



THE FRIENDS  
OF APHRODISIAS  
TRUST

8 November 2022

Dear Member,

I am taking this opportunity to thank you once again most sincerely for your vital support of the projects undertaken by the British team working at Aphrodisias which are made only possible through your ongoing generosity.

Next year's 29<sup>th</sup> AGM and annual Kenan Erim Memorial lecture – delivered as usual by the Director of Excavations at Aphrodisias, Professor Bert Smith – will be back in the **Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, WC1N 3AT on Thursday 16 March 2023 at 6:15 PM**. (Please note the date in next year's diary!)

It is with great reluctance that we have decided to increase the members' annual subscription from £35, where it has been for at least a decade, to £50. We wanted to guarantee our ongoing support to the extremely valuable work that's being carried out at Aphrodisias. As this newsletter testifies, this year's summer season saw significant achievements in many areas.

On 16 March 2023, we have the chance to hear from the horse's mouth exactly what those achievements were – the first fully active season since the pandemic. A full team of students, colleagues, and experts, including stone restorers from Cliveden Conservation, was back at Aphrodisias. It was an extraordinarily successful summer with significant progress on all major projects: the Basilica, Pool of the Place of Palms, Tetracylon Street, the House of Kybele, and the Sebasteion. Thomas Kaefer and Gerhard Paul were hard at work setting up large columns and architraves, and the Blue Depot was alive with Cliveden conservators working on difficult marble reliefs. Trevor Proudfoot would have been proud.

Chairman: Lady Daunt

Trustees: Mrs Renate Nahum, Mr Barnaby Rogerson, Dr Sandy Mosse (Hon Treas), Mr Gordon Robinson,  
Mr Richard Wilkinson, Lord John Scott, Mr William Chubb (Hon. Sec)

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

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### **The Basilica:**



In the Basilica five more panels of Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices in Latin, Turkish and English were set up which describe the strange world of the late Roman economy (centre left in the photo). At the same time, work progressed on the anastylosis (accurate reconstruction) of the four colossal columns of the building's vestibule, repairing and mounting their four-metre-long architrave blocks.

This involved bringing the large architectural members from the Basilica to the Blue Depot where they were repaired, joined, supplemented, dowelled, glued, and made good, after which they were taken back to the Basilica for mounting in their correct positions. At the same time, work for Michael Crawford's volume on Diocletian's Prices Edict was completed: it will go to the publishers shortly and will be *Aphrodisias XIII* in the monograph series. A 3D reconstruction of the inscribed edict on the Basilica's façade was made for the book's frontispiece.

### **The Pool of the Place of Palms:**

In the pool of the Urban Park (formerly known as the 'South Agora') good progress was made with the restoration of its sensitive marble perimeter along its north side (pictured left). The perimeter seating carried a super-abundance of graffiti. The major collaborative volume on the excavation of the pool and



its historical riches (by sixteen specialist authors) was finished at the site during the summer and will also be soon on its way to the publishers (it will be *Aphrodisias XIV*).

### **Tetrapylon Street:**



Work was pursued in different parts of the excavated Tetrapylon Street with new sondages to investigate continued life on the Street after the seventh-century urban collapse. Parts of the Dark Age Complex that jutted into the Street, in regrettably unsustainable forms of medieval construction, were dismantled. This allowed further inspection of the Street's long life and connections to the earlier street constructions behind it. The Street investigations have put a lot more detail and texture on the long, changed, and difficult life of the area in this period. The detailed collaborative write-up of the Street excavation is scheduled for next season. The photo shows the excavation of the Street's East Portico's back wall.

### The House of Kybele:



The big new project in the House of Kybele is producing excellent results. The late antique mansion just inside the northeast City Wall was part of a neighbourhood that includes a warehouse, a street, and a city gate. This season the house was cleared and cleaned, and the whole area was documented in a new state plan. Careful research reconnected the earlier finds in the museum with their contexts in the house. For example, the team was able to reconstitute the newly discovered assemblage of late Roman lamps and ceramic vessels with the exquisite marble statuette group of Kybele and Zeus that was found in front of a large niche in Room 10 in the private northwest section of the house.

The layout, history, and functional components of the house are coming into focus — its marble-tiled reception suite (Rooms 1-3), small private library(?) and fountain courts (Rooms 18-19), and a wide apsidal garden room (14) still for the most part unexcavated. The heyday of the house was the fifth and sixth century when Aphrodisias was a thriving provincial capital. The photo shows the House of Kybele from the Southeast.

**Sebasteion:**

New anastylosis was begun on the Sebasteion's temple. The aim is to restore its Corinthian columnar façade that faced down the long relief-lined avenue in front of it. The temple stood on a tall podium and was dedicated to Livia and Tiberius: it was the culmination of the whole complex. The team aims to recreate some of its effect in 'closing' the sanctuary's east end. This season, the temple platform was repaired to bring its front up to the right height, and parts of two columns and their column bases were trial-mounted. They already dramatically change the experience of the complex. The photo shows anastylosis work on columns of the Sebasteion Temple.

