Jocelyn Morris (Archaeology, 1941)

Even at the age of 16, Jocelyn knew that she wanted to work in a museum. By that time she had moved away from Ilkley where she had been born in 1917, the daughter of a schoolmaster, and was a pupil at Blackheath High School. From school, she went in 1937 to read Ancient and Modern History at Westfield College in the University of London, where her mother had previously been a student. Westfield had been evacuated to St Peter’s Hall in Oxford when Jocelyn wrote her finals papers in 1940. There was a great shortage of student accommodation at that time but Jocelyn was lucky because her mother had moved to a house in north Oxford.

After her degree, Jocelyn looked for postgraduate training relevant to museum work, but at that time Westfield was in no position to accept postgraduate students. She later wrote that Miss Mann was persuaded to take her on; she came to St Hilda’s to set out on a BLitt, on pottery from Oxfordshire villages, but this study was cut short after three terms when she went into war work in an administrative job with Murphy Radio. Jocelyn considered this industrial experience to be an education for which she was paid and for which she was always grateful.

After the war and two years in museums in Northampton, Jocelyn was appointed Curator of the Warwickshire Museum Service. An initial task was to design and set up a modern museum in Warwick. She later introduced to Warwickshire villages the first mobile museum in the country. In 1952, she was elected Fellow of the Museums Association and, in 1960, Fellow of the Society of Antiquarians. She was the first Chairman of the Warwickshire Nature Conservation Trust.

While visiting a house in Warwickshire in 1959, she Jocelyn recognized a small blue glass bowl, filled with primroses, as the Cuddesdon Bowl. It was first found in a grave in Cuddesdon in 1847 but subsequently lost to public view. This bowl is now in the Ashmolean Museum.

Jocelyn retired in 1977 to a house in Observatory Street in Oxford. She maintained her interest in antiquities, became a key figure in the Green Party, a colourful neighbor, and was someone who enjoyed parties - her own as well as other people’s. Her friendships were wide and varied and her enthusiasms were infectious.

Margaret Green and Margaret Rayner