfing, Mountain Day. After I had a summer internship with the Amnesty International French Section in Paris and returned to campus for senior year, my classmate Marjory Heath Wentworth and I founded the

Mount Holyoke Amnesty Chapter, which is still going! My fondest memory, however, is of all the **remarkable and lifelong friendships** I made, supportive conversations late at night during study breaks, M&Cs In the past two years as I have been our class Vice President and as I have become involved with the Mount Holyoke British and European alumnae groups, I have regained those precious feelings of connection and pleasure.

How did your MHC experience contribute to your life aspirations?

Mount Holyoke inspired me to be **brave, enquiring, and engaged with the world**. My college experiences prepared me for my aspirations to further study, work and live abroad. Over many years I coordinated AFS programs in Orkney, and my husband and I hosted three AFS daughters from South America. I am still active with Amnesty, and travel opportunities have allowed me to use my language skills. Mount Holyoke has had a massive influence on my life for which I am always grateful.

Fly Like a Bird

Winning Submission by Nadia Heath '80

Our cat, Banjo, loves to accompany my husband and me on walks through the fields behind our house. During the pandemic lockdown Banjo went with me every afternoon, turning a worrying time into a playful trek. He liked to show off his climbing and balancing prowess by scampering up the ten foot high sculpture pole. The beauty of my surroundings - the sea, sky, islands, green fields, historic stone walls - and my companions, always fill my life with joy.

Orkney Islands, Scotland

by Nadia Heath '80

Majestic trees on our windswept islands are a rarity. Whenever I wander in the grounds of nearby Woodwick House, I am reminded of the MHC campus filled with glorious trees and water. We take all of our visitors here to meander down the stream path, which opens out onto the bay with islands in the distance. Springtime has the added glory of thousands of bluebells. When writer Signe Pike stayed with us (on the recommendation of my MHC classmate, of course), she was so impressed with magical Woodwick that she has set part of her trilogy *The Lost Queen* here (due to become a TV series). Ah, the power of MHC connections!

Turkey: Perception vs. Reality

Look Back on Virtual Symposium 2021

The Mount Holyoke European Alumni Council held its first **virtual symposium** on **November 6, 2021**, with the theme, **“Turkey: Perception vs. Reality.”**

Spearheaded by Turkish Alumni Zeynep Kurmuş Hürbaş '96 and Yasemin Erkut '03, the symposium was attended by **over 100 alumnae from all over the world** and touched upon important topics such as climate change, women’s rights, and culture and society in Turkey.

Keynote speaker Prof. Dr. Zeynep Alemdar gave a thorough introduction to women’s rights movements in Turkey. Lale Görünür of Sadberk Hanım Museum spoke about the first women-initiated museum in Turkey, giving details of ethnographic collections, as well as the museum’s latest exhibition, “Motif.” Gözdem Gürbüzatık walked us through the history of alcohol in Anatolia. Gökşen Şahin gave insights into climate change and Europe’s role. Rana Birden of Kale Group spoke about women’s entrepreneurship movements and gave insights on UN development goals.

Impressions by attendees:

“The four hours just flew by!”

“It was fabulous and well worth getting up early.”

"I was so impressed by the topics and the turnout!"

Lunar New Year

Global Alums Welcome Lunar New Year of the Tiger with a Roar!

On February 1, 2022, many Asian countries celebrated the arrival of the **Lunar New Year of the Tiger**. It was a time for family and friends to gather to spend time with each other, share a meal, and greet each other with lucky sayings.

MHC alums from all over the world joined together to wish everyone a happy and healthy Year of the Tiger in a [very special video project](#), launched by **Eleanor Chang '78**, with support from the **Mount Holyoke Global Alum Alliance** and a team of volunteers from around the world.

Over two weeks in January, more than **70 alums** spanning 60 years, from classes of 1962 to 2022, living in **21 U.S. cities and 18 countries** around the world, uploaded their video greetings. They shared new year wishes in **16 languages**, including Dutch, Korean, Portuguese, Tagalog, Turkish, as well as Mandarin, Cantonese, and Shanghainese dialects of Chinese. **President Sonya Stephens** also wished the global community a happy lunar new year in French and English. The video, shared on different social media channels, showcased the incredible cohesiveness and reach of our international network. Enjoy the [video!](#)

For more information on the Global Alum Alliance email MHGlobalAA@gmail.com.

Past & Upcoming Events

Resilient Networks & Bonds

Bulgaria

Mountain Day 2021

Guergana Gougoumanova '99 and Slaviana Peeva '00 enjoying Mountain day together in Sofia, Bulgaria!

