This was a great year for Aphrodisias and for our project. Major discoveries were made in research and excavation; the newly renovated museum opened its doors; a monograph on the reliefs from the Agora Gate was published; important grants were awarded by foundations; and Turkey’s Ministry of Culture and Tourism asked UNESCO to place Aphrodisias on the World Heritage List.

EXCAVATION

The Street. Excavation of the grand north-south avenue, which runs south from the Tetrapsylion, exposed a Byzantine wall that made interesting use of earlier material, including columns of the Roman colonnade (Fig. 2). A remarkable monumental lintel block was discovered here, inscribed with a dedication by one Eusebes Philopatris to Zeus Spaloxios and Zeus Patroos, both local deities (Fig. 3). This ‘Eusebes the Patriot’ is well known at Aphrodisias as one of the builders of the Sebasteion. The street excavation was directed by Bahadır Yıldırım with trench supervisors Ayşe Ercan, D. Jacob Rabinowitz, and Lillian Stoner.

Basilica. The major discovery in the Civil Basilica was a raised audience chamber at the back of the south hall. It was fronted by a tall marble podium and entered by stairs from the side (Fig. 4). A new architectural drawing, like those found in the Basilica in 2005 and in 2008, was discovered engraved.
on the marble pavement in front of the podium (Fig. 5). Work was supervised by Phil Stinson with trench supervisor Maile Hutterer. Pottery studied by Ulrike Outschar indicates that the foundation deposits of the south hall date no later than the Neronian period.

**SITE CONSERVATION**

*Hadrianic Baths.* The Baths are one of the site’s most imposing structures (Fig. 6). They are very well preserved but have lacked proper conservation since their excavation in 1904-5. A six year plan to rescue these magnificent ruins from further decay and to present them as an open-air museum is being supported by the World Monuments Fund® Robert W. Wilson Challenge to Conserve Our Heritage, which is allocating a total of $333,333, and by the J.M. Kaplan Fund, as part of a larger grant to support conservation at Aphrodisias (see below).

After the plant overgrowth had been cleared, a remote controlled helicopter photographed the complex (Fig. 6). A four-columned court surrounding a pool was chosen as a test-case area for trialing different conservation treatments to be used in the rest of the complex. The damaged late antique tiled floor was cleaned and stabilized with special mortars and stainless steel dowels; ancient wall tops were capped with lime mortar; and the marble-lined pool was pointed and repaired.

A colossal torso of a naked god or hero, discovered beside its base at the pool in 1967, was molded in silicon, and a cast of the torso was set up on its original base (Fig. 7).

The conservation work was supervised by Thomas Kaefer and Gerhard Paul, and carried out by Kent Severson with the assistance of Berna Çağlar and Kristen Watson, and by Trevor Proudfoot with members of his Cliveden Workshop, U.K. (Nicholas Barnfield, Emma Kate Bertenshaw).

**Other funding.** The J.M. Kaplan Fund has awarded a challenge grant of up to $550,000 over the next three years for
conservation work in the North Agora and the Theater and for study and stone-for-stone reconstruction of the Sebasteion’s propylon or gate-building, as well as for conservation work in the Baths.

**DOCUMENTATION & PUBLICATION**

With a grant from NYU’s Institute for the Study of the Ancient World (ISAW), all the old field notebooks from 1961 to 1990 were digitized (more than 22,000 pages) – a vital undertaking. A new total station was bought with support from the 1984 Foundation, together with a computer to digitize our sector plans and develop a digital master-plan. Our senior architect, Harry Mark, together with Felipe Rojas, supervised Henry Bernberg, Aygün Kalınbayrak, Allyson McDavid, and Mykel Terada in surveying and making new plans in the Avenue, Basilica, Baths, and Sebasteion.

Dissertation projects were completed on the Atrium House (Ian Lockey), columnar sarcophagi (Esen Öğüş), and sarcophagi in context (Heather Turnbow). Mark Abbe continued investigation of marble polychromy (Fig. 8). And publication research was pursued on the Stadium (Katherine Welch), Triconch House (Michele Berenfeld), Sculptor’s Workshop (Julie Van Voorhis), and City Walls (Peter De Staebler). The latest monograph in the Aphrodisias series was published: Pascale Linant de Bellefonds, *The Mythological Reliefs from the Agora Gate: Aphrodisias IV* (2009) (Fig. 9).

New students on the project were funded by a generous grant from the Leon Levy Foundation, for training in excavation, artifact study, conservation, and museum display. Student seminars were held on each of these subjects.

**MUSEUM**

The Aphrodisias Museum was renovated, and students researched the sculptures displayed and wrote text for new labels and information panels designed by Harry Mark (Fig. 10). A newly conserved sarcophagus was mounted at the entrance (Fig. 1). The renovated Museum was sponsored by the Geyre Vakfi and opened on 24 October 2009.
SEBASTEION ANASTYLOSIS

The stone-for-stone reconstruction (anastylosis) of the east end of the Sebasteion, begun in 2005, reached the third, Corinthian story over Room 1 (Fig. 11). The discovery of a window, in place of a relief, in the centre of the short, east end of the building was a surprise. This work is generously sponsored by the Geyre Vakfı and was carried out by Thomas Kaefer and Gerhard Paul, with Özgür Emre İşık, Aygün Kalınbayrak, and Özgür Öztürk.

The main part of our dedicated team of 45 students and senior staff is shown at the Sebasteion (Fig. 12). The success of our work depended, as always, on close collaboration with our skilled local work crews, Aphrodisias Museum staff, and representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

We wish a fond farewell to Bahadır Yıldırım, who has taken up a permanent position in the Sardis Office, and welcome warmly Esen Öğüş as our new Field Director. She is a dynamic and talented young scholar, with long field experience in Turkey and at Aphrodisias. Currently at Harvard, she will take up her new post in July this year.

We express our warm thanks to the Friends of Aphrodisias and to our donors who have supported us so generously over the past year and made our work possible:

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Donations received 5/1/09 to 3/31/10

R.R.R. Smith – Director

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