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This interview transcript has been edited by BW for clarity and concision.

Bernard Wood (BW) and Maxine Kleindienst (MK)

BW: Let me begin by thanking you for agreeing to do this interview. Could you give us your name so I understand how to pronounce it?

MK: Maxine R. Kleindienst.

BW: What does the R stand for?

MK: Rose. It was my grandmother's name. She was Austrian.

BW: You are now retired, but could you tell us what you did immediately before your retirement, and when you retired?

MK: I was a professor in the University of Toronto. I worked on the Mississauga campus, which is now called University of Toronto at Mississauga, or UTM. Mississauga is a suburb west of Toronto.

BW: You chose to move away from the main campus to work at UTM?

MK: Yes, I did. It was by far the nicest campus, aside from which they allowed me to do my teaching in the summer, so I could go to Egypt in the winter. But I was a member of the graduate faculty so, technically, I also belonged to St. George, which is the main UT campus.

BW: What a sensible decision! You have already hinted there is an Austrian influence in your family. Could you tell us about your family?

MK: I know very little about my father's side, aside from my paternal grandmother's name, and that my father's family immigrated to Iowa in 1898. I do have some records of my grandmother's relatives. I know more about the background of my mother's side of the family. My mother was Finnish, and my maternal grandfather immigrated to northern Minnesota in 1903 to work in the iron ore mines.

BW: Where were you brought up as a child?

MK: I was brought up in a now defunct mining camp called Superior in southwestern Wyoming.My father worked as a mechanic servicing the big machines at the mine. The D.O. Clark Mine where he worked is one of the deepest in the United States.

BW: What was your mother doing?

MK: My mother was a public health nurse, working in one of the biggest counties in the United States.

BW: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

MK: No, I'm an only child.

BW: Where did you go to school?

MK: Superior, Wyoming. I was in the class of '51 at the Superior High School.

BW: Was there any academic tradition in your family? Did your parents go to college?

MK: My mother was trained as a public health nurse. She did some university work. My uncle was a lawyer, so there was some professional tradition in the family.

BW: Where did you go to college?

MK: I did one year at Wyoming, and then I moved to Albuquerque in New Mexico.

BW: With your parents?

MK: No, to go to that university.

BW: Why did you move from Wyoming?

MK: Because I wanted to do anthropology.

BW: How did this come about?

MK: There was one professor at Wyoming who was an anthropologist, but there was no course in anthroology. I was also interested in geology. My professor recommended the University of New Mexico (UNM) as a good place to study anthropology and archeology.

BW: Who were your instructors and mentors at UNM?

MK: Frank Hibben was the archeologist, but Leslie Spear was probably my mentor. I can't remember the others.

BW: When did you decide to go to graduate school?

MK: I met some undergraduates from the University of Chicago (UC) at an archeological field school in Arizona, and I decided that Chicago would be a good place to do graduate work.

BW: That's how you picked Chicago?

MK: I was a good friend with Patty Jo Watson (who was a UC undergraduate), who is well-known as a theoretical archeologist. And a couple of the others on the field school went to Chicago, so I decided that was a good place for me as well.

BW: Did you apply to any other graduate programs?

MK: I applied to several others, including Oregon and Utah, but I decided on the University of Chicago.

BW: What was the arrangement at UC? Did you have to choose an advisor from the get-go? Or did your eventual advisor emerge from your interests?

MK: Once I had my MA, which was pretty much proforma, you were assigned to whoever had the money to take you to the field! You didn't choose your PhD work. You were given it!

BW: So Clark Howell had money to take you to the field?

MK: That's right. He had the money to take Glen Cole and me to the field to work at an archeology site in the southern highlands of Tanzania called Isimila.

BW: Had that site been excavated before? Or were you the first people to excavate there?

MK: No, we were the first people to excavate at Isimila. There have been several others since, but we were the first.

BW: When did you go to graduate school?

MK: 1956.

BW: You must have raced through graduate school!

MK: I did! I went to the field in 1957-8 and finished my thesis in 1959. It was kind of rushed!

BW: Was your thesis mainly based on your work at Isimila? Or did it take account of other work going on in eastern Africa at the time?

MK: It was based on Isimila, but I also had permission from Desmond Clark to use information from Kalambo Falls, and from the Leakey's to use information from their sites in Kenya and at Olduvai (now Oldupai).

BW: Who was in your cohort of graduate students?

MK: Glen Cole, Sally Binford, Leslie Freeman, plus Gosh, a well-known Egyptologist.

BW: Was it a close-knit group?

MK:Oh, no. We all went off in different directions. We were assigned to whoever got the money to take people to the field. I was expecting to go with Braidwood to Iraq and Iran, but Clark Howell got money first. So, I'm an ‘accidental’ Africanist!

