

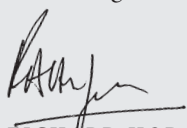
From the Director

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE BUTRINT

BY RICHARD
HODGES

ARCHAEOLOGISTS MAKE PLACES. Butrint was largely unknown when Luigi Maria Ugolini set out, in 1928, to discover if it really was a city founded by Trojan exiles. Ugolini's excavations became theoretically accessible when the nationalist dictator, Enver Hoxha, had a road built to the site on the occasion of Nikita Khrushchev's visit 50 years ago.

Butrint only became a *global* place, however, when it was inscribed on the World Heritage list in 1992. The following year, the Butrint Foundation was formed by Lords Rothschild and Sainsbury to protect its spirit of place. In 1999, the Foundation helped create an enlarged park with a buffer zone, along with a Butrint National Park authority, essentially safeguarding it from development. In the ten years since, visitor numbers have increased from a few thousand to 85,000 this year. Its idyllic setting and conserved monuments serve as many visitors' first experience of Albania, a country with an otherwise tortured 20th century history. The aim of the Butrint Foundation has been to carry out research that gives Butrint both a regional and national status, thanks to a combination of publications and capacity building. The explicit goal now is to make this bucolic but fragile place sustainable. Convincing all stakeholders that sustainability is essential is a challenge for place-makers in archaeology. The menace of unmanaged tourist development is always present. To counterbalance this, an ever more urgent need exists to convince local communities that the site and the flow of tourism, as well as the precious identity it has now fashioned—thanks to a combination of research and its idyllic spirit—must be protected. In this struggle to protect and present Butrint, the archaeological investigations proceed. 🏠



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Richard Hodges, Charlotte Hodges, Lucy Watson, and Will Bowden take wheelbarrows into Albania during the first season of excavation in 1994.