To: The Wellesley College Community
From: H. Kim Bottomly
Subject: In Memoriam: Anne DeCoursey Clapp
Date: January 10, 2014

I am saddened to inform you that Anne DeCoursey Clapp, professor emerita of art, passed away on December 25 at the age of 85. She taught in the Art Department at Wellesley from 1968 until her retirement in 1999.

At Wellesley, Professor Clapp was known for her rigorous and inspiring classes. She held the first full-time appointment in Asian art, and she developed a curriculum covering Chinese, Japanese, and Indian art, with seminars in Chinese painting.

Professor Clapp was recognized internationally as a scholar of Ming Dynasty painting (1368-1644). She was a member of the National Academy of Sciences Delegation to the People’s Republic of China in 1977, and was among the first American scholars to visit the country after Mao’s Cultural Revolution. Professor Clapp won two National Endowment for the Humanities awards for her research (1974 and 1981), and authored three books: Wen Cheng-Ming: The Ming Artist and Antiquity (1975); The Painting of T’ang Yin (1991); and, in 2012, Commemorative Landscape Painting in China.

In addition to her scholarship and teaching, Professor Clapp served a term as Chair of the Art Department, and participated in many committees and programs at the College where her judgment and her deep knowledge of Asian culture made significant contributions. Professor Clapp received a B.A. degree from Smith College and a Ph.D. degree from Harvard University. Before coming to Wellesley, she was a curator of Asian art at the Fogg Museum at Harvard.

A memorial service is being planned for April 5 in Cambridge. The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations may be directed to FRAXA Research Foundation, finding a cure for Fragile X.

I extend my condolences to Professor Clapp’s family, friends, and colleagues at this difficult time.