

# Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey Project

## Report of Activities Summer 2025

David Gilman Romano, Ph.D. and Mary E. Voyatzis, Ph.D.  
Co-Directors

University of Arizona

under the auspices of  
The American School of Classical Studies at Athens

with the permission of  
The Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports



# 2025 Season Introduction and Preparations

## Introduction and Acknowledgments

The Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey Project conducted the first of its three-year excavation seasons, under our new permit, from June 15 to August 1, 2025. Working under the auspices of the American School of Classical Studies and with the permission of the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports and in collaboration with the Arcadia Ephoreia of Antiquities in Tripolis, Dr. Konstantinos Kissas, Ephor. Our work was divided between the lower sanctuary, where much of our work was undertaken, and the southern peak of the mountain where we were asked to assist in a rescue excavation, together with the team from the Arcadian Ephoreia.

The co-directors of the project are Dr. David Gilman Romano and Dr. Mary E. Voyatzis, both of the University of Arizona. The work was made possible through the generosity of individuals, private foundations and supporters from the United States and Greece. The financial support of the Estate of Annette Merle-Smith of Princeton, New Jersey and Cole and Jeanne Smith of Tucson, Arizona were of major importance. The project also received recent support from the National Science Foundation and continued funding from INSTAP.

The project continues to have excellent relations with the villages of Ano Karyes in Arcadia and Abeliona in Messenia. This was our 22nd year of the project, which began in 2004.



## Preparation and Lab Work

In preparation for the excavation season, between June 12-June 15 nine students and staff worked in our apotheke, located at 32 Heroon Polytechnion Street in Tripolis, opposite the Archaeological Museum. Following two years of study seasons there was much to do to prepare for our first excavation season in three years. Of particular importance was the organization and efforts of Laryssa Shipley who guided the team during these preparatory days.

*Kyle Mahoney, Stephen Czujko and Hunter Hogue setting up the internet receiver with battery pack and microwave dish at the kiosk in the hippodrome. Photo: DGR*

## 2025 Mt. Lykaion Team

Elizabeth Parks, *University of Arizona*  
Gene Olga Mae King, *University of Arizona*  
Andrea Riehle, *Richard Kennedy Architects*  
Samantha Richter, *Harvard University*  
Caroline Carter, *University of Virginia*  
Hunter Hogue, *Chronicle Heritage LLC*  
Evan Paine, *University of Arizona*  
Chris Lee, *University of Arizona*  
Julia Moroz, *University of Arizona*  
Alexis Young, *University of Arizona*  
Grace Gleisner, *University of Evansville*  
Delaney Fisher, *University of Texas*  
Spiridoula Spathopoulou, *University of Patras*  
Anna Tsirakou, *University of Patras*  
Montana Hamel, *Swarthmore College*  
Jude Hemmins, *Swarthmore College*  
Chloe Kanemaru, *Swarthmore College*  
Emma Solórzano, *Swarthmore College*  
Audrey Dent, *Phillips Exeter Academy*  
Stanley Huang, *Phillips Exeter Academy*  
Lexie Sebastian, *Phillips Exeter Academy*

## Program Leaders

Dr. David Gilman Romano, *University of Arizona*  
Dr. Mary E. Voyatzis, *University of Arizona*  
Dr. Kyle Mahoney, *Swarthmore College*  
Dr. Stephen Czujko, *University of Missouri*  
Dr. Rebekah McKay, *University of Evansville*  
Laryssa Shipley, *University of Arizona*  
Philip Griffith, *Florida State University*  
Tabitha Rodriguez, *Studio Caban*

## Volunteers

Eugenia Perdikomati, *Pierce, The American College of Athens*  
Louise Bransbourg, *BASIS Independent Manhattan Upper School*  
Jeanne Bransbourg, *McGill University*  
Dr. Gilles Bransbourg, *Institute for Advanced Study*  
Kalliope E. Kourelis, *Central High School. Philadelphia*

## Chaperones for Exeter Students

Carole Cahalane, *Phillips Exeter Academy*  
Dr. Paul Langford, *Phillips Exeter Academy*

# Excavation Season

## Trench EEW

Work continued in the Ionic building, located directly to the west of the 67 m long stoa. General cleaning of the building was undertaken, and architectural drawings were made of the orthostates, the stylobate and stereobate of the building, some of the drawings are to be utilized for a partial reconstruction proposal to the Ministry of Culture. After cleaning, drawings and photographs were made of the southwest corner of the building, an area that was not documented previously. A detailed study of the prostyle pentastyle column locations on the northern stylobate was made, based on the “halos” of the column bases still visible on the stylobate. This study indicated that the spacing of the five Ionic columns was not exactly equal, but the two flank columns were closer to each other than to the center column. The northern façade of the building was marble although most of the building was built of native limestone. We have not found all of the marble features of the building that Kourouniotis describes and illustrates, although we found one new marble architrave block, and more marble chips in the area between the stoa and the Ionic Building. A sounding was made against the curvilinear interior wall of the building.

