



THE FRIENDS  
OF APHRODISIAS  
TRUST

8 November 2023

From Renate Nahum, the interim Chairperson of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust

Dear Friend,

You will by now have heard with great sadness of the death of Patricia, Lady Daunt, on 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2023 aged 84 at her home in Islington. In its present form The Friends of Aphrodisias Trust owes more to Patricia than to anyone else. It was in the early 1990's that she wrote to Professor RRR Smith, who had recently been appointed director of the Aphrodisias excavations, offering to take over as Chairman of The Friends. Patricia brought the Friends back to life, and soon its annual contributions became a significant part of the excavation's budget. Aphrodisias hugely benefited from the diplomatic expertise and social contacts that Patricia and her late husband Sir Timothy Daunt, the UK's Ambassador to Turkey, brought with them. Her energy and attachment to Aphrodisias were evident in the regular tours of Anatolia that she organised with groups of friends, tours whose final destination were always the site of Aphrodisias itself. Her love of Aphrodisias is beautifully expressed in an article that she wrote for Cornucopia in 2017:

*Aphrodisias is smaller than Ephesus, less showy than Pergamum, less ancient than Sardis, yet it yields to none for addictive charm, a charm which is all to do with its atmosphere: millennial sanctity coupled with the splendour of ancient architecture and the finest marble statuary, in a site excavated with subtle expertise. The site is still studded with vines, pomegranates, figs and mature stands of poplar. When the sun goes down and the moisture rises, red squirrels still chase each other's tails about the great plane tree with its roots entwined amongst the ruins of the*

Honorary President O. Koray Ertaş, the Turkish Ambassador to the UK

Interim Chairperson: Renate Nahum

Trustees: Mrs Renate Nahum, Mr Barnaby Rogerson, Dr Sandy Mosse (Hon Treas), Mr Gordon Robinson,

Lord John Scott, Mr William Chubb (Hon. Sec)

Director of The Aphrodisias Excavations: Professor R.R.R. Smith

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*Sebasteion's lost temple. Octavian the Triumvir rightly declared that, of all the cities in Asia, Aphrodisias was the one to be preferred.*

Thanks in part to Patricia's work, "Sebasteion's lost temple" is now not so lost, see page 3 below. She will be greatly missed, as will her husband Sir Timothy Daunt, who died on 5<sup>th</sup> August, just under two months before her. Sir Timothy was a huge support to Patricia in her role as Chairman of the Trust, regularly attending meetings and serving as a Trustee for 27 years. Although the Trust has suffered a great loss in their passing, we have every intention of carrying on, as Patricia and Timothy would have wished us to do. It is for this reason that I have accepted the role of interim Chairperson of the Trust until a more permanent candidate can be found. We hope to be in a position to announce the new Chair at next year's 30<sup>th</sup> AGM, the details of which are below.

Last year's AGM on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 was very well attended. Professor Smith delivered a fascinating lecture describing significant progress made at Aphrodisias during the previous summer, particularly at the Basilica, the Pool of the Place of Palms, the Sebasteion, Tetrapylon Street and the House of Kybele. We were delighted that the meeting was attended by Selçuk Gedikli, the First secretary at the Turkish Embassy in London. Thanks were given to Dick Wilkinson, who stepped down as a Trustee. Dick had stepped into the role of Hon Secretary following Patricia's riding accident on 2015.

Turning to the summer season 2023, the team of students and experts from Oxford, New York, and several Turkish universities made excellent progress on major projects. Site conservation and anastylosis were the main focus in the Basilica, Urban Park, and Sebasteion, while study and excavation in the Tetrapylon Street, House of Kybele, and North Temenos House are part of a programme of geophysical and archaeological research into the long history of urban living, private residences, and workshop structures in Aphrodisias.

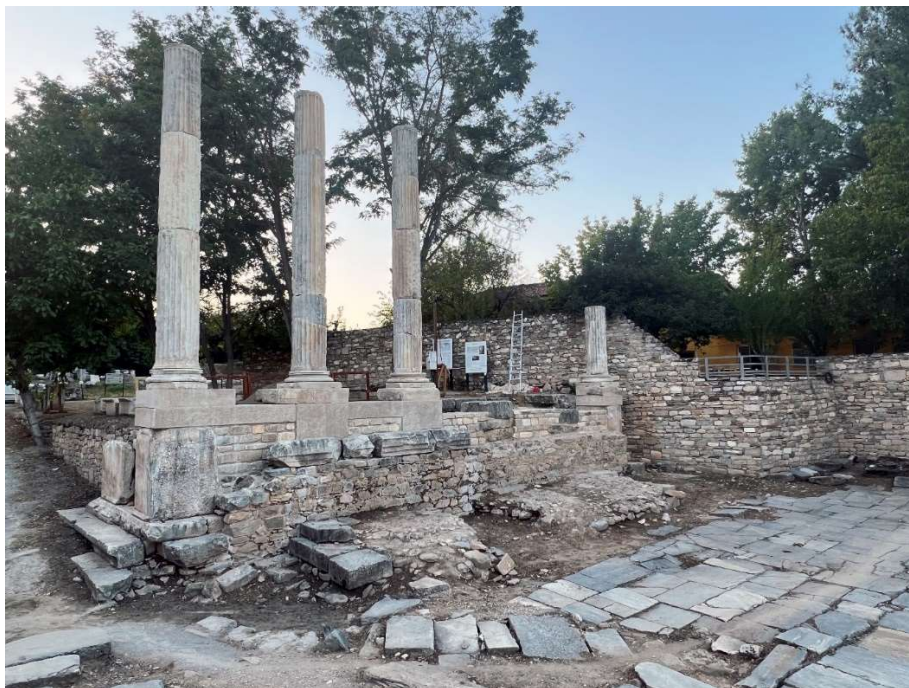


*Civil Basilica.* The anastylosis of the four colossal double-columns of the Basilica's vestibule was completed, together with their Ionic capitals, four-metre architraves, and blocks of mask-and-garland frieze. The remaining parts of Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices, originally

inscribed over the building's façade, were set up on ten custom-designed metal mounts, in Latin, Turkish, and English, on the line of the Basilica's west wall. They include the texts of Chapters 50 to 70 of the Edict, as well as information panels and reconstructions. A new edition of Diocletian's Edict, by Michael Crawford, studies the text as inscribed at Aphrodisias and will appear shortly as *Aphrodisias XIII* in our monograph series.



*Pool.* In the Urban Park / Place of Palms, restoration work continued on the sensitive marble perimeter of its 170-m-long pool. The collaborative volume on the excavation and history of the whole complex is now at the publishers. It will be *Aphrodisias XIV*.



*Sebasteion.* The temple at the east end of the Sebasteion stood on a tall podium and was dedicated to Livia and Tiberius. It was the culmination of the whole complex. A three-year anastylosis project was finished this year, with the re-erection of large parts of the temple's



Corinthian columnar façade. It has dramatically changed visitor experience of the complex. Strong progress was also made on a volume studying the architecture of the Sebasteion.



*Tetrapylon Street.* The excavation of this key urban artery was begun in 2008 and completed this year. It found a busy colonnaded street of the late fifth to sixth century, destroyed in the early seventh century, after which life resumed on top of its collapsed debris. In 2023, final excavation brought the last part of the baulk above the east colonnade down to the sixth-century floor, where an interesting inscribed weight standard of the late antique period was discovered. A small head of Dionysos, fallen from an apartment above the street colonnade, was found on the west side of the street. Intensive study and writing were carried out in situ for collaborative publication of the Street's excavation and history. The project has opened a whole new vision of changing city life from AD 400 to 1200.



*Kybele House.* The House of Kybele project, begun 2022, is investigating a city neighbourhood at the northeast City Wall that includes a warehouse, workshops, a street, a city gate, and the large Kybele House itself. This year most of a long, deep, and unexcavated spit of earth lying over part of the warehouse and part of the east-west street was removed. The excavation confirmed that this city quarter remained vibrant until the second decade of the seventh century, after which it fell victim to a sudden destruction event that created a debris layer more than 1.5 m thick.

A stand-out discovery here was a small street restaurant built over the street paving near the workshops in the sixth century, excavated with all its furnishing still inside – a cooking stand, a dozen cooking pots and their lids, several local storage amphorae, a ceramic strainer, and some tableware plates, both local and imported. A (broken) cooking pot was found with bones (for a soup or stew) still inside. A marble pestle and mortarium fragment are also connected to food preparation. The room's assemblage was completed by more than six ceramic lamps and a miniature head of a dog in blue marble found lying on the floor of the room.

*North Temenos House.* After a successful campaign of geophysical prospection to the north of the city centre early in the 2023 season, a new project was begun in the North Temenos House, located immediately next to the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, to investigate its extent, chronology, and function. The project is part of a new programme of research into housing and living in Aphrodisias from the later Roman into the Byzantine period. In 2023, two trenches were opened at the northern limits of the house and confirmed the geophysical results and that peristyles belonging to the house extended in this direction.

*Museum Courtyard.* Work by Cliveden Conservation continued on marble sculptures to be displayed in new covered halls in the existing museum courtyard. In 2023, work focused on three portrait statues and ten portrait heads and busts, many of them recently discovered. The heads and busts range in date from the first to the sixth centuries AD. They were prepared for mounting on independent pillars after careful assessment of their original postures. Three imperial statues, each badly fragmented, were also restored, together with their heads. They came from the Propylon of the Sebasteion and represented the emperor Tiberius, his mother Livia, and a young imperial princess called Aemilia Lepida.

*Publication.* In addition to the volumes already mentioned, on Diocletian's Prices Edict, the Place of Palms, and the architecture of the Sebasteion, good progress was made during the season on collaborative publications of the Tetrapylon Street, the Stadium, the Bouleuterion, the City Walls, and the reliefs from the Basilica. Publication remains a key priority.

#### Events in 2023:

At Daunt Books in Marylebone High Street on Monday, 9 January 2023 we had the chance to hear Julia (Dr Leneghan) and Bert (Prof Smith) discuss new aspects of studying ancient statues, in relation to the imperial figures displayed on Propylon of the Sebasteion. This was well attended and many thanks are due to Bert and Julia, and to Daunt Books for hosting us.

On 24 October 2023 nine of us made a pilgrimage to Petworth House where we were given star treatment by Emily Knight, the National Trust Curator for Petworth. Emily very kindly spent several hours taking us round the state rooms with their astonishing C17 interiors and old masters. Bert filled in with fascinating talks on what is the best collection of Roman marbles in private hands in the UK. We were blessed with wonderful weather.

On 13 October 2023 Prof Smith and William Chubb (Hon. Sec) were given an audience at the Turkish Embassy by O. Koray Ertaş, the newly appointed Turkish Ambassador to the UK. Ambassador Ertaş kindly agreed to be the Honorary President of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust.

Events for 2024:

Next year's annual Kenan Erim Memorial lecture will be delivered as usual by the Director of Excavations at Aphrodisias, Professor Bert Smith . The AGM and lecture will be back in the **Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, WC1N 3AT on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 6:15 PM.** (Please note the date in next year's diary!)

Subscription forms are being sent out with this newsletter. It remains for me to thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

*Renate Nahum*

Renate Nahum, interim Chairperson