



THE FRIENDS
OF APHRODISIAS
TRUST

Dear Member,

The Friends have had a difficult year, what with my accident and Trevor's illness, but heroic efforts from Timothy have kept things on track. The AGM and Annual Lecture took place on 24 February at the now regular venue of the Art Workers' Guild and were as informative, interesting and well attended as ever. Other activities were inevitably suspended but fundraising remained buoyant and thanks to a number of particularly generous donations we were able once again to make a significant contribution to the work at Aphrodisias in 2016.

On 28 November, as you know, Professor Andrew Wilson has kindly agreed to update us on his work at the so-called South Agora in a talk to be given at Daunt Books at 6.30 for 7pm. I look forward to meeting many Friends at what promises to be a most interesting event.

I have now been back home for several months. I remain Chairman and continue to have what I hope is a significant input to the Friends and our activities. Timothy has been able to step back a bit, though he remains a Trustee. Dick Wilkinson, who was already a Trustee, valiantly volunteered to step forward and take over as Honorary Secretary from Alev Karagulle in order to take on the bulk of the work including the administrative duties. While he knows and loves Aphrodisias, having worked there briefly with Kenan Erim in 1966 and visited on various occasions since, he is obviously not yet fully familiar with the work of the Friends and the membership. He craves your indulgence to bear with any errors, omissions or faux pas he may make!

As always we are indebted to the formal report of the Director of the excavations at Aphrodisias, Professor Bert Smith, for the following account. You will see that it is a record of significant progress and achievement at one of the most remarkable Graeco-Roman sites in Turkey. The Friends are proud to support this work, and as usual the form for renewing your membership for 2017, with details of the AGM and Annual Lecture to be held at the Art Workers' Guild on Wednesday 8 March, is also attached.

The 2016 season at Aphrodisias

A team of some 60 academics, researchers and students worked a long season from 1 June to 30 September alongside 96 local workers. There were important results and interesting finds. The Friends made a major contribution to conservation of the Hadrianic Baths; we were also the channel whereby the Headley Trust provided funds for the excavations in the South Agora and Tetrapylon Street. There was also work on the Sebasteion and the Tetrapylon itself.

Honorary President: His Excellency The Turkish Ambassador

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Trustees: Sir Timothy Daunt, Viscount Norwich,

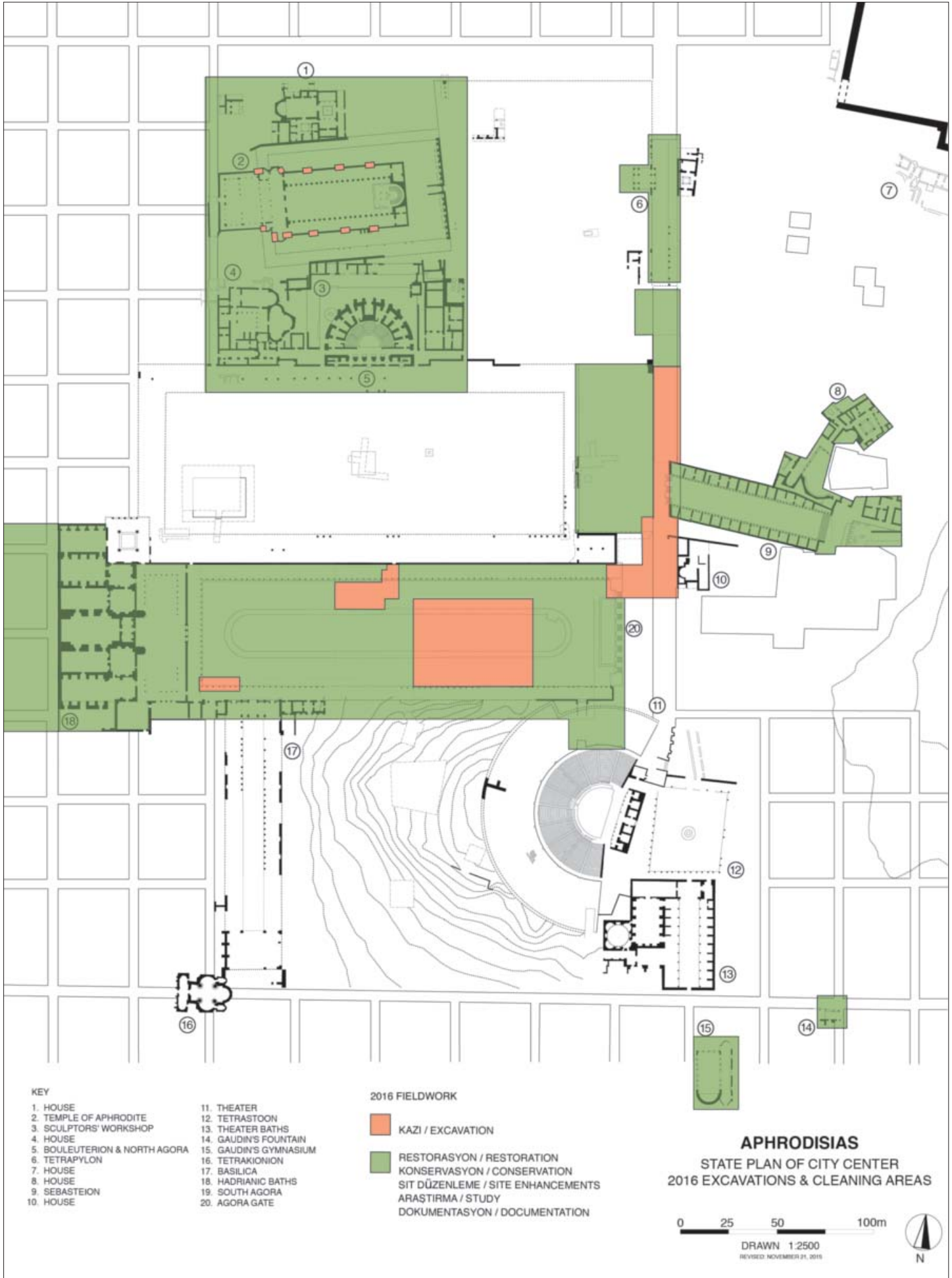
Sir Kevin Tebbit, Mr R.D. Wilkinson (Hon. Sec.)

