



Group of UCEM employee volunteers at Launchpad Reading's Allotment Project

WELCOME TO OUR MARCH ISSUE

March saw two further groups of eager UCEM employee volunteers put in two days of hard graft on Launchpad Reading, our charity partner's, new allotments. Our volunteers were tasked with creating a vegetable garden by removing the turf and digging over the compacted soil, even managing to sow some spinach by Day 2!

The food grown on these allotments will supply local soup kitchens, food banks and cooking lessons for those learning essential life skills. Keep your eyes peeled for a full UCEM Blog piece in the near future.

To find out more about the exciting events we have planned this year, and how you can get involved, please visit www.ucem.ac.uk/centenary.

Emma Wade

Centenary Project Manager

ucemcentenary@ucem.ac.uk

+44(0)1184 672227

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

In celebration of International Women's Day earlier this month, we wanted to introduce you to two of our most notable female alumnae, Irene Barclay and Doreen Thorp.



Irene Barclay, Britain's first female Chartered Surveyor

Irene Barclay, UCEM alumna and Britain's first female chartered surveyor

In 1922, Irene Barclay (nee Martin) sat her final examinations with the College of Estate Management and became the UK's first female chartered surveyor. With an academic background in history and social work and a strong sense of social duty, Irene used her professional qualification to bring a sense of compassion to the provision of social housing. She helped to establish several housing associations, contributed to the building of nearly 1,000 homes and, most famously, helped to improve living conditions in the slums of St Pancras. Irene, who has been described as 'Irene, the patron of the poor', wrote a book called *'People Need Roots'* that documented the enormous changes in social housing, and was awarded an Order of the British Empire for her significant and valuable work as a social reformer.

A copy of Irene's book, *'People Need Roots'* will be featured in UCEM's **Celebrating 100 Years of UCEM: Building Futures 1919 – 2019** exhibition at Reading Museum from Tuesday 10 September 2019.

Doreen Thorp, UCEM alumna and former member of the Women's Land Army

City girl Doreen Thorp used her Women's Land Army and College of Estate Management experience to build a career. A member of the Women's Land Army for 7 years, Doreen completed at least two of the College of Estate Management's courses: Elements of Agriculture and Farm Book Keeping. After leaving the Women's Land Army in 1947, Doreen's work and studies earned her a job as an Assistant Experimental Officer at the National Institute of Agricultural Engineering (NIAE). Unusually for a woman in the 1940s, Doreen worked at the prestigious NIAE for 12 years on their tractor development and testing programme until she left to raise a family. Doreen's wartime work and studies through UCEM created the exciting career opportunities that opened up to her.

A collection of documents and photos of Doreen Thorp's wartime work and study is held at the Museum of English Rural Life in Reading, capturing Doreen's enthusiasm for her studies and her work with farming equipment.



Doreen Thorp, former member of the Women's Land Army



A collection of photos of Doreen Thorp's wartime work and study

The Feminine Invasion

On 26 January 1923, just months after Irene Barclay had completed her examinations at the College of Estate Management, the British press picked up on the expanding role of women in professional roles.

The article, *The Feminine Invasion of the Professions*, was published on 26 January 1923 in the Western Chronicle. It states, 'The war proved that there are few vocations open to men that cannot be filled equally well by women.'

This was an era of change, marked by the Sex Disqualification (Removal) Act of 1919 which permitted women to qualify as surveyors. The increasing education and employment prospects for women were both a sign of exciting social reform as well as a necessity owing to the fact the country had lost so many men during the First World War.

However, despite early pioneers, women within the profession remain the exception to the rule. Even by 1980, only 1% of RICS members were female. This has risen to 13% today.

Rather than a 'Feminine Invasion', it would be better described as a gradual opening-up of the profession.

THE FEMININE INVASION OF THE PROFESSIONS.

The war proved that there are few vocations open to man that cannot be filled equally well by women, and it opened up the way to the feminine invasion of the professions. It is true there are as yet only a few women barristers and solicitors, and there is only a handful of women architects, members of the Royal Institute, but others are in training. There are three women members of the Institute of Naval Architects, and also several women members of different engineering societies. There is but one woman a fully qualified veterinary surgeon, only one is a chartered accountant, and there is but one woman associate of the Royal Academy, and one qualified surveyor of the College of Estate Management.

Article featured in The Western
Chronicle, 26 January 1923

IN THIS DECADE | 1929 - 1939



The Pavillion at Hinchley Wood

Every month, the centenary newsletter will highlight key events during a decade in UCEM's history. This month, we explore the period between 1929 – 1939.

The College of Estate Management experienced growth throughout the 1920s meaning that, despite international economic depression, the new decade began with the College ready to expand.

1930

In 1930, a Students' Union was born, establishing musical, social and sports societies that lasted for decades.

1932

In 1932, new premises in Hinchley Wood, Surrey, were purchased to offer residential courses and provide more suitable premises for Surveying and Levelling, Forestry, as well as a sports ground benefitting broader student life.

1939

1939 was a year of growth and optimism, with the autumn term due to include more classes and provide for a greater number of students than ever before.

The term was due to commence on 4 September 1939. On 3 September, war was declared.