

October 12, 2009

From the town of Ciciliano in Lazio, a notable tribute to Lily Ross Taylor FAAR'18



Portrait bust of Lily Ross Taylor in the AAR Library

This 18 November marks the 40th anniversary of the death of **Lily Ross Taylor** (1886-1969) FAAR'18, who is widely and justifiably regarded as one of the foremost Romanists that North America has produced. **During her career** at Vassar and (especially) Bryn Mawr, Taylor produced six books—each of unusual importance—some seventy articles and almost sixty reviews. Taylor also was the first woman to hold a Rome Prize in the united American Academy in Rome, and served as Professor-in-Charge at the AAR during two pivotal eras (1934-1935, and 1951-1955).

In one of her essays that appeared in *Memoirs of the American Academy of Rome*, Taylor surveyed the vexed problem of the location of the ancient municipality of ancient Trebula Suffenas, before definitively placing its location in the territory of modern **Ciciliano**, 13 km east of Tivoli in Lazio. Here Taylor also traced the whole story of the town's Plautii Silvani, a powerful family that formed part of the circle of the emperor Augustus and his wife Livia. This past weekend a cultural association from the town of Ciciliano "**Committee Article 9**" paid tribute to Lily Ross Taylor and her 1954 article "Trebula Suffenas and the Plautii Silvani" by naming a piazza and adjoining garden in her honor, complete with a memorial stele.



The not-for-profit Cultural Association “Committee Article 9”—founded just two years ago—aims to protect and enhance the historical, artistic and environmental territory of Ciciliano, on the basis of the principles laid down in Article 9 of the [Italian Constitution](#).



The event that the Association organized with the co-sponsorship of the American Academy in Rome and the Comune of Ciciliano was held Saturday 10 October 2009, near the archaeological site of Trebula Suffenas, now part of the Villa Manni. On the podium were a number of regional authorities, including **Zaccaria Mari** (Soprintendenza ai Beni Archeologici del Lazio), **on. Fabio Rampelli** (Camera dei Deputati), and **Patrizia Vincenti** (Assessore alla Cultura del Comune di Ciciliano), as well as **Francesco Poggi** (President of the Association), **Mario Ceccarelli** (from the Association), **Franco Sciarretta** (author of numerous learned publications on Trebula Suffenas) and AAR Mellon Professor **Corey Brennan**. All in attendance received a rare glimpse of the Villa Manni in a guided tour that followed the morning ceremony.



Franco Sciarretta explains the history of ancient Trebula Suffenas



Association president Francesco Poggi and Corey Brennan unveil the tribute stele



Members of the Corpo Forestale dello Stato at the ceremony



Attendees explore the Villa Manni, which now covers the forum and ancient baths of Trebula Suffenas



Some examples of the extraordinarily rich spolia at the Villa Manni

In describing the scope of her work, it would be hard to outdo a two-sentence summation Lily Ross Taylor herself offered in a 1959 lecture. “I have spent my life teaching Latin literature and producing studies on Roman religion and Roman politics, some of them of a regrettably technical nature (it’s harder to write a general book than a technical book). I want to know how the Romans thought and felt, what they learned at school, what they read and talked about in their leisure hours, what their sense of values was, the nature of their legal system and of their government of an empire, what the impact of Greek civilization on theirs was and how they handed down the treasure stores of Greece to future ages, how this polytheistic people, always hospitable to foreign gods, became monotheists, and how Rome became the center of a great religion which inherited the claim of universality that had once belonged to Roman rule.”



Three leading lights at Bryn Mawr in the mid-50s: from left, Berthe Marti FAAR’45, RAAR’51; TRS Broughton RAAR’60, ‘61; Lily Ross Taylor FAAR’18. Credit: Broughton family

On the evening of 18 November 2009 (6.30 PM) the American Academy will present “Lily Ross Taylor’s Rome”, an illustrated presentation by Corey Brennan. Here the aim is to contextualize aspects of Taylor’s life and work by focusing on five of her sustained experiences in Italy: as a young student in 1909 and 1910, a Red Cross worker during the First World War, an Academy Fellow of 1919-1920, and professor in charge at the American Academy in 1934-1935 and then 1951-1955. The event, held at the Academy’s Lecture Room at Via Angelo Masina, 5, is open to the public.



Omaggio a Lily Ross Taylor

studiosa americana che con i suoi scritti
contribuì alla collocazione di **Trebula Suffenàs**
nel territorio di Ciciliano

Visite guidate nell'area archeologica
di Trebula Suffenàs (Villa Manni)

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