France

May 2022

French Garden Party at Nesles-la-Vallee

On May 1 Méryem Puill-Châtillon '80 welcomed Jane Jimmy '74 and Josette Caussiol '69 (and husband) in her beautiful garden right outside of Paris. They all enjoyed the company, the good food, and the sunny weather!



Upcoming Event!

Sunday, June 12th at 3 pm, MHC alumnae in Paris will be meeting for a visit to the Gallen-Kallela exhibition at the Musee Jacquemart Andre. An open discussion, about the life and art of the Finnish painter and national symbol -who was initiated to symbolism in a Parisian art school, will be taking place afterward at the « Salon de thé » inside the museum.

Please make sure to **book your entrance online directly** on the site of the Musée Jacquemart André, and **RSVP on the Mount Holyoke Club of France Facebook group** for the Salon de thé talk or **RVSP by email** to France Country Delegate, Geraldine Boucherat CG '99 at gboucherat@gmail.com.

Germany

Mountain Day 2021

The German Club had a virtual Mountain Day on 17.10.2021 that included Nancy Kuehler '65, Vanietta Canonico-Jahn '77, Catherine Jourdan '95, Deborah Wilde '97, Ramona Marks '02, Marcia Schenk '09, Gergana Karadzhovala '12, Ningzi Xia '19.

Virtual M&C with the Germany Alumnae, March 2022

The German Club had a virtual M&C with the Germany alumnae which included: Nancy Kuehler '65, Pat Simon '68, Vanietta Canonico-Jahn '77, Debjani Das '84, Elisabeth Noelle '85, Deborah Friedman '89, Allison Bouchat '91, Catherine Jourdan '95, Ramona Marks '02, and Silvia Vlahova '13. Silvia Maulini '80 was a guest speaker to inform on the upcoming Symposium in the Hague.

DACH Alumnae Connections

On March 12, Jane Jimmy '74, Claudia Ricaldez '00, Ramona Marks '02, Ning Xie '15, Clara Färber '17, and Ningzi Xia '19 met up in Zurich for a cozy cafe catch-up session.

October 2021

On October 3rd, Nancy Kuehler '65 and Catherine Jourdan '95 came together in traditional Bavarian attire for the Wirsthauswies'n (in lieu of Oktoberfest).

Thank you to Vanietta Canonico-Jahn '77!

Finally, we give a big thank you to **Vanietta Canonico-Jahn '77** for leading the Dusseldorf-Cologne regional group all these years and now passing the torch to the duo of **Deborah Friedman '89 and Allison Bouchat '91**.

Great Britain

Club activities in the fall of 2021 featured an October in-person and virtual **Mountain Day** and a November **online literary workshop**. Mountain Day venues ranged from Cornwall in southeast England to Edinburgh and St Andrews in Scotland, with other gatherings in London and Oxford – and even the Orkneys, online.

Mountain Day 2021

In St Ives, Cornwall, two griffins enjoyed cream tea, then posed for a photo with the Atlantic in the background.

Mountain Day 2021

Edinburgh alums celebrated with gelato.

Mountain Day 2021

London alums were treated to Udderlicious treats.

Mountain Day 2021

Oxford alums (Virginia, Alison and Annie) had delicious ice creams and a walk in University Parks.

Mountain Day 2021

North London alums (and maybe a future MoHo?) reached the heights on Hampstead Heath, living up to the Mountain Day name.

November 2021

Literary workshop featuring Violet Kupersmith '11

In November, a literary workshop, *Discovering the Ghosts of History*, featured **Violet Kupersmith '11**. Violet read from her latest book, *Build Your House Around My Body*, then guided participants to construct their own stories based on their dreams. Subsequently, we learned that Violet had been awarded a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship. **Congratulations to Violet!**

February 2022

Junior Year Abroad Tea

The club kicked off 2022 activities in February by hosting MHC Study Abroad Students who came from Scotland to attend the 7CC tea, originally known as the Junior Year Abroad tea.

March 2022

Mount Holyoke Through the Decades

At our March AGM we considered changes to the Club by-laws before an entertaining panel discussion, *Mount Holyoke Through the Decades*. Panelists, including Gillian Reynolds '58, Debra Marmor '80, Abida Halstenberg '98, and Hà Lê '06 shared their experiences of life at Mount Holyoke.



Future events may include a Laurel Lunch in May to coincide with commencement and regional events. Watch Facebook and emails for news.