BW: That would be a good title for an autobiography! Could you give us the ‘two-minute’ version of your PhD thesis?

MK: It's outdated now, but it was the first attempt at a typology for the Upper Acheulean in eastern Africa. It was not just for Isimila. Desmond Clark gave me access to the Kalambo Falls collections, and I had access to some of the Leakey's collections in Nairobi. It was a thesis on the eastern African Acheulean. I forget the exact title!

BW: My amateur understanding is that you are being over-modest! Your typology has proved to be influential and long-lasting.

MK: I didn't do it all by myself. Glen Cole, Clark Howell and I developed it, but Glen refused to put his name on it because he didn't think it was a good idea!

BW: Why was that?

MK: He thought researchers would apply it to their material without considering whether it was a good fit or not. Which is what sometimes happens! Glen had as much to do with the typology as I did; he just didn't want his name attached to it.

BW: How much influence did Clark Howell have on the typology?

MK: We followed to some degree what had been established by Francois Bordes. Clark had us follow Bordes' principles, which weren't that different from the principles of North American archeology that I was trained to use.

BW: You received your PhD in 1959. What did you do after that?

MR: I was awarded an NSF post-doctoral fellowship, which I used to work in South Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg.

BW: Who did you work with at Wits?

MK: Mainly with Basil Cooke, but also with Phillip Tobias and Revil Mason, an archeologist. I was based at Wits, but I traveled all around South Africa, After that I drove an old Land Rover to Rhodesia, visited the Kalambo Falls collections in Livingston, and then went on to Nairobi to work at the Coryndon Museum.

BW: When did you go to Olduvai?

MK: I worked there with Mary in 1961/2. I dug the bulk of FLKN.

BW: She mentions you participating in the early 1960s, and specifically

your involvement in excavating in Beds III and IV.

MK: Yes, the Leakeys invited me to excavate in Beds III and IV at JK. I used my NSF funding to do that.

BW: Did you have any employment after the post-doc?

MK: No. I had affiliations with the Field Museum and at the University of Chicago, but I didn't have any regular employment. After I finished at Olduvai, I married the fellow who had done the the geology at Isimila! We were married by the district commissioner in Nairobi. After that I joined my new husband, who by then was working as an exploration geologist for Falconbridge Nickel Mines.

BW: Where was he working?

MK: In Cameroon, so Fiona Barber and I drove across Africa from Nairobi to Chad and Cameroon, and then we took the boat to Cape Town. After that I traveled with him to Madagascar, South Africa, Botswana, and to Northern Rhodesia (Zambia).

BW: To drive from Nairobi to the Cameroon was not an easy thing to do in those days.

MK: It's essentially impossible now. The roads were dirt tracks, and it was the rainy season, so we got stuck a couple of times. We had fun extricating ourselves.

BW: How are you as a Land Rover mechanic?

MK: Fortunately, we didn't have to do much of that.

BW: When was your first job in a university?

MK: I think in 1972, at the University of Toronto, in Scarborough.

BW: So, between your PhD in 1959 and 1972 your archeological research was funded, but you were not?

MK: After I married, and after the time in southern Africa, we moved to Switzerland. We bought an old farm in Fribourg and I had a son. We moved to Toronto in 1970 because of my husband's work, and I started doing some teaching at Scarborough in 1972. I wasn't tenured, but in 1977 I was reccomended by Rufus Churcher, who was Associate Dean, to be Chair of the department!

BW: So, you went from being a teaching assistant to Chair of the department in double quick time!

MB: Yes, they made me a tenured full professor! I needed that to be department Chair.

BW: Let me go back to your time with Clark Howell. Did he give you any memorable advice?

MK: Clark (Howell) was always supportive, but I don't remember any specific advice. As a mentor, he was always very positive in his thinking and advice; I tried to follow his example when I had graduate students of my own. His help wasn't instructive, but what he did do was provide introductions to people like Phillip Tobias and the Leakeys.

BW: Did he help with your writing? Or were you always a good writer?

MK: I always liked writing and I guess I just trained myself. The Union Pacific Coal Company gave us a good education; I had some really good high school teachers.

BW: If you gave Clark Howell a draft of a manuscript, did he write comments on it? Or, did he explain the comments?

MK: He would write comments, and he either discussed them with you, or you asked him what the comments were about.

BW: If you could read his writing!

MK: It was much better than Desmond's, which really was impossible!

BW: Which other archeologists were you in contact with in the 1970s?

MK: Revil Mason and Roy Inskeep, and of course I knew Glynn Isaac and Charles Keller.

BW: Glynn mentions you quite often in his Olorgesailie monograph.

MK: Glynn, Charles Keller and I were the three people working in North America who really were interested in the Acheulean. We met up at meetings, and sometimes co-authored things.

