

## Obituary

# Joyce Reynolds 18 December 1918–11 September 2022

Susan Kane, Susan Walker, Charlotte Roueché, Philip Kenrick and Elhabib Elamin

Joyce Reynolds was born in London, in 1918, and her progressive parents encouraged her education, first at St Paul's Girls School, and then at Somerville College Oxford. She graduated in war time with a First Class degree in Greats (Classics): it was only in 1948 that she was able to travel outside England, to the British School at Rome, and from there to Libya. Her first publication was the *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* in 1952, and from then on she worked in Libya throughout her life, building many relationships and publishing new inscriptions. She continued to work long after her retirement, in particular on the inscriptions of Aphrodisias, in Turkey, and on Cyrenaica, firstly the Christian monuments, and then the Roman inscriptions: her corpus of some 2000 texts was published by the Society in 2020. Her achievements were recognised by a Fellowship of the British Academy and later by the Academy's Kenyon medal. Her genius was her ability to translate and interpret ancient texts, piecing them together and adding new perspectives to our vision of Roman history.

In 1951 she took up a post at Newnham College Cambridge, where she worked for the rest her career, and remained an honorary fellow until her death. Others have written of Joyce's college life and of the many students whose careers and interests she influenced. (It is a sign of the times, and one of which she probably would not have wholly approved, that she may be referred to here by her first name, but that is also a sign of the affection and familiarity with which we think of her.) As far as the Society for Libyan Studies is concerned, she has been a key figure throughout its existence. She was a founding member of the Society and from the outset a Member of Council. In 1982, following the premature death of the then president (and close colleague) John Ward-Perkins, Joyce was elected President, in which capacity she served until 1987. In recognition of this service, at one of several times when it was difficult or impossible for political reasons to carry out fieldwork in Libya, she was in 1988 elected a Vice-President.

One of the earliest initiatives of the Society was to assemble into a single volume and republish selected papers concerning Libya by the late Richard Goodchild (whose death in 1968 was largely instrumental in leading to the foundation of the Society<sup>1</sup>). This task was undertaken by Joyce and resulted in a volume of enduring importance.<sup>2</sup>

In 1983, and again in 1993, she organized and co-hosted in Cambridge colloquia on Cyrenaican studies, the papers of which were published with exemplary speed.<sup>3</sup> A duty which she

took on with typical thoroughness was the completion of *The Christian Monuments of Cyrenaica*. This was a project conceived by John Ward-Perkins and Richard Goodchild as a sequel to *The Christian Antiquities of Tripolitania*, which had appeared in 1953.<sup>4</sup> The project had been dogged by the premature and successive deaths of Goodchild (1968), Ward-Perkins (1981) and then of Martin Harrison (1992) who had subsequently accepted responsibility for the manuscript. It was thus Joyce, close friend and collaborator of the original authors, who did bring the work to eventual publication in 2003.<sup>5</sup> The preface to the volume makes clear the considerable obstacles that had to be overcome and the amount of effort that was put in by Joyce herself. In the end, there had still to be compromises in order to get it into print, and the tension which arose thereby is discreetly masked by a footnote, making clear that she did not see (i.e. was not allowed to modify) the final printer's proofs! It was a consequence of this that Joyce resigned her title of Vice-President of the Society, though her dedication to it and to Libyan studies was undiminished.

Joyce was a stickler for exactitude and perfection, as any who have worked with her will be able to testify. This could exasperate editors, but it also meant that her published work was always elegantly written and demonstrated the highest standards of clarity and scholarship.

In view of the long life and career of Joyce Reynolds, we have chosen to include some voices from her life, particularly those who worked with her in Libya and thus know her work for BILNAS (formerly the Society for Libyan Studies). Our contributors are Susan Kane, Susan Walker, Charlotte Roueché, Philip Kenrick and Elhabib Elamin.

