From the Director

The University of Pennsylvania Museum’s archaeological research at the site of Gordion in central Turkey was launched fifty years ago by Rodney Young and is still flourishing today under the leadership of Ken Sams (Project Director), Mary Voigt (Field Director), Elizabeth Simpson (Gordion Furniture Project), and their colleagues from a number of different institutions. The Gordion Archaeological Project clearly has been one of the most important and successful research endeavors that the Museum has undertaken in its 113-year history. From the discovery of King Midas’s tomb to the elucidation of the heyday of the Phrygian empire as seen from its capital to new understandings of Gordion’s changing role in long-distance trade in the 1st millennium BC, the fieldwork and laboratory analyses at Gordion have resulted in important contributions to scholarly knowledge of ancient Anatolia. The exciting new discoveries by Pat McGovern and his colleagues about the nature of the funerary feast in the Midas tomb, which was first reported in the journal Nature and widely noted in the press, is just the latest of the significant outcomes emanating from the ongoing study of Gordion.

As part of its responsibilities to Turkey, and in cooperation with the Turkish government, in recent years the Museum and the Gordion Project have devoted considerable time, effort, and money to stabilizing and conserving the architectural and artifactual remains at Gordion, as well as to making the site more attractive to tourists. In relation to the latter, the Museum is exceedingly proud of the opening this past fall of the new addition to the Gordion Museum. The active assistance of Yener Yilmaz, a member of the Museum’s Board of Overseers and head of the non-profit, Turkey-based Gordion Foundation, and Ilhan Temizsoy, the Director of the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, in furthering the development of Gordion as a tourist-friendly attraction has been invaluable.

Readers interested in learning more about Gordion are encouraged to read the articles that follow and to contact Leslie L. Kruhl, the Museum’s Associate Director for Development and Special Events (215-898-4031 or kruhly@ben.dev.upenn.edu), to find out how they might help support the productive work at the site in years to come.

Jeremy A. Sabloff
The Williams Director