Iberian Peninsula

Tea get-together, April 2022

Our first MHC gathering in Portugal! Tea and cake in Lisbon :-)

Ireland

Museum Visit, November 2021

On November 28, 2021, seven (Iheri Egor-Egbe '17, Leora Deflumere '17 Barbara Schmidt '69, Emma Murphy '15, Annemarie Lambe '93, Ashley Deflumere '09, and Stuti Devkota '17) of us had a very enjoyable visit to the Museum of Decorative Arts and History. We visited the "Little Rooms" exhibition - a collaboration of the museum with local school children who designed rooms to reflect their experiences of Covid lockdown. These were touching insights into a child's perspective of the situation. We were all blown away by the Eileen Gray exhibition, Ireland's foremost architect and furniture designer in the 20th century. We had an unexpected visit to the Asgard, a yacht used in 1914 for gun-running, later restored and used as a training vessel for the Irish Navy. Our photographs - masked and unmasked - were taken after Stuti Devkota '17 had left for choir practice. Sorry Stuti.

Barbara Schmidt '69

Council Delegate for Ireland

The Netherlands

Mountain Day 2021 Attendees included (from left to right: Evgenia Sokolova '01, Nancy Boeije '69, Alejandra Neyra '08, Sofia Redford '08, Paula Blanco Houston '06, Mieke Kamps '78, Jacqueline den Hollander '84, Anna Koelewijn '01, Silvia Maulini '80, Claire Brouwer '57, Suzanne Jansen '91, Georgia Regnault '64, Christine DeLeon Brown '91)

Dutch alums gathered in Scheveningen to finally celebrate a "real" Mountain Day together. The weather was not on our side, but it was very special to see each other again and to start making plans for the 2022 European Alumnae Symposium in The Hague. Georgia Regnault '64 organized the event... and the ice cream and Mieke Kamps '78 was our official photographer.

Cooking with Micha and Silvia - Season Two

The virtual monthly culinary workshops with Micha Heilman '19 and Silvia Maulini '80 are ongoing, attracting participants from all over Europe and beyond. The recipes and the list of ingredients needed for each workshop are shared prior to the session and participants have the opportunity to cook alongside the "chefs", learning tips for finessing their skills, or

simply to watch and get inspired for future culinary adventures. The workshops are advertised in the MHEAC Facebook group and take place on Sunday afternoon. If you wish to join and to receive more information about the planning, please contact mhceuropean@gmail.com.

Switzerland

Thank you to Sarah Thomforde '96

Gergana Karadzhoval '12, is going to succeed Sarah Thomforde '96 as a Swiss country delegate in the European Alumnae Council. Sarah has decided to step down after serving as the president of the alumnae group for the past three years. Thank you, Sarah, for your service in those turbulent years!

Welcome to Gergana Karadzhoval '12!

Gergana is new to Switzerland, but a familiar face in the European Council. She is originally from Bulgaria, studied at Mount Holyoke as a full-time student and graduated with a major in German and Russian Studies. She spent significant time working in Germany before moving to a small town in Eastern Switzerland last year. Gergana works as a cybersecurity consultant.

In the ten years since graduation, Gergana has kept a strong connection to Mount Holyoke College and the alumnae group in Europe. Between 2017 and 2021 Gergana served as an editor of the Council newsletter and as a German country delegate, attended multiple events of the "Dusseldorf-Cologne" regional group and travelled to Riga and Athens for the bi-annual European Alumnae symposium.

Gergana comes on board with fresh ideas about the organizational model of the Swiss alumnae group. She looks forward to building a Swiss Steering Committee of alums in different parts of the country, who will rotate in leading the group and spearheading new initiatives.

Join Us for Virtual M & Cs!



In late March 2020, when most European countries started to embrace more and more social distancing measures, Corinne Morgan '13, President of the Mount Holyoke Club of Britain, thought it would be nice to set up a weekly virtual Milk and Cookies to help stay connected to one another and share thoughts and experiences in these difficult times.

The sessions, originally promoted to the British Club, were soon advertised to all members of the **European Alumnae Community**.

If you would like to take the opportunity to connect with other MHC alumnae, please feel free to join every Sunday evening at 8:00 PM (CET) 7:00 (GMT) at <https://mtholyoke.zoom.us/j/99698796120> (please note new Zoom link!)

The link to the sessions is also pinned in our [Mount Holyoke European Alumnae Facebook](#) group page each Sunday morning, together with a yummy cookie recipe, courtesy of Corinne.

Remembrance

Professor Jon Wayne Western (1963–2022)

Jon Western, Carol Hoffmann Collins '63 Professor of International Relations and Five College Professor of International Relations, died suddenly, leaving behind his wife Jenny and their two sons, Charley and Alex.

if you would like to send condolences to the family, please visit the [obituary of Jon Western](#) and learn more about his incredible accomplishments and the legacy he leaves behind.

Looking for a group near you?

Get to know the European Council
Country Delegates

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**Mount Holyoke European Alumnae
Council**

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