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

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Plan of Aphrodisias showing where work was carried out in 2016

The Hadrianic Baths

A seventh and final season of conservation work was carried out here by Trevor Proudfoot and his Cliveden conservation team. The excavated rooms have now been opened to the public; other rooms can be viewed from the exterior; and the great palaestra court in front of the Baths has been cleared and made accessible to visitors.

In 2016, conservation work was concentrated in the great central hot room of the complex, the *caldarium* (Room 4), and on the tall masonry support wall between Rooms 4 and 5. A find of considerable historical significance was made in Room 4: a well-preserved bronze coin of the emperor Phokas (AD 602–610) was recovered from the mortar layer immediately beneath some loose marble paving. It implies that significant renovations were still being undertaken in the early seventh century at a time when earlier no such civic vitality had been suspected.



Hadrianic Baths: the caldarium (hot room) and adjacent room (left) and Work in progress in the caldarium (above)



The South Agora looking west towards the Hadrianic Baths

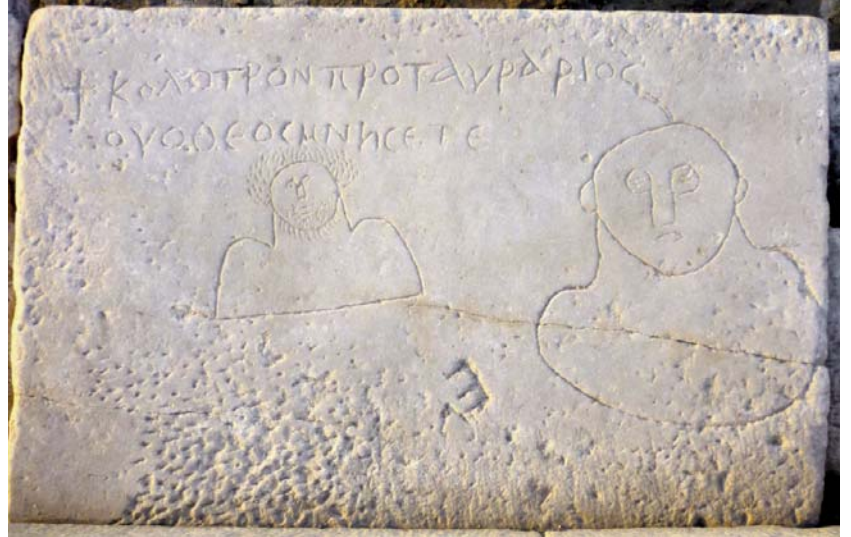
The South Agora

As many Friends will remember from his earlier talk to us in 2012, Professor Andrew Wilson, who directs the excavations in the South Agora, has discovered that it was more in the nature of a park or pleasure garden with a large shallow pool and a grove of palm trees. Excavation in 2016 investigated the overlying medieval and post-medieval levels, as well as the plantings surrounding the pool. One large trench was excavated in phases across the eastern half of the complex and reached below the marble seat courses of the pool's inner perimeter. The marble surround of the pool is now almost fully exposed.

In addition to some important marble finds, perhaps the most striking aspect of the excavation was the high level of post-antique and medieval activity across the whole area. Far from being empty fill, the levels above the pool have a complex sequence of walls and strata from approximately the tenth through to the sixteenth century. They imply a level of human activity not previously expected at the site in these periods.

Among an abundance of coins, small finds and marble fragments of architecture and statuary, two items may be mentioned. A newly uncovered slab of the pool's southern perimeter was found to be

inscribed with a semi-public graffito, prefaced by a cross, for one 'Kolotron, head gold-worker (*protaurios*), whom God shall remember' (see photo to right). The text is accompanied by two engraved frontal busts of athletes: one (left) wearing an elaborate victor's crown and the other, much larger bust (right) being of a thick-necked boxer or wrestler. This athlete has a single lock of hair emerging from his otherwise clean-shaven head – this was the hairstyle of the professional heavy athlete (*cirrus in vertice*). The same Kolotron is known from a similar seat inscription in the Theatre.



