



THE FRIENDS
OF APHRODISIAS
TRUST

16 October 2020

Dear Friends,

How long it seems since we were in the now familiar surroundings of the Art Workers' Guild for the 26th Kenan Erim Memorial Lecture! The date – 4th March – was barely a fortnight before the imposition of the lockdown. I am delighted that our AGM and lecture were able to go ahead as planned, and I have not heard of anyone suffering any ill effects as a result. I hope we shall be similarly lucky for next year, when the AGM and 27th **Annual Lecture are (please note) booked for Monday 8th March, again at the Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square WC1N 3AT at 6.30pm.** If this is not possible, we will meet by Zoom.

In his lecture this year the Director of Excavations at Aphrodisias, Professor Bert Smith, gave us a round-up of activities in 2019, concentrating in particular on the work in the Tetracylon Street to which the Friends contributed. But first he spoke of the life and unparalleled contribution to work at Aphrodisias over 30 years of Trevor Proudfoot, a close friend to many of us, whose untimely death in August was a grievous blow. It was good that Trevor's sister, his son Lewis and members of his team from the Cliveden Workshop were present.

This year's good news is that the Friends' future is assured. Contrary to our fears, we have a volunteer to take on next year from Dick Wilkinson the role of Honorary Secretary (responsible for all and every aspect). William Chubb is already helping Dick and will be up for election as a Trustee at the AGM next March. William is suitable in every way. An actor by profession, he is also an art historian by inclination and training. He knows Aphrodisias; he was a contemporary of Bert as an undergraduate at Oxford and they have remained firm friends. I hope you will be able to meet William on 8th March. In any case, please continue your support for the Friends when he takes over.

William will, I am confident, continue to organise events of interest to Friends, at which Dick has excelled. In January Dick took a group to Oxford to be shown round the immensely successful and popular Pompeii exhibition at the Ashmolean by Bert and by the curator of the exhibition, Dr Paul Roberts. After an excellent and convivial lunch at Lincoln College, courtesy again of Bert, a smaller group returned to the Ashmolean, where Dr Volker Heuchert, Curator of Coins and Medals, presented a fascinating selection of ancient coins that would once have circulated in the shops and markets of Aphrodisias.

Chairman: Lady Daunt
Trustees: Sir Timothy Daunt,
Sir Kevin Tebbit, Mr R.D. Wilkinson (Hon. Sec.)
Director of The Aphrodisias Excavations: Professor R.R.R. Smith

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The 2020 season at Aphrodisias

Owing to the worldwide pandemic, it proved impossible this year for Bert to carry out his planned programme of on-site excavation and fieldwork with his usual international team. Luckily the Headley Trust, who had promised us £15,000 for work on the Kybele House, generously agreed that their donation could be postponed till next year. However, there was still plenty to be done at Aphrodisias – conservation, clearance, cataloguing and other study – and, in the absence of new projects to attract outside donors, Bert made it clear that a contribution from the Friends was as important as ever. We contributed £20,000.

With the help of our contribution, a largely local team was able to work at Aphrodisias in June to July. They focused on study in the depots, research for publication and conservation. The ancient monuments were carefully checked; all vegetation was cut and cleared from the site (see photos above and right); new information panels were set up (see below); and material for publication of the Tetrapylon Street, House of Kybele and South Agora/Place of Palms was documented in the depots.





New research on the inscribed dedication and carved ornament of the East Gate of the Place of Palms revealed the monument belonged not in the mid-second century AD as previously thought, but in the late first century AD (above).

Work on inscriptions focused on preparations for a new monograph on Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices and for the corpus of all the inscribed texts of Aphrodisias being prepared by Angelos Chaniotis. A relief from the Sebasteion was dismantled from its museum display by the Cliveden-trained marble conservators for transport to an exhibition in Istanbul (above, right) and a delicately decorated Roman fountain basin, brought from Karacasu and restored by the marble conservators in 2018–2019, was set up on a new base in the museum garden (right).



As you see, despite the pandemic a worthwhile programme of work was carried out to which the Friends can be proud to have contributed.

Envoi

It remains for me to thank you all for your continued support through this difficult time. Aphrodisias is now generally considered, with Ephesus, one of the two finest Graeco-Roman sites in Asia Minor and our steady support over nearly 30 years has contributed to that. Particular thanks are due to Bert Smith for involving us so closely in his work. We are most grateful to our two Trustees who will be stepping down in March, Kevin Tebbit, who has served as Honorary Treasurer throughout, and Timothy Daunt. I owe a particular debt to Dick Wilkinson, who stepped in to run the Friends following my 2015 accident and will continue as Trustee until his retirement in 2022. And, as usual to Gina Coulthard for her skilled and generous help with putting together our newsletters and with other electronic communications.

At William Chubb's request, I hope to soldier on as your Chairman until the 2022 AGM. Meanwhile, two new Trustees will need to be appointed in March. This is a role which involves very little so long as all is well: if any of you are willing to stand for election as Trustees, please let us know.

Patricia Daunt
Chairman, The Friends of Aphrodisias Trust