Caroline Carter was the trench supervisor working with Audrey Dent, Anna Tsirakou and Spyridoula Spathopoulou.



Audrey Dent working on the test trench at the back of the Ionic Building. Photo: DGR

## Trench PP



Stanley Huang and Paul Langford working in Trench PP. Photo: DGR

The large area of the irregular trench of the Sanctuary of Pan was cleaned, after three years, taking a substantial amount of time. The trench has an open and varied shape. The cleaning revealed the most conspicuous characteristic of this trench which is a very deep curvilinear area where we found previously terracotta water pipes and late Archaic and early Classical pottery and the “Pan” inscription on an archaic roof tile. This area continues to be the most significant aspect of this trench, although the entire trench is interesting.

More rectilinear limestone blocks have been revealed towards the floor of this area. There is also an upper level of the trench to the north that appears to border the curvilinear sunken area. Much of the time of the excavation was spent documenting and understanding the stratigraphy of central portion of the trench, which includes a consistency of clay towards the bottom of the curvilinear area that is an indication of an ancient pool of water. Safety precautions were put in place to guarantee safety of the deep scarps.

Hunter Hogue was the trench supervisor working with Stanley Huang and Paul Langford and others.

## Trench LL



*Chris Lee and Emma Solárzano with Thanasis and Dimitris in the background, digging in Trench LL. Photo: DGR*

The current work in the large Administrative Building measuring 38 x 20 m is in the northern third of the building. The exterior walls are constructed with large ashlar polygonal masonry enclosing several different sectors at different ground levels.

Work was continued in Trench LL in a number of different areas. In the northern aspect of the building the floor level continued to be cleared. To the south of the east-west dividing wall of the building was found an area of burning that produced a number of tile fragments and Hellenistic lamp fragments together with a Doric column drum.

The architects continued to draw the 8 m long north-south interior wall of the building and other specific architectural blocks that have been revealed in the area including a Doric capital and an architrave block.

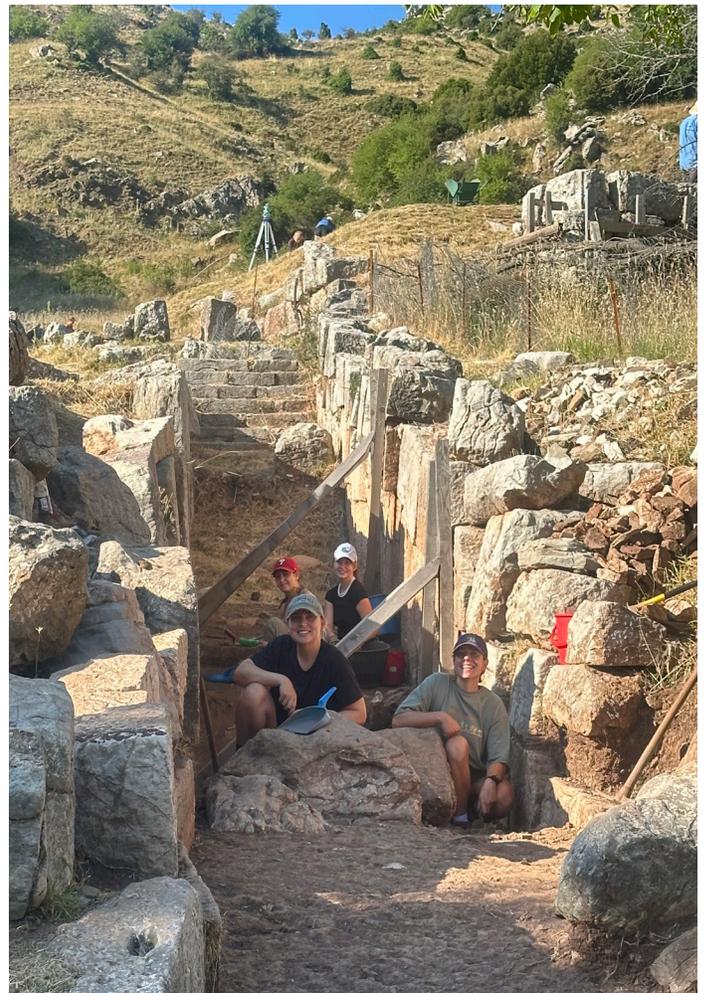
Christopher Lee was the trench supervisor assisted by Emma Solárzano and at times Alexis Young.

## Trench N

Excavation continued in the 31 m long open air corridor that runs between the Administrative Building and the arch towards the stadium and hippodrome. The archway sits between the corridor and the dromos. The corridor was converted into a refuse area during the Hellenistic period, when the Lykaia were moved to Megalopolis and the corridor was no longer utilized for the movement of athletes.

Excavation was carried out for close to 5 m revealing more of the Hellenistic trash deposit excavated in previous seasons. A great deal of Hellenistic pottery was found together with a large quantity of metal finds, including no less than 13 bronze coins from a single context.

