



THE
FRIENDS OF
APHRODISIAS
TRUST

Brunswick House,
97 Knatchbull Road,
London SE5 9QU

Telephone: 0774 896 4075
aphrodisias.org.uk
Email
willchubb@msn.com

1 December 2024

Dear Friends,

In some ways it was sad to be making our way back to the Art Workers' Guild in March, 2024, knowing that neither Patricia nor Timothy Daunt would be there to greet us. But what a wonderful legacy Patricia left! Her contribution to Aphrodisias as Chairman of almost 30 years has been phenomenal, and I know all the Friends are determined to see it carried forward.

For Patricia, Aphrodisias was simply 'the most beautiful of all the archaeological sites in western Turkey – arguably in the whole Classical world'. How she would have enjoyed writing an introduction in her inimitable style to the Director's report on 2024's exceptional discoveries. For they are indeed exceptional. She would have been thrilled by the chance discovery of the colossal head of Zeus (see overleaf), as well as the progress made in so many areas of the excavation.

The 2024 AGM at the Art Workers' Guild on 5 March was well attended by some 50 Friends, who were joined by a large group of excavation-team members, well-informed colleagues and students. It was fascinating to hear their stories, and we look forward to meeting them again at the next **AGM, on 12 March, 2025**. We were also honoured by the presence of the Friends' Honorary President, Koray Ertaş, Turkey's Ambassador to the UK.

Following the business of the AGM, I was introduced as the new Chairman of the Trust. Professor Smith then delivered the 30th Kenan Erim Lecture, giving us a vivid account of the progress made during the summer of 2023. Highlights included completing the setting up of Diocletian's Edict of Maximum Prices in the Civic Basilica (in Latin, Turkish and English); continued restoration of the perimeter seating around the 170m-long pool in the Place of Palms – Patricia loved the 'super-abundance of graffiti' (the 14th monograph is now out); and the re-erection of large sections of the Sebasteion's façade and its Corinthian columns, as well as further excavation in Tetrapylon Street and the House of Kybele.

Finally, the presentation of a copy of Don McCullin's *Journeys Across Roman Asia Minor* was made to Renate Nahum to thank her for stepping in as Interim Chairperson.

John Scott

Chairman of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust

Honorary President

H.E. O. Koray Ertaş,
Turkish Ambassador
to the United Kingdom
Chairman

Lord John Scott

Trustees

Mrs Renate
Nahum, Mr Barnaby
Rogerson, Dr Sandy Mosse
(Hon Treas), Mr Gordon
Robinson, Mr William
Chubb (Hon. Sec)

Director of The

Aphrodisias Excavations

Professor R.R.R. Smith

Registered Charity
Number 293148



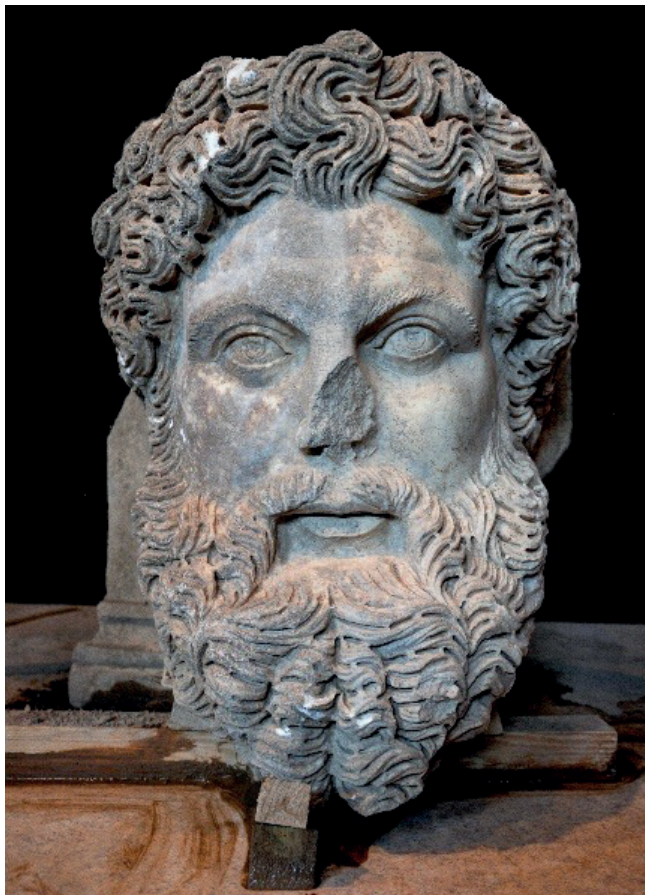
Barnaby Rogerson,
Bert Smith,
Renate Nahum,
John Scott,
H.E. O. Koray Ertaş



THE 2024 APHRODISIAS SUMMER SEASON

Besides the discovery of the colossal head of Zeus, this summer produced other interesting surprises – not least in the House of Kybele and the North Temenos House. Both of these form part of the Housing and Urban Living Project, to which the Friends have been important contributors. The dig has made exciting progress on many other fronts, too.

