

The Amorium Excavations Project

October 2005 Newsletter

This is to be the last Amorium Newsletter – at least, in this printed newssheet format. The bi-annual Newsletter was started back in 1994 and so has had a good run, but it has now been superceded by the Amorium website : www.amoriumexcavations.org. The latter has been very well received and has already captured a worldwide audience – something that the Newsletter never quite managed. Bishop John of Amorion has recently described the website as “terrific,” and he has already made it part of his personal home address! His Grace continues to take a very great interest in the Project and was thrilled by the finds this past summer. Indeed, the 2005 excavation season was exceptional. It showed that Amorium still has a very great deal to offer in the way of individual finds and in the information that can be gained from the discovery of well-preserved archaeological strata. All of the team can take



Bronze reliquary cross found in 2005 – of the many fine line drawings done during the season by Paola Pugsley

credit for what was a very productive and enjoyable summer at Amorium. Many of them were old Amorium hands – and it was particularly pleasing to have Yoav Arbel back on the team – but there were also some important new additions. Benny Arubas introduced two new members, Octavian Reicher and Tatiana Meltsen, who contributed enormously to the planning and drawing effort, and Louise Freedman joined the stone conservation team and provided much valuable help and advice. We were also pleased to welcome back Muradiye Bursalı, who joined Beate Böhlendorf’s ceramic drawing team and took a keen interest in the Byzantine pottery. We should not forget, too, the contribution of the local workmen, who did an excellent job again this year and showed great enthusiasm for the work. It is, perhaps, appropriate in the last Newsletter to mention also our long-serving cook and housekeeper, Kazim Eryiğit. He has been indispensable to the Project since he took on this role back in 1993, and it is mainly through his efforts that the Dig House has been able to run so smoothly and efficiently. Archaeologists dig on their stomachs (not literally!), and Kazim’s *türlü* (vegetable stew) and chicken ‘*kuri*’ (curry) have become synonymous with all that is good about Amorium.

Plans for the 2006 season are already well advanced with an ambitious *one* programme of excavation, conservation, and research work. The increased scale of the proposed work calls for an enlarged team and more funding. A team list of some 50 people has already been drawn up; strenuous efforts are now being made to come up with the necessary funds. Eric Ivison, Jane Foley, and Mücahide Lightfoot will lead the team in the field, as they did so successfully in 2005, but it is hoped that Benny Arubas will also become part of the management team, directing all of the surveying and planning work in the coming season. The Director meanwhile continues to focus on publications. Revisions have been made to the new *Amorium Guidebook* so that this year’s finds can be included, and Homer Publications now promises to have it ready for publication by the spring of 2006. Likewise, a number of chapters in *Amorium Reports 3* in the monograph series were updated and new material from the 2005 season was added. It is hoped to have this volume ready for the publisher by the end of the year. Good progress has also been made on *Amorium Reports 4: The Coins of Amorium*, which is being compiled together with Constantina Katsari, who has recently taken up a new post at Leicester University. Congratulations also go to Olga Karagiorgou and her husband, Stephan Risch, on the birth of their son Philipp on October 12 – another addition to the new generation of Amorians!

This year is drawing to a close with a very upbeat tempo. Things are looking good for the Amorium Project with a well-established team and a dynamic plan of work laid out for the next few years, culminating with the creation of the Amorium Visitor Centre at the site of the Lower City Church. We



All smiles at Amorium 2005 – some of the team

have come a long way since Newsletter No. 1, so please help the Project to continue the good work by pledging your support and making a contribution. Contact the Director, Chris Lightfoot, at the email address below.

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