



# LIONBYTES

AN OCCASIONAL COMMUNICATION TO SUPPORTERS OF THE NEMEA CENTER  
JUNE 2007

*Abbey Turner graduated from Berkeley in May, 2007, with a degree in Classical Civilizations and an honors thesis on the Roman army. While an undergraduate, she studied a year in Greece with the College Year in Athens; this is her second summer at Nemea. She will continue her study of the Greco-Roman world at the University of Pennsylvania next fall. She writes from Nemea of her experiences in June at the Nemea Field School.*

There are few sights more majestic or more exciting than the temple of Nemean Zeus lit up at night or fellow students sprinting barefoot down the hard-packed dirt of the ancient stadium. Few discoveries are more satisfying or more gratifying than identifying a long-searched for artifact or having an in-depth discussion with Dr. Kim Shelton or one of the graduate students assisting with the program. From the most impressive structures to the smallest sherd of undecorated pottery, undergraduate and graduate students alike are given the opportunity to appreciate and marvel at these artifacts of the ancient Greeks at one of the most peaceful and beautifully preserved sites in Greece.

The undergraduate experience working at Nemea with Dr. Shelton is multifaceted and rewarding beyond imagining. Students come together with peers as dedicated as they to work and study in an inspiring and fruitful venue unlike any other. Fast friendships are formed, respect and admiration are gained, and imaginative creativity abounds. In addition to creating important social and personal networks at Nemea, the undergraduates are able to handle and study ancient pottery, metals, glass and stones, and architectural fragments in the storeroom of the museum. Pouring over volumes full of possible comparanda one learns vast amounts about Corinthian, Attic, Hellenistic, Mycenaean and Argive pottery and those books become as familiar as a favorite novel and just as loved. Discussing particularly difficult sherds with fellow students and involving the ever-willing graduate students in the quest is invigorating. It is particularly exciting to discuss any kind of pottery or any period of occupation with Dr. Shelton and experience her vast and accessible knowledge which she shares readily and enthusiastically. She is able to walk over to a table laden with small sherds, pick up the most seemingly obscure piece and chuckle with delight, her



Abbey and friends working on Nemea pottery in the Peterson Museum

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Director Shelton in the field

eyes sparkling, as she challenges the students to identify one of her favorite decorative motifs.

The intense schedule of life at Nemea only serves to further fuel and challenge the students to excel in their studies in every way they can. The day begins at 6:30am with breakfast in the hotel and departure for the site at 7:10am. Museum work - studying and identifying pottery and artifacts, cataloguing those finds, and writing summaries of the different lots of pottery - begins promptly at 7:30 and lasts until 3pm. The days manage to fly by effortlessly, however, and there are often several people who are not ready to leave when Dr. Shelton announces "Last call."

One of the true joys of working in the museum is the knowledge one gains and is able to take out into the world of archaeology. When the students visit sites all over the Peloponnese and Greece they are able to see whole pots and reconstructed artifacts which are very similar to those they study at Nemea. There is nothing more thrilling than recognizing subtle nuances and decorative motifs on the pottery in the National Museum in Athens. It allows one to relate archaeology to life, study, travel and physical remains, and it deepens one's knowledge of the field of material culture in a crucial manner: it is primarily from the pottery that archaeologists are able to identify and date many sites and structures all over the world.

In addition to the wonderful learning experience that study at Nemea provides, undergraduates are also given the opportunity to participate in and learn about the rich and diverse culture of Greece. From Greek food and wine to Greek dancing and music, students are able to travel to nearby towns and experience first hand the Greek way of life. Little old men having coffee and playing backgammon; little old women in black climbing stairs and walking everywhere; groups of young people involved in intensely passionate conversations over a late lunch; the fruit truck laden heavy with produce being announced by a loud speaker; a table full of delicacies tantalizing to the palate...and so many more different and amazing things!

The opportunity to study at Nemea is one of the most rewarding and educational experiences one can hope to have at Berkeley or anywhere. The people, the site and its artifacts, the wealth of knowledge of everyone one works with, the beautiful land of Greece may all be taken in and absorbed to the fullest. Students wish to and do in fact return year after year because of the fulfilling and exciting month of June spent among the pottery in the Nemea Museum, and everyone is grateful beyond expression for the support and encouragement of those who wish to make dreams come true and inspire new dreams to come alive. — *Abbey Turner*

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## NEMEA IN THE NEWS

*California* magazine notes the archaeological activity of the Classics Department this summer.



Due to changes in the campus travel policy based on State Department travel warnings, **art history professor Andrew Stewart** says he won't be in Israel for the summer and instead will be based in Athens, Greece, working in various museums. On the plus side, he notes that there'll be time to catch up with old friends and make new discoveries as well. **Archaeologist Crawford Greenewalt** will be spending the summer in Sardis, Turkey, while his colleague **Kim Shelton** is taking several graduate and undergraduate students to digs at Nemea and Mycenae in Greece. One of Shelton's favorite moments at the Mycenae site: discovering and reading a clay tablet inscribed in Linear B—"the earliest written Greek," she notes—3,300 years after the fire that razed the building it was found in. That tablet is one of the oldest tablets found on mainland Greece.

Source: *California*, July/August 2007, p. 27; article by Massie Santos Ballon

Nemea appears in Wikipedia! Check out  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemea>