



THE FRIENDS
OF APHRODISIAS
TRUST

30 October 2008

Dear Member,

Once again thank you a hundred times and more for your continued support of the Trust, which could not function without you. Thanks to your generosity, we have again contributed useful funds to the British team working at Aphrodisias, as well as to Aphrodisias-related work at Oxford.

2008 has been another productive year at Aphrodisias. Though tangible results include exciting finds, a leap ahead with the Sebasteion stone-for-stone reconstruction (*anastylosis*), conservation, study and publication, the highlight of the year was undoubtedly the opening of the new Museum Hall on 31 May.

The Hall, attached to the north side of the Aphrodisias Museum, is a purpose-built structure designed by Cengiz Bektaş to house the Blue Horse from the Civil Basilica and sixty-five of the eighty reliefs recovered from the Sebasteion. It was paid for by the Istanbul Friends of Aphrodisias in memory of their late President, Sevgi Gonul.



At last, these precious and fragile treasures, which over nine years Trevor Proudfoot and his Cliveden Conservation team have been meticulously restoring and reassembling using new stainless steel dowels and lime-mortar fill, are on public display in their original sequence. We, the English Friends, have played a significant part in this achievement.

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Trust Secretary: Mrs Alev Karagülle

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

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Understanding of the exceptionally beautiful reliefs within the new museum hall is complemented on the site itself by the *anastylosis* of the east end of the three-storeyed South Building of the Sebasteion, painstakingly pieced together by the Austrian architects, Thomas Kaefer and Gerhad Paul, using only original architecture to support cast copies of the reliefs executed by Trevor.

The Sebasteion complex consisted of a long processional avenue (90m x 14m) flanked by 12m-high buildings to the north and south and a raised temple at the east end. For their whole length, these three-storeyed north and south buildings carried some 200 marble reliefs in their upper storeys in an unusual combination of Greek and Roman subjects. More than 80 were recovered during the 1979–1984 excavations.

The reliefs from the north building featured a series of personifications of *ethne* or ‘peoples’ brought into the Roman empire by Augustus. In the south building, the reliefs juxtaposed emperors and gods with scenes from Greek mythology. The heroes of myth represent the past; the Roman emperors, on the same plane as the Olympian gods, represent the present.

The first century AD Aphrodisian Sebasteion, or ‘Temple of the Emperors’, was built and paid for by two Aphrodisian families to celebrate the close ties of Aphrodisias with Rome during the Julio-Claudian dynasty. The story of its part-reconstruction will be told when Thomas, Gerhard and Trevor give a joint lecture in the New Year.

Museum Hall and Sebasteion apart, a start was made on a three-year excavation of the north-south avenue running from the Tetrapylon to the entrance of the Sebasteion. The north end of the avenue passing to the east of the Tetrapylon was exposed for about 50m in excavations in 1983–1986. This year four trenches were opened over a 21m x 21m area of an unexcavated portion immediately to the south. The most interesting find was an outstanding late Roman marble pilaster capital featuring a peasant with a goat (see cover of the membership form).



Work continued in the unexcavated area at the south end of the Civil Basilica. A trench first revealed a series of late Byzantine graves and then a dense concentration of large, fallen architectural blocks which had to be removed by crane. This architectural debris, part of a catastrophic collapse of the building probably in the seventh century AD, included six well-preserved elements of a pier and the arches it supported along the south side of the hall. These monumental pieces together with an elaborate composite pilaster capital decorated with two sets of three projecting animal *protomes* (a pair of bulls flanking a roaring lion) were brought into the Blue Depot.

Throughout the site, conservation was, as always, given high priority. Notably, maintenance was carried out on the east side of the Tetrapylon. The Bouleuterion was cleaned and the gaps between its seats repaired, as were the broken blocks of the Doric cornice of the Theatre stage building. The marble floor in the triple apse of the Bishop’s Palace was re-laid and the heavy paving slabs inside the tetrastyle court of the Atrium House, lifted for excavation in 2006, were put back on packed stone and sand beds.

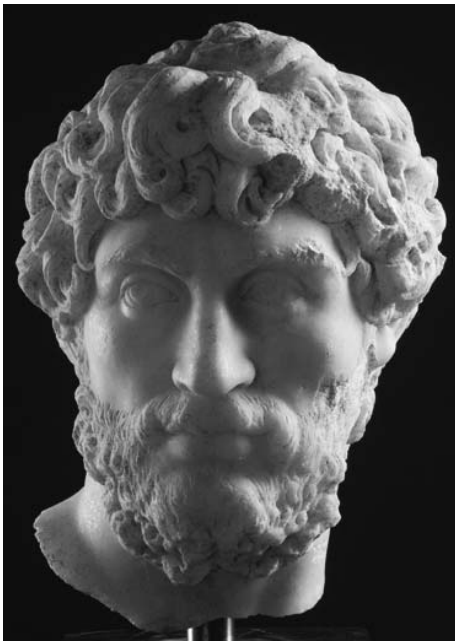
More than twenty old trenches were cleared of debris then lined with geotextile and filled with soil. The fountain platform at the east end of the North Agora was cleared and a protective dry stone retaining wall built around its perimeter. Finally the trench exposing the interior of the Sebasteion temple was transformed into a platform from which visitors can now view the whole complex and, in order to prepare a new project to raise funds for the conservation of the Hadrianic Baths, the bath rooms were extensively cleared of overgrowth, soil and grass.

