

## MARGARET WOOLDRIDGE 1918 – 2006

Margaret Wooldridge, who died aged 88 on 19th November 2006, will be fondly remembered by all those who knew her during her long association with London's archaeology.

Born in Norwich, and always proud of her home city (she never quite lost her accent despite years in London) Margaret joined the West London Archaeological Field Group (WLAFG) soon after it was established by Roy Canham in the mid-1960s.

Volunteering on the excavations then under way in Brentford, and further afield at Heathrow and Shepperton, Margaret eventually became a full time member of the archaeological team working across west London for the Museum of London from the 1970s.

During these years Margaret acted as WLAFG's Treasurer (husband Les was a Chartered Accountant), and also helped to organise the processing and storage of finds generated by the west London team. She made particular contributions to the animal bone group based in a succession of cramped premises in Brentford, and was never happier than when an opportunity arose to get involved in finds illustration – especially flintwork. Margaret was the welcoming public face of the Museum for new members of WLAFG and a regular helper at LAMAS Archaeology Conferences. She was also a staunch supporter of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings, the CBA and the Museum of London's own

Friends of Fashion. However, she was perhaps most in her element in the 1980s when working alongside a new generation of younger archaeologists then coming onto the scene; tea breaks were invariably the setting for feisty exchanges on politics, gardening, literature and life.

After retiring from the Museum, Margaret threw herself into a new round of experiences, buoyed up by an enquiring mind, youthful outlook and mischievous sense of humour. She learnt to swim (an ambition of long standing) and was a keen member of extra-mural classes covering a bewilderingly eclectic range of subjects that included art appreciation, architecture, music, archaeology and philosophy. Typically, her musical tastes were wide and encompassed Vaughan Williams, George Melly, U2 and Bruce Springsteen, while 'phone calls from her at this time would invariably begin, without preamble: 'So, what can you tell me about Aristotle ...?'. Her love of drawing came to the fore again too, and the walls of her small house in Twickenham were hung with local views and still life sketches. It was an abiding sadness to her and to her many friends that the progressive and



Photo: Krystyna Gadd

miserable loss of her sight over the last few years of her life robbed her of this much-cherished outlet for her energies and talent.

Her last illness, though painful and debilitating, was mercifully short, and she retained her independence of spirit to the end. A lifelong atheist, she dismissed a deathbed offer of prayers with the words, 'yes, by all means pray if you must, just go somewhere else and do it ...!'. Margaret Constance Wooldridge will be much missed.

~~~Alison Parnum and Jonathan Cotton

### Portuguese faience

I found the article on Portuguese faience in the Summer 2006 issue interesting, but it would have been useful to have had some indication as to how it can be distinguished from English delftware, since some can seem very similar to the untrained eye; for example the Wan Li style copied by the Portuguese faienciers was also copied by English delftware potters.

It is said that the large amount of Portuguese faience in Amsterdam can be explained as imports by the Portuguese Jewish community there, but Portuguese Jews also settled in England

in the 17th century; they were officially permitted by Cromwell but it is believed that there may have been 'unofficial' settlers before then, so perhaps that may explain some of the Portuguese faience in England too.

It is also said that imports of Portuguese faience ended c. 1700, but the King Street context (no. 11 on the map on p. 115) dates to the 1750s, and the Queenborough House site (no. 1 on the map, though there placed rather too far south) is of similar date (c. 1745–70 according to the report in *Surrey Archaeol Collect* 91 (2004) 105–136). It would be nice to know whether these sherds were fifty or more years old

when deposited, or are evidence for import carrying on into the 18th century. This is particularly important for the Queenborough House site, since this was a delftware and stoneware waste dump, and the occurrence of exotic pottery in such contexts has been interpreted as models for the local potters to copy (as here p. 137), but this would be unlikely if they were fifty years old.

Graham Dawson  
40 Station Road  
Orpington  
Kent BR6 0SA