

Episkopi Bay Survey 2005 Field Season

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During July and August, a small team of archaeologists and students undertook a third season of underwater survey work in the area of Episkopi Bay and the Akrotiri Peninsula. The project, which forms a contribution to the University of Cincinnati excavations at Episkopi-*Bamboula*, is undertaken by permission of the Department of Antiquities Cyprus and logistically and financially supported by the Institute of Nautical Archaeology at Texas A&M University, the Cyprus Society for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage, and RPM Nautical Foundation.

The team resumed surveys at the inlet of Dreamer's Bay on southern Akrotiri. Limited explorations of the anchorage had already shown that the site was littered with pottery, and several substantial new and revealing assemblages were added to the catalog this past summer. Archaeologists also began preliminary mapping of a long ashlar-built mole reported years before by F. Haggerty. The magnitude of the structure, which is at present entirely submerged, places it alongside the island's other major maritime facilities, certainly meriting additional and more intensive attention during future seasons.

Previous investigations at the small inlet of Avdimou Bay had revealed the scattered debris of a 5th or 6th century A.D. merchantman. Further explorations in 2005 aimed to gauge better the extent of the wreckage, and determine whether additional diagnostic ceramics and other cargo or hull remains might yield a more precise date for the wreckage. During the course of recording, two additional stone anchors were documented, along with three partial millstones that may have served as ballast or else supplemented the ship's primary cargo of wine carried in amphoras from the Gaza region of Palestine.

Finally, thanks to a grant of equipment and technical expertise by RPM Nautical Foundation, high-resolution remote-sensing was undertaken over a large area of Episkopi Bay. Multibeam sonar operations from the 37-meter research vessel *Hercules* resulted in the detection of many anomalies on the seabed, including some potential shipwreck targets. Investigations during 2006 will focus on visual exploration of these targets through diving and remotely operated vehicle (ROV) work to determine which may be the remains of shipwrecks.

For more information and updates, see the website of the Department of Antiquities for press releases: http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/da/da.nsf/DMLexcavat_en/DMLexcavat_en