



THE FRIENDS
OF APHRODISIAS
TRUST

3 December 2015

Dear Member,

Many of you already know that Patricia had a very bad accident while with a riding party in the Wadi Rum on 23 October. The horse seems to have fallen and rolled on her. Two vertebrae were displaced and other injuries inflicted. After nearly a fortnight in an Amman hospital, she was flown to London; after a spell in University College Hospital, she was transferred to the National Orthopaedic Hospital at Stanmore, where she remains after a very long operation to stabilise her spine. The long-term outlook is uncertain. Unable to speak, she was able to indicate that she was fussed about the annual letter and wanted me to get on with it!

On Patricia's computer I found a first outline draft of this letter. With assistance from many quarters, I have done my best with it: apologies for omissions and shortcomings, and for missing out any who ought to receive a copy (I cannot find the 2014 distribution lists).

Patricia's draft starts 'The collective generosity of the Friends has once again enabled the Trust to play a crucial role in funding the work of the British members of the team at Aphrodisias; and we again "matched" conditional funds from another donor, thereby in effect doubling a big part of our money! Many, many thanks to all of you'.

Even by Aphrodisias standards, this season was exceptionally good: important discoveries, thrilling new marble finds and striking progress on restoration and site conservation. Beside discrete research projects, anastylosis of the Sebasteion's Propylon and continued conservation work in the Hadrianic Baths, the team focused on excavation in the South Agora and Tetrapylon Street.

A full account will be presented when we return to the Art Workers' Guild at 6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury, at 6.30pm on **Wednesday 24 February 2016** to hear the Director, Professor R. R. R. Smith, deliver the 22nd Kenan Erim Memorial Lecture. We hope that Trevor Proudfoot, Director of the Cliveden Conservation Workshop, who has been very unwell, will be able to contribute as usual. Please put this date in your diaries if you have not already done so. In Patricia's absence, Mollie and John Julius Norwich are nobly organising the event and will be your hosts for drinks after the lecture.

Meanwhile, **please renew your membership, for 2016, using the attached form.**

Honorary President: His Excellency The Turkish Ambassador
Chairman: Lady Daunt
Trustees: Viscount Norwich, Sir Kevin Tebbit, Mr R.D. Wilkinson
Trust Secretary: Mrs Alev Karagülle
Director of The Aphrodisias Excavations: Professor R.R.R. Smith

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2015 SEASON

The season lasted four months, which included a two-month period of research and excavation with a team of some 60 senior staff and graduate students and 96 local workers. The projects in the South Agora and Tetrapylon Street are designed to connect these two important urban zones; removal of the deep modern terrain that lies between these two areas will facilitate the creation of a new visitor route through the centre of ancient Aphrodisias. The projects are parts of a larger vision for making the centre of Aphrodisias and its major monuments accessible – notably, the monuments that have been restored by the team in recent years (Sebasteion, North Agora colonnades and Hadrianic Baths).

Excavation: South Agora and pool

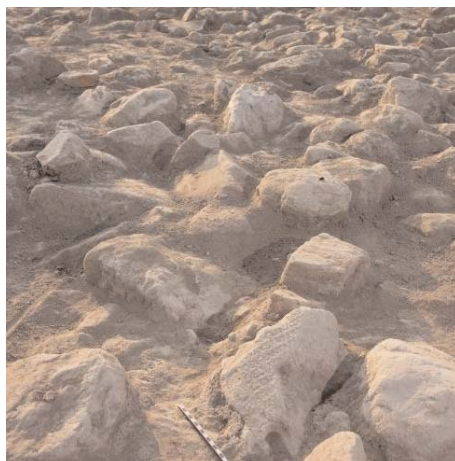
Part of the South Agora pool, at its east and west ends, was excavated by Kenan Erim in the 1980s. A five-year project, funded in the name of Mica and Ahmet Erteğün, to complete the excavation of the pool and its surrounding basin was begun in 2013. Excavations in 2015 continued the investigation of the large ornamental pool and overlying medieval and post-medieval levels, and the plantings surrounding the pool. Work focused on the eastern half of the pool and an area adjacent to the ‘Portico of Tiberius’, and showed that medieval Aphrodisias was not confined to the Theatre Hill but spread over the area below it too. Some crude figures may represent the scale of the operation: 1,590 m³ of soil and stone were removed and some 190 distinct archaeological contexts were identified. The finds included parts of statues and of Diocletian’s Edict of Maximum Prices: 206 marble fragments, 76 coins and 317 miscellaneous small finds, as well as some high-quality early Ottoman ceramics.



South Agora: the south colonnade and the retaining wall and vaults of the Theatre Hill, viewed from the north

South Agora and pool, viewed from the east

South Agora: a fragment of Diocletian’s Edict of Maximum Prices, found during work on the eastern half of the pool



Excavation: Tetracylon Street

The Tetracylon Street runs north-south from the Tetracylon to the Propylon of the Sebasteion. Major finds in the two areas investigated in 2015 included several remarkable pieces of high-quality marble statuary. With a new grant from the Headley Trust, work began on the deep overburden over the street immediately south of the Propylon of the Sebasteion. The aim is to extend the street excavation to the south in order to connect the street with the back of the Agora Gate at the original Roman level. Many large blocks from the Agora Gate had been stored here in the 1980s, and these had first to be removed by crane. The upper parts of the overburden were then removed. Finds here were entirely modern (shoes, shovels, medicine bottles, an oil filter for a tractor!) and demonstrated that the high ground level in this area is due mainly to the dumping of earth from the 1980s excavation. The extensive old spoil heap was removed. This essential preparatory work will enable the project to move into a new phase in 2016, when it is anticipated that significant finds will be made during excavation of the earlier levels.