A fragment of an early Imperial portrait head (see photo to left) was excavated during the cutting back of the east section of the pool fill. The head fragment was found in the lower dump layer in what was probably an early seventh-century context. The head was once part of a high-quality portrait statue of the Julio-Claudian period. Its nose, upper face and hair fringe are perfectly preserved. The quality of the portrait can be seen in the delicate carving of the line of its upper teeth in the slightly opened mouth.

The Tetracylon Street

The Tetracylon Street, the city's main thoroughfare, runs north to south from the Tetracylon to the Propylon of the Sebasteion. Its excavation, begun in 2008, is designed eventually to open this part of the street for visitors and to bring new information about the history of the site in the late antique, Byzantine and Ottoman periods.

Excavation in 2016 concentrated on the deep overburden over the street immediately south of the Propylon of the Sebasteion. The aim is to connect the street with the back of the Agora Gate at the original Roman level, both to enhance visitor circulation at the site and to investigate a key urban hub in the ancient city plan.

The western half of the excavated area was occupied by a sizeable, well-built structure (visible in the foreground of Fig. 8). The excavation has so far uncovered its two most northern spaces, both of which had been intentionally filled in, probably in the later nineteenth century. The eastern space was a water tank, lined with hydraulic mortar, supplied by a pipe coming from the south and heated by a *prae-furnium* on its eastern side. The larger western room had a hypocaust and water supply provided by a pipe from the tank that runs around its eastern and northern walls. It was clearly the hot room of a small bath complex of the middle to late Byzantine period. Since bath complexes of this period are rare, this excavated example is of considerable significance.



The Tetracylon Street looking north to the Tetracylon. The Byzantine baths can be seen in the foreground

To the north of the Propylon, work aimed to excavate large brickfalls that had been left in situ on the Roman pavement in 2014 and 2015, in order to open the street and to carry out conservation work on its paving. Three areas of brickfall that collapsed in the early seventh century from the western street wall were drawn, photographed and excavated. The southern brickfall lay directly on top of the street paving; the 'middle' brickfall came from two arches of the upper storey of the eastern street colonnade; and the northern brickfall lay on top of a thick layer of burned and unburned material, including window glass.



The northern brickfall contained a large and important female head (see photo to left). It is a veiled portrait of the early Imperial period that clearly once belonged to the extensive statue display on the Sebasteion's Propylon. The head has an ideal Augustan physiognomy with the tight melon-hairstyle of a young woman. The trial attachment of the head to a surviving statue from the Propylon found nearby in 1981, although it

does not join, showed that they almost certainly belong together (see photo to right). Furthermore, the statue is identified independently by its inscribed base as Aemilia Lepida, wife of Drusus Caesar (son of Germanicus). She appears prominently in history only in AD 36 when she was forced to commit suicide, the Roman historian Tacitus tells us (*Annals* 6.40), because she was conducting a widely-known affair with a slave. Such matters, however, were not of much concern in Aphrodisias! The newly excavated head completes a remarkably well-documented honorific statue of a Tiberian princess, one who is not identified in any other portraits.

The Sebasteion and Tetrapylon

The physical anastylosis of the three-storeyed South Building of the Sebasteion is now mostly completed. In 2016, the back of the structure was built up in *petit-appareil*-style masonry to act as a brace and support for the whole restoration. The first physical assembly of all parts of the Propylon's first storey is also now complete, and it was decided not to dowel and glue the columns and entablatures permanently but to leave them dry-fixed as they are, in case further work proves possible. Important advances were made in 2016 in the study of the Sebasteion's building history. Careful cleaning and recording revealed that in late antiquity a water basin (9.25m wide) was built up against the front of the Sebasteion Temple at a time when it had been put out of use as a cult building.

The Tetrapylon, the grandiose entrance to the domain of Aphrodite, was rebuilt by Kenan Erim between 1986 and 1990. The anastylosis is checked and maintained periodically, and, in 2016, the western side of the structure was scaffolded, cleaned, pointed and thoroughly checked. Open joints and cracks between repairs and the marble of the ancient building were mapped and filled using hydraulic lime-based mortars. Some of the abstractly restored figure and acanthus decoration of the pediment was remodelled and recoloured by hand to match the character of the surrounding stonework.





The restored Propylon at the entrance to the Sebasteion (above) and the Tetrapylon with repair work in progress (right)



Envoi

Renewed thanks are due to Bert Smith and Trevor Proudfoot for their continued close involvement with the Friends, and to Andrew Wilson for his talk on the South Agora; to Alev Karagulle for her many years of loyal service as Trust Secretary; to Gina Coulthard for her continued assistance. Most important of all are heartfelt thanks from me to all of you who support the Trust, not least to our major anonymous donors and to the Headley Trust.

This letter incorporates a major contribution from Dick Wilkinson, whose address and details are at the foot of page 1, and he will be organising the Annual Lecture and AGM. We are confident that the new arrangement will work well.

With thanks and all best wishes,

Patricia Daunt