The aims of sculpture research at Aphrodisias still remain to record the material found in the excavations of the Professor Kenan Erim years, 1961–1990. Work continued on the statues from the Bouleuterion, the Sebasteion reliefs and the statues from the Sebasteion Propylon. Further drawings were made of the Blue Horse and the manuscript concerning the mythological relief panels from the Agora Gate checked.

The six containers consisting of the marble fragments from the old depot, demolished to make way for the new Museum Hall, together with a large body of pottery and study finds from the Garage House depot of the Excavation House, were installed in the new built (2007) New Stoa Depot. All now have new shelf locations and are entered in the database inventory.

Even time was found to continue the important study of the Aphrodisian sarcophagi of the Roman period, with inscriptions and new fragments added to the database which now contains some 800 items.

Unprecedented in the annals of Aphrodisias, fifty-one sculptures from the Aphrodisias Museum were brought to Istanbul in September, where they remain on display at the Vedat Nedim Tor Museum in Beyoğlu's Yapı Kredi Bank Cultural Centre on İstiklaal Caddesi until 25 October 2009. It is a remarkable exhibition, devoted to the twin themes of sculpted portraiture and marble production in the Roman Imperial period. Trevor and his team were responsible for the re-instatement of these major original sculptures, many of which have never been displayed in public before. The pieces on display show an astonishing range of portrait styles and personal fashion in Anatolia under the Roman Empire.



Friends' events

Once again, the Kenan Erim Memorial Lecture, on 6 March 2007, was a sell-out. We are extremely grateful to the Learning and Audiences Department at The British Museum for being our hosts and for offering to have us back for the fifteenth in the series (see below).

In early February, Dr Ian Jenkins, the Senior Curator at The British Museum responsible for the ancient Greek Collections, invited a small party of Friends to meet him by the Lion of Cnidus in the Great Court, whence he introduced us to the Museum's unrivalled collection of Lycian and Carian architecture and sculpture. It was a privilege, as well as a real pleasure.

In early April, another small party of Friends visited East Sussex. During the morning, Anthony Penrose and his daughter Ami Bouhassane guided us round Farley Farm House, the home Roland Penrose and Lee Miller bought in 1949 and made home to the Surrealists. Thanks to Colonel Beville Pain, good Friend of Aphrodisias, we then lunched in Firle Place before being shown round one of the great houses of Sussex. We were in the hands of an unrivalled expert on Firle Place, its collections and the Gage family. We are extremely grateful to Beville Pain.

Next year's **Kenan Erim Memorial Lecture** will be delivered by Bert Smith, with a contribution from Trevor Proudfoot, in the Stevenson Lecture Theatre of the Clore Education Centre at the British Museum at **6.30pm on Thursday 5 March 2009**. Please put it firmly in your 2009 diary. Every paid-up Friend is entitled to one ticket for the lecture. As the Museum always has more applicants than tickets, *please* say if you want yours (see below).

This year, the Friends' events are all taking place in 2009, details of which I will be sending out in early January. However **Eland Press** invite you to the launch of *Turkish Coast* by **Rupert Scott** on **Wednesday 19 November 2008, 6.30–8pm** at **Daunt Books, 83 Marylebone High Street, London W1U 4QW - RSVP** (acceptances only) to info@elandbooks.co.uk.

Finally, the Friends' projects at Oxford

This year we sponsored Dr Julia Leneghan's visits to Oxford when working on the important new book Bert Smith is producing on the Sebasteion reliefs. It will be a companion to the magnificent publication Bert produced on Aphrodisian portrait statuary. Many of you will remember its launch party at the Marylebone High Street branch of Daunt Books in 2006.

Meanwhile, the refurbishment of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, due to reopen in autumn 2009, and of its Cast Gallery goes ahead. Bert Smith, as Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art, is *ex officio* Director of the Cast Gallery. His ambition is, in time for the reopening, to fill a major gap in the collection of some 800 plaster casts of Classical sculpture intensively used by students. That gap is the virtually complete lack of work from Roman Asia Minor. It is to be filled by casts of four of the life-size reliefs – two of emperors from the second storey and two of gods and heroes from the first (including Claudius conquering Britannia) – from the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias. It is a major and expensive (upwards of £50,000) challenge: complex and very skilled work, plus material and transport costs. Thanks largely to the great generosity of Trusts connected with Friends, added to our own resources, we are paying for it. There will, I trust, be a celebratory viewing for us in Oxford when the time comes!

Please continue to support the British work at Aphrodisias by completing and returning the enclosed membership form (even if you pay by bankers' order). If you are good enough to make a donation, however small, and you have not already signed a gift-aid declaration for us, please complete that too. Membership includes a ticket for the 2009 lecture. Please do not fail to let me know on the form if you want yours. If you want any extra tickets, let me know.

As usual, a very big thank-you goes to Bert Smith and Trevor Proudfoot for their continued close involvement with the Friends; to Beville Pain and Ian Jenkins for their invaluable contributions to the Friends' events and to Gina Coulthard and Siobhan McKeown, London Secretary of the British Institute at Ankara, for their indispensable administrative assistance throughout the year; and to all of you who have supported the Trust so generously, not least in enabling us to realize Bert's ambition for the Ashmolean's Cast Gallery.

Yours sincerely



Patricia Daunt