**Museum:**

In the Blue Depot, talented Cliveden restorers worked continuously on the set of sculptures to be displayed in a new hall and covered court that will be built inside the existing museum courtyard. Work was carried out first on the most challenging items, a set of badly fragmented mythological reliefs from the Basilica and the Propylon of the Urban Park (formerly known as the 'Agora Gate'). They are



typically vigorous Aphrodisian compositions that have been brought back to life by their sensitive restoration. The photo shows restoration of a centaur's head.

#### **The Priestess:**



The summer's most eye-catching find, typically Aphrodisian, is a beautiful marble portrait of a young Antonine priestess of the imperial cult, found in the Street excavations. The portrait had been re-used as rubble at the foot of the west street wall, having fallen from an apartment above during the collapse. The head has significant traces of fire damage and was probably a victim of the early-seventh-century disaster, a major fire followed by a serious earthquake, dated by coins to c. 615-620.

The Priestess wore a tiara-like headdress that once carried several little busts (now knocked off) of the imperial figures whose cult she served. Perhaps most striking is the young woman's elaborate fashion hairstyle, modelled on that of Faustina the Elder, wife of Antoninus Pius (AD 138–161). Her hair has been tightly plaited and wound around her head six times. The resulting coiffure is superbly carved. The portrait demonstrates that the coiffure was achieved with her own real hair (it must have been very long), and that it was arranged with a complexity that needed skilled slaves. The photo shows this exciting find, the portrait head of an Imperial Priestess CE 140.

Professor Smith writes 'it was a most rewarding season, with really good results, carried out at full strength' and that he is 'enormously grateful to the Friends for their outstanding generosity'.

#### **Events in 2022**

During February 2022, Julia (Dr Leneghan) and Bert (Professor Smith) discussed the families of outstandingly gifted Aphrodisian sculptors who followed the trade in marble from Aphrodisias' quarries throughout the ancient world with electrifying brilliance in the Marylebone branch of Daunt Books.

Following the AGM in March, Bert delivered another of his beautifully illustrated lectures on the unexpectedly productive 2021 season despite the problems caused by Covid. As usual it took place in the Art Workers Guild and for those unable to attend, it was impeccably and simultaneously zoomed by William Chubb's daughters.

In mid-June, blessed by glorious weather, William organised a memorable outing to the gardens of the late Christopher Lloyd at Great Dixter. The party was taken around by Fergus Garrett, Christopher Lloyd's charismatic half Turkish head gardener with whom many Turkish seed collecting expeditions were made from the late 1990s. These now give the garden its unusual flora now combined with Fergus' vivid sense of colour. Once again, for those privileged Friends who took the train down to Kent, it was an inspirational day.

### **Events for 2023**

So far, we have two definite dates for the Friends' 2023 diaries. The first is in **Daunt Books, 83 Marylebone High Street W1U 4QW at 6:30 PM on Monday, 9 January 2023** when we will have another chance to hear Julia (Dr Leneghan) and Bert (Prof Smith) discuss new aspects pertaining to Aphrodisias which doubtless will be as interesting as it will be unmissable. I am as grateful to Bert and Julia as I am to Daunt Books who unfailingly extend us a warm welcome.

The second is a reminder that our 29<sup>th</sup> AGM and annual Kenan Erim Memorial lecture is on **Thursday, 16 March 2023**. The AGM will start punctually at 6:15 PM and the lecture itself by as near to 6:30 PM as possible. Once again it will take place in the Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, Bloomsbury WC1.

The application forms for Monday 9 January and Thursday 16 March will be emailed to you with this newsletter.

William Chubb has told me that it may be possible to organise a seven-day expedition to Aphrodisias next June which, besides concentrating on Aphrodisias itself, would include other sites in Western Turkey. A possible itinerary might be to fly to Antalya, then travel north to Aphrodisias, and fly back from Izmir, perhaps having stayed en route on the shore of Lake Bafa. However, he needs to know how many Friends might want to be included before proceeding any further, so if you are interested, please contact him at [willchubb@msn.com](mailto:willchubb@msn.com). The likely dates for this expedition would be June 25-July 2 2023.

It remains for me to thank you all once again for your continued support through the political turmoil of both countries. The good news is that Aphrodisias is now generally considered, after Ephesus, the finest Graeco-Roman site in Asia Minor and our steady support for nearly 30 years which has contributed towards this, is entirely thanks to Bert for involving us so closely in his work. I am also most grateful to the Trustees of the Friends – most especially to William Chubb, our invaluable Hon Secretary who nobly looks after the day-to-day running of the Trust with maximum efficiency as well as to his daughters for their technical skills which makes it a family business.

Remaining deeply grateful to Julia Leneghan, Fergus Garrett and Elspeth Denison for their invaluable contributions throughout the year, and finally immeasurably more thanks go to Bert,

Yours sincerely



Patricia Daunt

Chairman of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust