

Editorial

This edition of *Buried History* seems to have survived the pandemic with only a delay. It may be a sign of the times that we begin with tributes to three long-standing supporters of the Institute. Tributes to supporters who have died this year are already in preparation for the next issue.

Helen Merrillees is the first person to be remembered. Her husband, Dr Robert Merrillees, focusses on her scholarly aspirations and achievements. His tribute is well illustrated with photos from the Merrillees' family collection. Professor Alan Millard has prepared a tribute to Terence Mitchell. Terence was an ancient Near Eastern scholar and as a young graduate from Cambridge in the 1950s, undertook investigations for Walter Beasley, the founder of the Institute. This was some of his first employment. Terence soon took up a position at the British Museum, which he held for the rest of his life. He was a regular contributor to *Buried History*, a supporter of the Institute and a friend to many of those associated with it. His family have graciously provided images to illustrate the tribute. We also acknowledge John Curtis, Terence's successor at the British Museum, who assisted in the preparation of the tribute.

Professor Cambitoglou had a significant influence on Classical archaeology in Australia and on the Nicholson Museum, an organisation that was important to Walter Beasley. We are indebted to his University of Sydney colleagues, Drs James Fraser and Stavros Paspalas, for acknowledging Professor Cambitoglou's many important achievements.

While this volume was in preparation several other Institute supporters and contributors to archaeology in Australia have passed away; there will be tributes in our next edition. For the moment we acknowledge Professor Francis Andersen, a Fellow of the Institute, Dr Noel Weeks, Australia's leading Assyriologist, and Emeritus Professor Bob Englund, UCLA, an originator of CDLI (Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative). Bob regularly advised the Institute on digital procedures for recording cuneiform tablets and was a valuable referee for this journal. We offer condolences to the families of all of these friends.

Sandra Gordon, a post-graduate student at the University of Sydney, has contributed a paper on a north African mosaic newly acquired by the Nicholson Museum of the University of Sydney. We appreciate her contribution

and acknowledge her supervisor, Dr James Fraser, for providing this paper.

We are indebted to Jean-Marie Olivier who has written a piece tracing some of the history of *Codex Angus*, which was the subject of a 2017 *Buried History* paper by Dr Albrecht Geber. It is a fascinating glimpse into Christian manuscript movement in eastern Europe. The paper was submitted in French and has been published as submitted to retain the scholarly details. Prof Olivier has also supported the dual publication of his paper in the English house style of *Buried History*.

Jean-Marie Olivier is now retired from the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes (CNRS) where he over saw the Section of Byzantine narrative sources and published works such as a *Catalogue des manuscrits grecs de Tchecoslovaquie* [*Catalog of Greek manuscripts from Czechoslovakia*] (Éditions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1983) and after the political changes in 1989, *Supplément au répertoire des bibliothèques et des catalogues de manuscrits grecs* [*Recently discovered Greek manuscripts in the Czech Republic*] (Turnhout: Brepols 2018).

Dr Noel Weeks drafted several papers in the last months of his life. He was originally a Zoologist and brought a scientific frame of mind to his study of the ancient Near East. The paper published herein was written after a lifetime of study and describes his understanding of ancient Mesopotamian religion. A second paper is being recast into a tribute to Dr Weeks, tracing his academic life and will appear in the next edition of *Buried History*. We are grateful to Dr Luis Siddall, who shared the journey with Dr Weeks during the last months of his life and has been preparing his papers for publication. He retained the 'lecture' style of the paper we include.

There are two reviews of books dealing with early Christianity. One is concerned with archaeology and the other with contemporary literature. Both seek to illuminate the meaning and significance of early Christianity from its cultural, linguistic and philosophical contexts.

As always, we recognise our referees and members of the Editorial Board who have provided valuable practical advice on the contents of this edition.

Christopher J Davey
Editor