FIGURE 1
HEAD OF ZEUS
Height 66cm,
later 2nd century AD



The colossal head of Zeus unearthed near the Temple of Aphrodite this summer was an extraordinary find of great historical importance. Carved in marble of the highest quality, it has already attracted widespread interest in the international press and on social media, following a media launch by the Turkish Minister of Culture and Tourism.

The discovery of the giant bearded head of a senior Olympian god came early in the season, in mid-July, when grass was being cleared around the city centre to create a fire-break. It was lying close to the surface, some 60 metres northwest of the Temple of Aphrodite (fig. 1). A geophysical survey revealed that the find-place was an open area with a stoa on one side (a sanctuary?) aligned with the ancient street grid.

The head projects in high relief from a moulded console or bracket. The hairstyle, beard and royal diadem identify the subject as Zeus, a god of

great local importance at Aphrodisias, on a par with Aphrodite, the city goddess.

This is a sophisticated realisation of a divine image, both powerful and dramatic. The brilliant drill-work in the hair and beard are those of a top Aphrodisian workshop. The sensitive technique is borrowed from portrait sculpture, used here to give the classic image of Zeus a contemporary effect – the effect of a living, breathing divinity.

HOUSE OF KYBELE

FIGURE 2
HOUSE OF
KYBELE

The long, vaulted basement chamber (B) and the apsidal reception room of what was formerly called the Water Channel House. The complex was renamed the House of Kybele after a striking late-antique cult figure of the mountain mother goddess found in it in 1986. The neighbourhood includes workshops, a warehouse, a street and a city gate, as well as the house itself



The Housing and Urban Living Project includes the excavation of both the House of Kybele and the North Temenos House (overleaf). The Friends' generous support is making a valuable contribution towards the cost of excavating, conserving and publishing these two big houses and their remarkable inventories.

The House of Kybele Project, begun in 2022, is investigating a neighbourhood just inside the northeast City Wall. It includes a warehouse, workshops, modest housing, a street, a small street restaurant and a city gate, as well as the large House of Kybele itself.

In 2024, work concentrated on understanding more of the phases in the construction of the warehouse and the complex of structures to its east, and more about the several levels of the Kybele House in the spaces behind (north of) its major apsidal reception room (fig. 2, A), where we expected to uncover the service quarters. The results could not have been more different.

A remarkable complex was excavated between the apse and the exterior north wall of the house. It consists of a long, vaulted basement

chamber (fig. 2, B), constructed with imperial-period brickwork of high quality, which originally supported an upper storey, probably a kind of piano nobile. The basement chamber has a curious cramped circular pit countersunk into its floor, complete with cover slabs. At its east end an entranceway leads down into a series of underground chambers and tunnels that follow a U-shaped route round and beneath the basement chamber. Their walls were deliberately encrusted with thick sinter to give a cave-like appearance.

The contents of the basement chamber were badly damaged by the destruction of the house in the early 7th century and were partly ransacked during later salvage operations looking for metal and building materials. What is important about the vaulted chamber of the Kybele House is that whatever was going on in this chamber was still in full operation throughout the 5th and 6th centuries and into the early 7th. The finds show that the activities were of a committed pagan ritual character. A series of high-quality small marble cult figures



FIGURE 3
APHRODITE
Height 34 cm,
5th century AD

*The great mountain
mother goddess Kybele
is depicted in no fewer
than three of the finest
figures discovered
this year in the vaulted
chamber of the
House of Kybele*



of 5th-century manufacture were found in thick assemblages against the north wall of the House of Kybele's vaulted chamber, and also broken and strewn violently across its floor.

The cult figures represent Aphrodite, Apollo, Athena, Kybele and Zeus. The great mountain mother goddess Kybele is present in no fewer than three of the finest figures (fig. 3). Attendant

apparatuses included copper-alloy lamps, miniature ceramic lamps, ceramic vessels, copper-alloy jugs and many small stands for incense-burners. All of this makes compelling evidence for a private pagan cult complex functioning into the early 7th century.

FIGURE 4
NORTH
TEMENOS
HOUSE

Excavation is under way in the rooms of the north range of the North Temenos House. The tall columns at the back are part of the Temple of Aphrodite



NORTH TEMENOS HOUSE

Excavation in 2024 of the North Temenos House, located beside the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, was closely coordinated with a new programme of geophysical surveys in the northern part of Aphrodisias. The focus was on exploring the peristyle at the eastern edge of the house plan and the range of rooms on its northern edge (fig. 4).

