
PEOPLE AND PLACES

From the Archives: Women of the Early Institute

Elizabeth Pye*

To mark Sue Hamilton's appointment as Director, we are including here photographs from our archives of some of the women who contributed to the early development of the Institute.

Acknowledgments: Ian Carroll for making the photographs available, Katie Meheux and Rachael Sparks for research. All photos are copyright UCL Institute of Archaeology.



TESSA VERNEY WHEELER 1893-1936

Archaeologist and crucial figure in the history of the Institute, she worked tirelessly to ensure the foundation of the Institute but tragically did not live to see the formal opening in 1937. With her husband R.E.M. (later Sir Mortimer) Wheeler, the first Director of the Institute, she excavated and published a number of important sites, see for example **Wheeler R.E.M. and Verney Wheeler, T** 1936. *Verulamium: a Belgic and two Roman cities* (Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London 11). Oxford: The Society of Antiquaries.



KATHLEEN KENYON 1906-1978

Archaeologist particularly known for her excavation of ancient Jericho. She had worked with the Wheelers at Verulamium. In 1942 while Wheeler was serving in the British army during World War II, she became Acting Director of the Institute, at the same time serving in the Red Cross. After the War she lectured at the Institute until 1962 when she became Principal of St Hugh's College, Oxford. In 1973 she was appointed DBE for services to Archaeology. See, for example, **Kenyon, K** 1957 *Digging up Jericho the Results of the Jericho Excavations, 1952-1956*. London: Benn.

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IONE GEDYE 1907- 1990

Pioneer conservator; while working at Verulamium her interest in artifacts was encouraged by Tessa Wheeler and she founded the Institute's 'repair department', thereafter leading conservation at the Institute until her retirement. See **Gedye, I** 1987 Forty years of conservation at the Institute. *Recent Advances in the Conservation and Analysis of Artifacts: Jubilee Conservation Conference*. Summer Schools Press: University of London, Institute of Archaeology.



MARJORIE MAITLAND HOWARD 1898-1983

Artist and illustrator who worked at the Institute from 1948 to 1960. She was responsible for making models and illustrations of prehistoric animals for F.E Zeuner Professor of Environmental Archaeology, and she illustrated one of his important books (**Zeuner, F E** 1946 *Dating the Past*. London: Methuen) as well as other books on Archaeology. She also created the bust of Gordon Childe, now in the Institute's Library.



JOAN SHELDON 1926-2002

Environmental archaeologist, she joined the Institute in 1948 as Professor Zeuner's assistant and became a specialist in identification of ancient charcoal. She retired in 1983 and subsequently wrote about the development of environmental archaeology at the Institute: **Sheldon, J** 2001 Environmental archaeology at the Institute: the early years. *Archaeology International* 5: 9-11. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/ai.054>



VERA CONLON 1906-1994

Photographer who joined the Institute as M. G. Cookson's assistant (Cookson ('Cookie') had worked with the Wheelers as photographer). 'Connie', as she was known, taught photography at the Institute to generations of students until her own retirement in 1971. After retirement she wrote a textbook for archaeologists: **Conlon, V M** 1973 *Camera Techniques in Archaeology*. London: John Baker.



JOAN DU PLAT TAYLOR 1906-1983

Pioneering nautical archaeologist, co-founder of the Council for Nautical Archaeology, and librarian.

Both she and **Geraldine Talbot** (below) played a very important role in developing the Institute's library and making it the well known and widely used specialist archaeology library that it is today. Please see Meheux's article on the history of the library in this issue for more details.



GERALDINE TALBOT 1908-2000

Archaeologist and librarian (see above).

How to cite this article: Pye, E 2015 From the Archives: Women of the Early Institute. *Archaeology International*, No. 18: pp. 131-133, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/ai.1817>

Published: 16 November 2015

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