## Notes

- 1 See *First Annual Report of the Society for Libyan Studies 1969–70*, 3.
- 2 Reynolds, J. (ed.). 1976. *Libyan Studies: selected papers of the late R. G. Goodchild*. Elek, London.
- 3 Barker, G. Lloyd, J., Reynolds, J. (eds). 1985. *Cyrenaica in Antiquity*. British Archaeological Reports, Oxford; Reynolds, J. (ed.). 1994. *Cyrenaican Archaeology: an International Colloquium (Libyan Studies 25)*. The Society for Libyan Studies, London.
- 4 Ward-Perkins, J.B and Goodchild, R.G. 1953. The Christian Antiquities of Tripolitania. *Archaeologia* 95: 1–82.
- 5 Ward-Perkins, J.B. and Goodchild R.G., with Reynolds, J. (ed.). 2003. *Christian Monuments of Cyrenaica*, Society for Libyan Studies, London.

## Remembering Joyce

Susan Kane

Mildred C. Jay Professor Emerita, Oberlin College

Joyce Reynolds was already a legendary presence in Libya when I first came to Cyrene in 1976 to excavate with Professor Donald White and the University of Pennsylvania Mission to Cyrene. She served as our epigrapher and often was in country at the same time as our excavation season.

Joyce's connection with Libyan archaeology was long and distinguished, spanning over 80 years and beginning with her work with John Ward-Perkins. She was a close associate of Richard Goodchild, the first Controller of Antiquities for Cyrenaica in the post-war Kingdom of Libya. Over the years, she was a much sought after consultant for the many foreign missions working in Libya as well for many Libyan archaeologists working in both local universities and the Department of Antiquities. Joyce had the exceptional ability to rise above politics and to be universally valued and respected for her scholarly expertise.

Haja Joyce, as she was known in Cyrene, was seen as a kindly and patient teacher to any Libyan archaeologist who had a question. She was definitely not the formidable presence that some of her Newnham students have described but seen rather as an honoured elder. Her deep love for Libya and the Libyan people was apparent to her Libyan colleagues who felt the warmth of her regard. She had many close friends like Ali Lektrik, with whom she stayed when in Benghazi as part of his family. She was a

mentor to Fadel Ali Mohammed, who studied epigraphy in Greece and served as Controller of Antiquities in Shahat.

I spent one term on sabbatical living in her home in Cambridge working on the statuary and related inscriptions from the Wadi bel Gadir Sanctuary excavations of the American Mission. While I was there, Fadel Ali Mohammed came to stay with her. It fell to me to take Fadel on his errands in town. While out shopping, Fadel bought himself a beautiful silk dressing gown that he was very proud of. One Sunday while we both were visiting, Joyce invited two of her colleagues to join us for Sunday lunch. She had bought a joint of meat and was ready to put together a typical British meal when Fadel announced that he wanted to make lunch for us all instead. Joyce acquiesced and let Fadel have free rein in the kitchen. When the guests arrived and we assembled in the dining room, Fadel appeared in his dressing gown holding a large bowl of pasta with the cut up pieces of the joint on top. He proudly set the dish on the table to the astonishment of the two invited guests who did not know anything about Libyan cooking and then announced that he was going upstairs to take a nap! Joyce took the whole event with great equanimity and began explaining Libyan cuisine to her guests. Fadel clearly felt at home with Joyce and she treated him not only as a colleague and protégé, but as a son. That is how I remember Joyce and her love for all things Libyan.

## With Joyce Reynolds in Libya, 1988–93

Susan Walker

Ashmolean Museum and Wolfson College, University of Oxford

I visited Libya with Joyce on multiple occasions from 1988 to 1993. Joyce thought that I might aspire to follow the late John Ward-Perkins and help her write a volume on Cyrenaica for Routledge's series on the provinces of the Roman Empire.