Abundant high-quality late-Hellenistic ceramic tableware (unusual for Aphrodisias) showed that there was elite housing in this area as early as the Augustan period. The date of construction of the surviving house after circa AD 300 was confirmed. New evidence showed extensive remodelling after circa AD 600.

OTHER PROJECTS

Other ongoing projects in 2024 included the conservation of the Tetrapylon, further anastylosis in the Sebasteion, documentation of the Temple of Aphrodite, conservation of the pool in the Place of Palms, and the study of bones, ceramics, coins, glass, inscriptions, marbles and mosaics.

2024 also saw the publication of the 14th site monograph: Andrew Wilson and Ben Russell (eds), *Aphrodisias XIV: The Place of Palms: An Urban Park at Aphrodisias* (Wiesbaden 2024), aphrodisias-excavations.com/monographs

A VISIT TO
CALLEVA
ATREBATUM,
SILCHESTER

Guiding the Friends on their walk around Calleva Atrebatum in October was the excavation director, Prof. Mike Fulford (centre), who had just completed and published a major excavation of one of the settlement's main city blocks



EVENTS IN 2024

On Tuesday, 8 October, a small and very fortunate group of Friends were treated to a wonderful circuit of the walls of the Roman town of Calleva Atrebatum, just to the east of the village of Silchester in Hampshire. Calleva Atrebatum is a settlement contemporary with Aphrodisias. Our guide to walking the site on that beautiful October day was its brilliant longtime excavation director, Prof. Mike Fulford, who had just completed and published a major excavation of one of the settlement's main city blocks. Besides possessing one of the best-preserved Roman walls in the country, Calleva Atrebatum also boasts the impressive remains of an amphitheatre. After a two-hour walk the party retired to the aptly named Calleva Arms for lunch and refreshments.

EVENTS FOR 2025

At next year's 31st AGM, the annual Kenan Erim Memorial Lecture will be delivered as usual by the Director of Excavations at Aphrodisias, Professor Bert Smith.

**The AGM will be back in the
Art Workers' Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT
on
Wednesday, 12 March, 2025, at 6:15 PM.
(Please note the date in next year's diary!)**

Subscription forms are being sent out with this newsletter. Please encourage friends to join. It remains for me to thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.



THE FRIENDS OF APHRODISIAS INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT AND THE NEW-LOOK WEBSITE

The setting up of the new Instagram account and the overhaul of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust website, aphrodisias.org.uk, are initiatives that I suggested following my appointment as Chairman. Professor Smith and his Turkish colleague Ozan Yıldırım of Istanbul Technical University are largely responsible for the work involved, for which I would like to thank them.

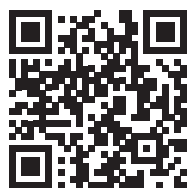
You can log into the [friends.of.aphrodisias.trust](https://www.instagram.com/friends.of.aphrodisias.trust) Instagram account either through the Instagram app, or via the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust website, aphrodisias.org.uk. Click on the **Instagram logo** in the top right corner of the first page of our website, and it will direct you to our Instagram account.



The design of the Trust's website, illustrated above, brings it in line with its sister site, aphrodisias-excavations.com, which is the main excavation website run by New York and Oxford Universities.

If you click on the **Gallery** tab at the top right of the home page of The Friends of Aphrodisias Trust website, you will be taken into the main Aphrodisias excavations site, and assume, as I did, that the excellent photos and descriptions of the buildings were all part of the new Friends site. In effect, they are, and the new Friends website provides an excellent introduction to Aphrodisias.

It is a vital portal for current Friends and hopefully for new recruits. On which note, do please forward the link to anyone you think might be interested. For instant access to the site on your telephone, please use this QR code.



John Scott
Chairman of the Friends of Aphrodisias Trust



THE
FRIENDS OF
APHRODISIAS
TRUST

Brunswick House,
97 Knatchbull Road,
London SE5 9QU

Telephone: 0774 896 4075
aphrodisias.org.uk
Email
willchubb@msn.com

Honorary President

H.E. O. Koray Ertas,
Turkish Ambassador
to the United Kingdom

Chairman

Lord John Scott

Trustees Mrs Renate

Nahum, Mr Barnaby
Rogerson, Dr Sandy Mosse
(Hon Treas), Mr Gordon
Robinson, Mr William
Chubb (Hon. Sec)

**Director of The
Aphrodisias Excavations**

Professor R.R.R. Smith

Registered Charity

Number 293148