BW: That was a pretty small group.

MK: We were, until the three of us began to have our own students. There just weren't many researchers working in North America who were interested in the prehistory of the African Pleistocene. There were some interested in the Iron Age and later Pleistocene, but we were the triumvirate interested in the earlier record.

BW: That's the impression I got from doing a little reading before we had this conversation.

When did you retire from your full-time post in academia?

MK: In 1998, because in Canada at that time you had to retire at the age of 65.

I did some contract teaching afterwards, but we were forced to retire at 65.

BW: Would you have liked to have gone on working?

MK: Sure. Most of us would. They can now, but back then we had no choice.

BW: Did you have other research interests?

MK: Yes, in 1986 I got involved with the Dakhleh Oasis project.

BW: Tell us about that?

MK: It is an international project that began in 1977-8 at Dakhla Oasis, which is in the middle of Egypt’s Western Desert. I started doing the Pleistocene archeology alongside a Holocene prehistorian, Mary McDonald. We later expanded our interest to Kharga Oasis, also in the Western Desert, which is where Gertrude Caton Thompson had worked. There were better

prospects for Uranium/Thorium and ESR dating at Kharga, although now we have ESR dating at Dakhla as well. The Dakhla sequence goes back to MIS 17, and we have what could be Oldowan artefacts at Kharga.

BW: How large was this research group?

MK: We were a small group. I was the Pleistocene prehistorian, with a couple of very good students. Bob Giegengack became the geologist, and he brought good students to the field to do the stratigraphy. Rufus Churcher covered zoology and paleontology.

BW: When did you start to be involved with graduate students?

MK: I had some involvement as soon as they made me Chair of the department. My first student as the primary advisor was Peter Shepherd, who went to Auckland; Joanna Casey worked in South Carolina, and one of my students was the chief archeologist of the Yukon! They did all right.

BW: Did you enjoy having graduate students?

MK: I did. I didn't like the big undergraduate classes. I much preferred smaller classes or seminars. I usually did smaller-class undergrad and graduate seminars.

BW: This is a difficult question to answer, but what do you think your graduate students got from you?

MK: Rigor in research, I think.

BW: Were you like Clark Howell? In other words, you led by example? Or did you instruct them in this rigor?

MK: They got a lot of red ink on things if they weren't being rigorous!

BW: Were there any professional organizations that were particularly important for you?

MK: I've dropped most of them now, but I still belong to the Society for Africanist Archeology. I did, belong to the American Society for Physical Anthropology, the American Anthropological Association, and the Society for American Archeology.

BW: Were those meetings important for the exchange of ideas? Or did you go because you thought you should go?

MK: I went because as Chair I had to go to the American Anthropological Association. The Society for Africanist Archeology was where Africanist archeologists exchanged ideas and learned about new things. I was a founding member.

BW: So, to go back to your research interests, the impression I get is that in your case it was Clark Howell's Rolodex that was most useful. Is that the case?

MK: Very much so. He provided that for all his graduate students. It was very useful to know Kenneth Oakley well-enough to be able to get into the back rooms of the Natural History Museum! And, if I remember correctly, I think Kenneth Oakley was one of the people Clark brought in to teach for a semester at UC. Phillip Tobias also did that. We (the graduate students) made a lot of contacts that way. Chicago was still teaching archeology in those days.

BW: If you had to pick one research opportunity to come your way that was more important than any other, what would that be?

MK: The opportunity to work at Isimila. The full publication of the Isimila work has been a long time coming, but it may actually even appear this year! (see Kleindienst, Blackwell and Skinner, 2024, Isimila Prehistoric Site, Tanzania: Comparative Faunal Datings and ESR, with a Reassessment, *Journal of African Earth Sciences*, 211: 105156). It's never been published properly. The manuscript has been sitting in the Journal of African Earth Sciences for a long time. But the editor suddenly came to life and said, "Do you want to finish this?" So I did, with the help of the son and granddaughter of the man I married, who did the original mapping!

BW: That's not bad for a 90-year-old! Which of your current publications are you most proud of?

MK: A liitle book called the *Oasis Papers Eight.* I think it's a good report of what we did at Dakhla and Kharga, which are both fascinating sites.

BW: What about the early papers on the typology?

MK: People keep citing them. as Glen Cole predicted. It wasn't a bad typology. I think I did all right, but I didn't do it all by myself.

BW: What was your impression of Glynn Isaac?

MK: He was a great person. I was very saddened to hear when he passed. We were good friends. We would sit next to each other in meetings and exchange commentary on the speakers. Once, he leaned over and whispered that the speaker, whoever it was, "could stand a few courses in logic"!

