

### New laboratory equipment courtesy of a legacy gift

Alan Greaves | University of Liverpool

Robin Guthrie, who recently passed away at the age of 71, had a life-long commitment to charity work. In his career he held important posts in the charity sector, including such senior positions as Director of the Joseph Rowntree Memorial Trust and Chief Charity Commissioner for England and Wales. He had a strong personal commitment to voluntary projects and to arts, educational and social causes. An obituary of Mr Guthrie in the *Yorkshire Post* said of him that he was ‘inspired by adventure and driven by an overwhelming passion to help and support others’.

Mr Guthrie was also a member of the British Institute at Ankara and he very generously remembered the Institute in his Will. His unexpected gift of £1,000 gave the Institute a rare opportunity to upgrade its facilities and invest in new equipment. A gift of this kind is especially useful to a charitable organisation like ours at a time when sources of government funding and private sponsorship are increasingly difficult to find. Following consultation with the staff, it was agreed that the best way to benefit the Institute in the long-term would be to use Mr Guthrie’s very generous gift to acquire new scientific conservation equipment for our laboratory.

The Institute’s laboratory in Ankara houses extensive scientific reference collections and has the scientific equipment necessary to support a wide range of environmental research. There are four major collections in the laboratory: the seed collection has 2,792 samples; the herbarium collection has 2,568 specimens of plants; the wood collection has 80 specimens from modern Turkish trees and shrubs; and the bone collection has 102 skeletons (complete and partial) of mammals and birds. Microscopes, measuring devices, scales, geological sieves, computers and other equipment are available for researchers who use the collections for environmental studies. Research is further supported by a large section in the library of the Institute being devoted to environmental studies, including reference books and atlases as well as reports, conference proceedings, doctoral theses and other publications covering work undertaken in Turkey and across large parts of the Middle East, the Black Sea region and the Balkans.

The archaeobotanical collections are of particular value to archaeologists and environmental scientists who are researching Turkey’s ecology and agricultural history over time. Unfortunately, it is not just humans that find seeds good to eat! An infestation of weevils recently attacked the seed collection, and, without the means to preserve it, the collection would eventually have been lost. Thankfully, Mr Guthrie’s legacy meant that we were able to buy the essential conservation equipment needed to save the collection – a dedicated deep-freeze system.

Systematically freezing the samples to very low temperatures and holding them there for a long period of time before

returning them to room temperature kills off any insects that they may be harbouring. This halts the damage being caused by the weevils. It also means that our scientific collections can be safely expanded in the future, because, once they have been treated by freezing, new samples can be added to the existing collection without fear of introducing new infestations. This deep-freeze system can also be used to conserve other archaeological materials and ethnographic collections, such as textiles and carpets, to prevent decay and deterioration.

Turkey is home to many unique species of plants and was one of the cradles of early agriculture, so preserving and improving our research collections is fundamental to the work of the Institute’s Strategic Research Initiatives that seek to understand early human settlement in Turkey and the region’s changing environment. Ceren Kabukcu, a doctoral student at the University of Liverpool, is researching vegetation ecology and the origins of agriculture in Neolithic central Anatolia. She comments: ‘I have used the BIAA botanical collection for the identification of seed macro-remains and found this resource to be extremely useful. The collection is well organised, has an extensive coverage of Near Eastern *taxa* and provides one of the best tools for identifying charred plant material from archaeological sites, and it has been an essential part of my research’.



Halime Kalaycıoğlu cleaning and reorganising the seed collection containers



The seed collection storage system

With this valuable new addition to the laboratory, the future of the Institute's plant collection is secure and it will continue to be an invaluable asset to students and scholars engaged in research of Turkey's archaeology and changing environment. We are very grateful to Mr Guthrie and his family for their support of our work. Gifts such as that left by Mr Guthrie make a real difference to the work of the Institute in furthering research and conservation of Turkey's heritage and environment.

To leave a legacy to the Institute in a new Will, or by amending an existing Will, the wording below may be useful to you/your solicitor; residuary gifts are particularly appreciated:

*I give [X]% of the residue of my estate to the British Institute at Ankara (BIAA) Reg. Charity No. 313940, of 10 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AH.*

Is important to ensure your intentions are recorded accurately, and it is always advisable to consult a solicitor over precise wording, whether making a new Will or adding a Codicil to an existing Will.

### Research collections

If you would like to know more about the Institute's research collections, you can search both the scientific and library collections online at:

<http://www.biaatr.org/org/index.php>

### Online publications

Abby Robinson | British Institute at Ankara

We are pleased to announce the launch this year of the Institute's online publications series. Like the existing monograph series, which it complements, the new series focuses on substantial works, while articles will continue to be published in the Institute's journal, *Anatolian Studies*. Authors have now been invited to propose volumes for the series. Selection will be based in part on how well the work fits the online format; for example, there may be advantages related to navigating text and images, or interesting ways of linking to databases, multimedia libraries or other electronic resources. As with all Institute publications, submissions will be subject to peer review.

Volumes in the online series are freely available via the Institute's website ([biaa.ac.uk](http://biaa.ac.uk)), where they are offered as downloadable PDF files. At present there is no cost to the user. The inaugural online publication is David French's *Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor (RRMAM)*. The first fascicle, *Republican Milestones (RRMAM 3.1)*, was published in April 2012 and the second, *Imperial: Galatia (RRMAM 3.2.1)*, appeared in September 2012. The third fascicle, *Imperial: Cappadocia (RRMAM 3.2.2)*, will be published in the last quarter of 2012 and four additional fascicles will follow in due course, on Pontus et Bithynia, Asia, Lycia et Pamphylia and Cilicia, Isauria et Lycaonia.

*Roman Roads and Milestones of Asia Minor* features hundreds of photographs, maps and drawings alongside David French's expert commentary. It is an excellent example of a publication which is ideally suited to – as well as made viable by – the online series. The product of decades of work by David French, the size alone would make it prohibitively expensive to publish in book form. Furthermore, the electronic format enables the user to move around the vast amount of content quickly and intuitively, and to access it from any location. The online publications project has made it possible to provide specialists and the general public alike with easy access to this exceptional resource.

There are some further developments planned on the production side of the project. We hope in the future to employ more sophisticated desktop-publishing software; this is partly with the aim of better integrating the layout of the online publications with the style of the Institute's monograph series and *Anatolian Studies*. The possibility of developing versions of the texts for portable devices, such as tablet computers, will be explored. A strategy is also being formulated for more actively publicising and promoting the series to readers and authors.

We look forward to hearing from writers with proposals for volumes that they believe could employ the new online format creatively. As part of the process of developing and expanding the Institute's newest publication series, we also welcome comments or suggestions from users about their experience of accessing the volumes online.