

## **Irene Tasker and the Early History of the Alexander Technique in Education**

### **Earliest attempts to bring the Alexander Technique into education:**

- 1914/15 – 1917 Margaret Naumburg's school in New York; F. M. Alexander was directly involved. Irene Tasker worked as a Montessori teacher at this school during the term of 1916-17 before she became Alexander's assistant in 1917.
- Around 1920 Ethel Webb taught two or three times a week at St. Felix's school, Southwold, England.
- Around 1920 Irene Tasker taught at a small school in Hertfordshire.
- 1924 – 1942 The Little School was started by Irene Tasker at Alexander's teaching practice, 16 Ashley Place, London. The school was turned into a boarding school and moved to Penhill in 1934 and Tasker shortly thereafter left for South Africa. Margaret Goldie became headmistress. After the outbreak of WW2 the school was evacuated and finally moved to the Whitney Homestead, Stow, Massachusetts, USA.
- 1936 – 1939 Gurney MacInnes taught at Weymouth College, England, a boys' preparatory school.
- 1937 – 1949 Irene Tasker ran - with interruptions - an application class for children in Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 1942/43 Margaret Goldie taught at the Friend's school in Media, Pennsylvania, USA. About 1947 the Alexander Foundation School was set up in Media and ran until the late 1960s.

### **Further reading:**

- Stratil, Regina, *Irene Tasker: Her Life and Work with the Alexander Technique* (Graz, Mouritz, 2020).
- Fischer (ed.), Jean M. O., *The Alexander Times: The Journal of the Little School* (2 vols., London, Mouritz, 2017).
- MacInnes, Gurney, 'Teaching F. M. Alexander's Technique in a Boy's Preparatory Boarding School 1936–39', Mouritz Library (2007). Free download from: <https://mouritz.org/system/files/libitemfiles/1936-39/1939MACNF002.pdf>
- Rootberg, Ruth, 'The Alexander Foundation School – An experiment in education' in *AmSAT Journal* issue no. 1 (Spring 2012), pp. 29-34.