

The Amorium Excavations Project

March 2008 Newsletter

Spring has officially arrived, and we were able to kick off the season (and Easter) in a suitably fitting way for Amorium with a lecture on March 20 at the Bruce Museum, sponsored by the Archaeology Associates of Greenwich. Many thanks go to Phyllis Simons, who organized the talk, and to all those who came out on an unseasonably cold and windy evening. As noted in the new style website created by Ned Schoolman, there has been much traveling and lecturing done over the past few months, but at the same time much progress has been achieved on the publication front and in our preparations for the coming season. This year we will have a larger team than ever before, including new members from Portugal, Croatia, Germany, Italy, and the Czech Republic. We are also pleased to welcome



Chris Lightfoot and Hanna Witte-Orr in Leiden for the NINO Symposium – the Roman soldier clearly needs a restorative glass of Amorium ayran!

some new Turkish team members, including a fresh crop of students from 18th March University, Çanakkale. Sadly, Ece Turnator, a graduate student at Harvard, will not be able to join us this year to carry on her great work with the marble revetment, but Olga Karagiorgou is planning to come back with her two little ones, so work will continue on this important but less glamorous aspect of the carved stone project. In addition, Tatiana Meltsem will make further inroads into the marble and limestone furnishings with her superb drawings for the final publication of the church (which we are now officially calling 'Basilica A'). Eric Ivison, presently a Fellow at the Koç University Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, has spent the winter working on the first draft of this volume, which promises to be both spectacular and scholarly.

Visits have been made to the site during the winter, first in December and then in March; more pictures are posted on the website. Eric in particular was able to capture some nice views of the site under snow. It is very valuable to experience Amorium at different times of year and to be reminded that it is not constantly a place of heat, dust, and flies. Likewise, it is always good to see the site guard, Selahattin, and the few remaining villagers. No *ayran* at this time of year of course (see Newsletter 24), but lots of hot tea and generous hospitality. Meanwhile, Jane Foley and Arzu Demirel have recently announced a plan to compile an Amorium Cookbook. Team members are being asked to join forces with their compatriots and produce a national dish that will complement the fresh local produce and, perhaps, capture something of the flavour of the site. All entries will be tested during the 2008 and 2009 seasons, and the winning menus, selected by a panel of judges, will be credited and entered into the Cookbook, along with illustrations of the dishes and suitable views of Amorium and its surroundings. With the beginning of spring our thoughts turn again to the Annual Symposium in May – to be held this year in Ankara to mark its 30th anniversary (together with that of its impressive publication, the *Kazı Sonuçları Toplantısı* volumes). The event also coincides with the 60th anniversary of our official sponsors, the British Institute at Ankara. Then we will eagerly await the start of the season itself, provisionally set for June 30. We encourage visitors to come and see the excavations as they unfold during July and August; all will be greeted with a warm welcome and a cool, refreshing glass of Kazım's finest *ayran*. The recent loss of the Amorium cell phone in Turkey means that a new number is being acquired and will soon be posted on the website, together with other practical information about the site and the project. If you wish to support or contribute to the Amorium Project, please contact the Director at the address given below.



The new stone shelter in the Dig House compound as seen in December with the dismantled Şuayp Demirel gantry