BW: If you had the scientific equivalent of a fairy godfather or a fairy godmother, what would you like to know that we presently don't know?

MK: It is a little obscure, but there are stone structures in Dakhla and Kharga Oases that we don't have an exact date on, but they're probably MIS 4. We would also very much like to know who the Dakhla and Kharga people were. There is no skeletal evidence. We have no really good date for that lithic unit with stone-built structures. It could be as old as MIS4, which would make it the oldest stone-built structure in Africa.

BW: Something that really impresses me is that you are an archeologist, but you spend as much time talking about the people as you do about artifacts.

MK: Well, each artifact represents somebody doing something.

BW: When you were on the faculty at UTM, which parts of your job did you like, and which were the parts you didn't like?

MK: I didn't mind being an administrator. I'm okay at that. I liked the smaller graduate seminars where we could actually look at things, or discuss topics in detail. I often dismayed the undergraduate students by giving them thought problems to do. Something that you could actually have a pro and con answer to.

BW: Well, that's something we're still struggling with these days. I don't think people are willing enough to think about alternative explanations other than the one they are wedded to.

BW: What did you do when you weren't working?

MK: When I wasn't working, I was bringing up my son.

BW: Did you have any hobbies?

MK: We liked to go fishing. We would drive up to the North Shore of Lake Superior and fish for salmon. They were very good to eat.

BW: If, for some reason, you had not been able to be an archeologist, what would you have done?

MK: When I was at college in Wyoming, I wanted to be a geologist, but the then head of department said the only way to do that was to marry one! Which is ironic, because that is what I did. They were not so narrow-minded at UNM, so although I majored in anthropology, I have an honors minor in geology.

BW: Let me ask the question another way. If you had not been an archeologist *or* a geologist, what might you have done?

MK: My other minor was psychology, which is kind of close to anthropology, I guess. The truth is that I got hooked on archeology when I was five years-old. There was a children's book by Madeline Brandeis, called *Little Rose of the Mesa*. I read that as a child and I said to myself, "That's what I'm going to do." I never really got sidetracked, and I later realized that geology and Pleistocene archeology are intertwined.

BW: Can I take you back to the Olduvai days? What were your impressions of Louis and Mary Leakey?

MK: Louis was a lot of fun. He had this vast store of knowledge about natural history. We would have lunch on the roof of the Coryndon Museum, and then he'd talk to us about the ecology of the different fauna, and how their behavior was interrelated. That was something I treasure, and even now when I read things about animal behavior, sometimes I say to myself, "I don't think that's quite true"!

BW: What about Mary?

MK: Mary was a friend, and we certainly respected each other. Unfortunately, they invited me to dig at JK when Mary was having trouble with the menopause, and there were a couple of unhappy incidents. She blamed me for letting out her pure-bred dalmations, one of which got humped by a yellow dog. I know who opened the door and let the dogs out, but it sure wasn't me!

BW: Did you see eye to eye with Mary about how to interpret the archeology at JK?

MK: Hardly. If you read what Mary says about the JK archeology, she regards the larger artifacts, the hand axes, as Acheulean, but she considers the small quartzite cores and flakes as Developed Oldowan. Something we discovered at Isimila was that the Acheulean people made large and small tools. Louis came to visit us at Isimila, and when he saw the small quartz artifacts he said, "Oh, you have a mixture of Acheulean and Later Stone Age." And we said, "No, no, no, no, no. It's all Acheulean!" He didn't really believe us until he went back to Olduvai and started working at SHK in Bed II, where he also found small quartz artifacts. After that he said, "Oh, yes, you're right. They're all Acheulean!"

BW: What was your impression of Desmond Clark?

MK: Desmond was a great fun, but he was also a control freak. People don't like to acknowledge that,

BW: Is there anything else you would like to add?

MK: When I began my career, there were very few Africanist archeologists, and not many in North America either. It was an interesting time, and because there were so few of us, we interacted regularly. Nowadays people are using all sorts of new methods to work on the Acheulean, but they're still comparing shapes. It hasn't advanced much. There are a few people who are doing experimental archeology with the Acheulean, like Alastair Key. I've never met him, but I read his papers. I think he's doing great experimental work.

BW: So you think that while the methods may have changed, the questions haven't got more sophisticated?

MK: People are still more worried about the morphology of the artefacts, than they are about what they were used for. For example, there's one site at Kharga Oasis, which was an ancient lake, and in the dried-up lake beds there are all sorts of scattered hand axes. No cores, no flakes, just hand axes. The only thing I can think of is they used them as skipping stones or something. They played games with them. Why not?

BW: It has been an enormous pleasure to have this conversation with you. I want to thank you, and your granddaughter for making the arrangements. And good luck with your forthcoming publications in the Handbook of Pleistocene Archeology of Africa.