It took us five years to get a visa, but it was worth the wait. Travelling with Joyce in Libya, especially Cyrenaica, which she loved so well, was a bit like travelling with a local saint as Joyce was so well-regarded by her Libyan, French and Italian friends and colleagues. Fortunately, we rarely dined in, instead enjoying generous hospitality in the houses of her many friends in Shahat. Then in her seventieth year, Joyce was still hardy and up for a visit to any site bearing inscriptions, even the remotest wadi caves into which she had to wriggle on her tummy. Quite unbothered by the absence of creature comforts, Joyce would happily spend all day reading texts incised in crumbling, often eroded stone in a Doric dialect that had foxed so many other scholars.

Our Routledge project was doomed by security concerns. In any case, the late Fadel Ali Mohammed, then Controller of Antiquities for Cyrenaica, and himself a keen epigrapher, had other work for us to do. In our first year Joyce read 70 inscriptions discovered since her last visit some years previously. She was able to identify eleven Libyan ethnic names, including members of ephebic institutions. Packing the inscribed stones into the back of his Toyota

truck, Fadel Ali took the texts to Tripoli and explained that the Englishwoman had proved that the "colonial" city of Cyrene was central to ancient Libyan identity; therefore, the proposed new highway from Shahat to Apollonia should spare the ancient city. In practice the highway greatly damaged the cemeteries of Cyrene and Apollonia, but the damage could have been far worse. None of these concerns was vouchsafed to us during our visit.

Joyce read and re-read new and old texts destined for *Inscriptions of Roman Cyrenaica*, and we visited many sites that were to form the nucleus of her edition of Ward-Perkins and Goodchild's volume, *The Christian Monuments of Cyrenaica*. She published several of the new texts with Fadel Ali Mohammed, and with the late Lidiano Bacchielli of the Italian mission, keeping up to date with regular attendance at the *L'Africa Romana* conferences organised by her friend Attilio Mastino of the University of Sassari.

Joyce was a great enabler, encouraging anyone who wanted to learn. One of my enduring memories of our years in Shahat is of Joyce teaching a young girl who wanted to learn Latin. Joyce patiently worked through a Latin primer with her, the girl's father acting both as chaperone and translator (this was a time when the teaching of English was not encouraged in Libyan schools). The setting was our brand new but sparsely furnished "rest house"; and for a moment Cambridge came to Cyrene.

## Joyce and the digital future

Charlotte Roueché

Professor Emerita, King's College London

I only visited Libya with Joyce once - but with long term consequences.

I was taught by Joyce when I was an undergraduate at Newnham College Cambridge; from 1971 I worked with her on the inscriptions of Aphrodisias in Turkey. By 2000 we had collected a great deal of material from that site, and I approached Joyce with the proposal that we should publish it online. Joyce did not like computers: but she was never frightened of new things, and was always prepared to examine the benefits of innovation. She agreed to let us try out these new possibilities and provided invaluable guidance as we developed what is now a standard set of protocols for publishing inscriptions online. In all this she demonstrated her deep commitment to serious scholarly collaboration - learning from others and supporting others. This was already clear when she and John Ward-Perkins had published the *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* in 1952, drawing on contributions from many other colleagues, Italian and British. For that publication it was only possible to include a small number from the large collection of photographs held at the British School at Rome. By 2007 it was clear that online publication would allow us to publish all the images, and also to provide accurate maps; Joyce agreed to this project, and provided new English translations of all the texts for an online second edition of IRT (*IRT2009*). We then started work on the larger

project of publishing all the materials which she had collected for a companion collection of the inscriptions of Roman Cyrenaica; in this we were greatly helped again by collaboration, with Catherine Dobias-Lalou, who was publishing the inscriptions of the earlier period online. The *Inscriptions of Roman Cyrenaica (IRCyr2020)* was published by BILNAS just in time for Joyce's 102nd birthday! A revised and enhanced edition of the *Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania* was published a year later (*IRT2021*).

