

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**New Exhibition at Pitt Rivers Museum 15 October 2018 – 11 March 2019**

**INTREPID WOMEN: FIELDWORK IN ACTION 1910 to 1957**

Why intrepid? The six women featured in this exhibition undertook ground breaking fieldwork at a time when women were not expected to excel. They all defied conventions, travelling to places where 'ladies' didn't go, learning local languages and establishing relationships across cultural barriers. These women were all leaders in different ways and many survived physical hardships in their research: one was nearly thrown overboard on a sea voyage to Mexico, and another ventured into literally uncharted parts of New Guinea. One was Maori, and became an extraordinary cross-cultural ambassador, while another led a resistant force of indigenous people from the Naga Hills in India against the oncoming Japanese forces during World War II.

The exhibition highlights the challenges and discriminations these women faced and celebrates their achievements through exploring their material legacies, while also acknowledging the inherent privileges many had as white Europeans in a colonial age. This provides a unique opportunity to see objects and photographs resulting from their fieldwork travels, as well as original archival material on display here for the first time. The exhibition is part of the University of Oxford's programme marking the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which gave British women the right to vote.

*This is the first time the Museum has celebrated the contribution of women collectors, the extraordinary objects they assembled during their fieldwork, the photographs and films they shot, the relationships they built and how they dealt with the prejudices they encountered because of their gender.* Julia Nicholson, Co-curator.

Notes to Editors

**About the Pitt Rivers Museum**

- The Pitt Rivers Museum is one of Oxford's most popular attractions, famous for its period atmosphere and outstanding collections from many cultures around the world, past and present. Admission, exhibitions and most events are free.
- The Pitt Rivers Museum was founded in 1884 when General Pitt Rivers, an influential figure in the development of archaeology and evolutionary anthropology, gave his personal collection of some 26,000 items to the University on condition that a museum was built to house the material, and a post was created to lecture in anthropology. Today the collection numbers approximately 600,000 items and the Museum remains an active department of



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Oxford University, doing and supporting research and teaching in archaeology and anthropology.

- The Representation of the People Act of 1918 granted the vote to women over the age of 30 who met a property qualification. The same Act gave the vote to all men over the age of 21.
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