

## OBITUARIES

### Dorothy May Thorn

It is impossible to think about Dorothy without remembering her husband James. The two of them were an extraordinary team who devoted their lives to archival research concerning nineteenth and twentieth century exploration in Cyrenaica. James Thorn's volume *The Necropolis of Cyrene: two-hundred years of exploration* (2005) was a masterful integration of both previous and new discoveries in the necropolis of Cyrene. In the course of researching the materials for that book, the Thorns discovered a veritable treasure trove of unpublished materials in the archives of the British Museum concerning the expedition of Robert Murdoch Smith (1835–1900) and Edwin Augustus Porcher (1824–1878) to Cyrene in 1860–1861. Dorothy Thorn's *The four seasons of Cyrene. The excavations and explorations in 1861 of Lieutenants R. Murdoch Smith, R.E. and Edwin A. Porcher, R.N.* (2007) is a careful and painstaking publication of a group of largely unpublished letters, official dispatches, photographs and watercolours relating to that expedition.

Their love of Cyrene and its inhabitants, both ancient and modern, was unwavering and strong. More importantly, it was reciprocated. The news of both their deaths elicited heartfelt responses within the Shahat community. Dorothy's ashes, like those of her husband, will be brought to Cyrene for dispersal. They belong there.

I remember that Jim Thorn once showed me a newspaper article written about the two of them when they were still in secondary school. They were already a team then and interested in archaeology and archival research. The title of the photograph began 'two boffins make discoveries in the library...' and there were Jim and Dorothy, gleefully surrounded by a mound of books.

And that is what I will remember most about Dorothy—her gleeful enthusiasm for all things Libyan. A dear colleague and friend, she will be missed.

Susan Kane



*Dorothy Thorn, between Jim Thorn and Joyce Reynolds, at a picnic in Cyrenaica (photo courtesy of Chris Thorn).*