All of this was made possible by Joyce's energy in working in the field, her profound and careful scholarship in preparing the texts, and her remarkable openness in accepting a new medium for publication. In considering the arguments for online publication what was particularly important to her was the opportunity to make these materials widely available to all, and particularly to colleagues and students in Libya. From that very first visit to Libya, in 1977, what I remember best is a series of meetings with Libyan colleagues and friends, for whom Joyce was not just a respected scholar, but a trustworthy and considerate friend, to whom they could turn for advice and support. Her legacy is a major contribution to the study of the history of Libya but also an outstanding example of collaborative scholarship, and the value of friendship.

## Joyce and the Sidi Khrebish excavation

Philip Kenrick

Abingdon, Oxfordshire

The emergency project of excavation in Benghazi at the Sidi Khrebish site (a fragment of Hellenistic and Roman *Berenice*) between 1971 and 1975 was a formative experience for all involved. It was the first major fieldwork project of the Society for Libyan Studies and several of us were recent graduates or early in our careers, faced by a veritable *embarras* of finds and data. Amongst all the other finds, there were of course inscriptions, both monumental and in the form of graffiti. It was unquestioned that these should be assigned to Joyce for study. Joyce contributed a chapter on the epigraphic material to the first volume of the excavation reports,<sup>6</sup> confined mainly to the monumental material. A second report, on the texts on portable objects, was long intended to form part of a final volume in the series, but the continued lack of the other components of the volume led to its appearance only in 2015 as an article in the Society's journal.<sup>7</sup> Following the death in 1999 of John Lloyd, it had fallen to me to expedite (mostly without success) the outstanding reports, and this led to my collaboration with Joyce. Her text was entirely hand-written, with elements cut out or pasted in on pieces of paper of various sizes: it fell to me to

convert this into a digital text, approaching as closely as possible to the 'traditional' style of the Leiden Convention on reporting epigraphy. This was challenging, as was also the issue of including makers' marks on pottery and lamps, which Joyce considered still to fall within her domain, while I argued that, for most of these, the proper context for discussion and presentation was within pottery reports and issues of trade (rather than of local ethnicity). This was reflected by Joyce's reference on p. 75 to me 'with whom I have had vigorous discussions on various points.' Where she conceded a point, she did so with grace; on the other hand, the integrity of her approach to her chosen discipline was never in doubt and surely earned her universal respect.

### Notes

6 Reynolds, J. 1977. Inscriptions. In: J. A. Lloyd (ed.), *Excavations at Sidi Khrebish, Benghazi (Berenice) i = Supplements to Libya Antiqua V.i*. Dept. of Antiquities Tripoli: 233-54.

7 Reynolds, J. (with a contribution by Kenrick, P.). The epigraphy of Sidi Khrebish, Benghazi (Berenice): an update. *Libyan Studies* 46: 75-101.

## Joyce Reynolds in Libya

Elhabib Elamin

Former Minister of Culture, Libya, archaeologist, journalist, poet

She has always succeeded in reading what the passers-by wrote on stone, but her name was engraved as an icon on the wall of time and the memory of contemporaries.

Few did.

Libyans will remember that.

Mrs. Reynolds – I knew a name when I was a student attracted by the titles of books, studies and archaeological research, I was fascinated and I simply – and with a dreamy imagination – I imagined them with auras of epic and mythology in the Homeric style.

I think Joyce had a lot more than I imagined, but she gave me more than that when I met her in person and read the details of the epic time she lived in historical Libya, and there is no doubt that she feels joy and she is proud of the inspiring exploits she left on the shelves of the Libyan library for all the students of Libyan archeology, as I was once I'm still a student.

Thanks, Joyce.



Joyce Reynolds with Abdul Kader, Cyrene Museum 1993 (Photo: Susan Walker).



The group in Apollonia, Libya (2008), Adham Fadlallah, Joyce, Braik Quenin, Dorothy Thorn, Hafed Walda (Photo: Charlotte Tupman).



Joyce Reynolds at Cyrene (Photo: Hafed Walda).