Tetracylon Street



Tetracylon Street: in front and to the south of the Sebasteion's Propylon, viewed from the north

North of the Propylon considerable advances were made in understanding the chronology and phasing of the street area. There were also spectacular finds of marble sculpture. An over-life-size head of a goddess was found face down behind the Niche Monument on the west side of the street (see photo to right). It has a strong dynamic turn and wears a veil and a *stephanē* (divine crown).



Seventh-century destruction. More of the collapse of the colonnade of the Tetracylon Street, constructed c. AD 400, was excavated in 2015. Close study of the coin finds indicates that the colonnade was destroyed in the years between precisely AD 610/11 and AD 617.

Ninth-century statue deposits. Above the destruction layer, there were two later dirt-and-gravel roads. The later road was part of a reorganisation of the street area, dated by associated pottery to the ninth century. A small high-quality himation statue was found, built into the foundations of an early Byzantine wall on the east side of the street. It represents a young boy wearing chiton and himation, and is of mid-imperial date. Other statue finds include a statue base with an inscription for Tiberius Caesar (Gemellus), son of Drusus, son of the emperor Tiberius, and two high-quality late antique marble portrait heads used as rubble filling. One head represents a bearded male with a characteristic Theodosian hairstyle; the other is an unusual portrait of a lean-faced man with a goatee-style beard, which turns out to join a headless statue found nearby in 2012. Both portraits are of c. AD 400.



Tetracylon Street: himation statue in find-position in foundation of north-south wall

Anastylosis: Sebasteion Propylon

The physical anastylosis of the three-storeyed South Building of the Sebasteion was completed in 2012. Under the direction of Thomas Kaefer and Gerhard Paul, the planned anastylosis of the Propylon at the Sebasteion's west end (begun in 2012) was continued and finished in 2015.



Sebasteion Propylon: an architrave-frieze block is craned into position (left) and the view from the west, looking into the Sebasteion complex from the street (above)

Site conservation: Hadrianic Baths & Theatre

The major project in the Hadrianic Baths, begun in 2010, was pursued with conservation and restoration work on the main fabric of the complex. The project is funded by the World Monuments Fund and ourselves. Conservation of the walls, floors and hypocausts was concentrated in the great central hot room of the complex, the *caldarium*. Work focused on the east end of the chamber and its wide pool. In September, four fully-restored chambers of the baths were opened to the public – Rooms 6, 7, 13 and 14, with views into the restored Rooms 5 and 12.

In the Theatre, a major seven-week project removed parts of the overburden of earth from the upper *cavea* (auditorium) that was in danger of sliding onto the *diazoma* (walkway) below. The overburden was carefully excavated in terraces, and the slope of the theatre hill was graded to an angle of c. 45 degrees. This excavation produced some interesting stray finds, including a high-quality torso of a naked male, an inscribed marble loculus cover for a man called Apphianos and a small stele with a frontal portrait bust of a veiled woman.



Hadrianic Baths Room 6: information panels on the decoration and conservation of the baths (left) and the stainless steel barrier used to direct visitor access

Publication, documentation & other research

Substantial progress was made in the study and documentation of the finds and building complexes uncovered in the excavations of Kenan Erim (1961–1990) and in succeeding years. Fifteen new inscriptions were worked on by the team of epigraphists, and important work went forward on publication projects on the Hadrianic Baths, the Bouleuterion, ‘Gaudin’s Fountain’, the Archaic temenos of Aphrodite, the later phases of the Temple of Aphrodite, the Stadium, the Sebasteion and the Triconch Church.

Sculpture. The study of different categories of marble sculpture discovered at the site was pursued with recording and photography of objects in the depots. The rich new statuary finds were assessed and recorded, and, in addition to the finds already mentioned, fragments were found of a new Sebasteion mythological relief from the second storey of the South Building (it shows a mysterious scene with a god or hero wearing winged boots). A lower arm fragment, also from the street excavation, was found to join the broken upper left arm of Armenia in the *Nero and Armenia* relief (see photo to right), also from the Sebasteion.

FRIENDS’ EVENTS 2015

In addition to the Annual Lecture, a party of Friends was entertained to lunch at Lincoln College by Bert Smith on 2 February. Another party was taken round Peter and Renate Nahum’s collections in Bloomsbury Square on 14 April. On 21 April Thomas Kaefler lectured to the Friends, with contributions from Bert Smith and Trevor Proudfoot.

FRIENDS’ EVENTS 2016

Notices will be issued if and when events in addition to the Annual Lecture can be organised. For the Lecture, every paid-up Friend is entitled to one ticket; as the Art Workers’ Guild accommodates only 100, *please* say if you want yours. ‘Extras’ can be accommodated if there is room.

Patricia would certainly want gratitude to be expressed to Bert Smith, Trevor Proudfoot, Peter & Renate Nahum, Thomas Kaefler, Gina Coulthard for her indispensable administrative assistance, and Elspeth Denniston, the Guild Steward.

pp. Patricia Daunt