Sammi Richter was the trench supervisor of Trench N, assisted by Julia Moroz and Lexie Sebastian.



*Kalliope Kourelis, Lexie Sebastian, Sammi Richter, and Julia Moroz in Trench N. Photo: DGR*

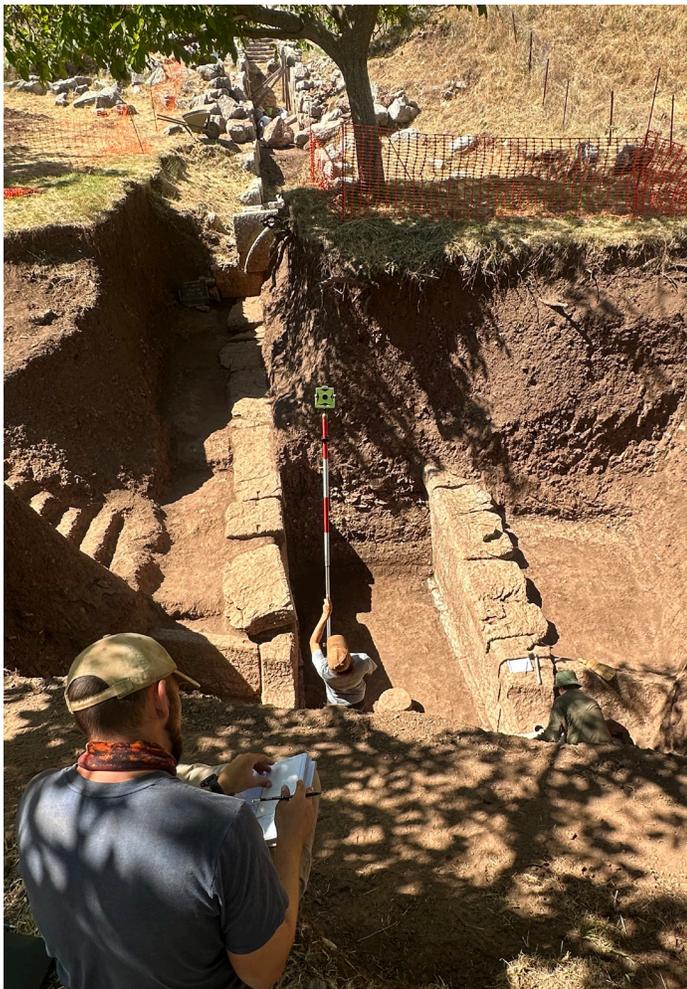
# Excavation Season

## Trench RR

Much of the work in Trench RR was devoted to cleaning the architectural blocks and studying the scarps and the walls of the trench, which have reached a depth of up to 4 m. Various safety precautions were put in place to reduce the danger of the elevations of the scarps.

New excavation revealed the extent of what are likely to be the tops of seat blocks at the edge of the dromos entrance facing north. Further excavation of the exposed floor levels revealed largely Classical and Hellenistic pottery. Our next objective will be to excavate the walnut grove to the north of Trench RR, extending the trench towards the stadium and to remove the walnut tree that is currently over the west end of the arch.

Stephen Czujko and Evan Paine were the principal excavators of Trench RR.



*Dr. Stephen Czujko and Phil Griffith taking elevations in Trench RR. Photo: DGR*

## Trench Z



*Dr. Kyle Mahoney giving an overview of the excavation at the end of the season. Photo: DGR*

Due to illicit excavation and disturbances on the southern peak of Mt. Lykaion last summer and over the course of the year, it was necessary to conduct rescue excavations, at the behest of the Arcadian Ephoreia of Antiquities.

A small team was assigned to clean disturbed areas in the southern area of the altar area within the fencing, and to excavate in an unexcavated area ZIN IE, IIE and part of IIIIE. This was undertaken successfully and together with Mycenaean and Early Iron age pottery were found several bronze tripod cauldrons and several tripod fragments, some bronze decoration and iron fragments and a silver ARKADIKON coin. The American team was also helpful to the Greek team working at the altar, providing them with methodological advice and survey drawings with grid squares that have been useful for their work.

Kyle Mahoney was the Trench Supervisor of the American altar team and he worked with several different students, including Jude Hemmins, Chloe Kanemaru, Alexis Young, Anna Tsirakou, Eugenia Perdikomati, Grace Gleisner.

## Architecture Team

The architectural team consisted of Tabitha Rodriguez, Andrea Riehle and Gene King. They worked in all of the trenches recording individual blocks and walls and making comprehensive drawings of different areas. Special emphasis was given to the north-south wall in the Administrative Building, detailed drawings of the Ionic Building and documentation of the Corridor blocks. Andrea Riehle also worked at the altar of Zeus recording newly discovered aspects that may be related to the architectural platform.



Architects Tabitha Rodriguez and Andrea Riehle in the foreground, with Phillip Griffith and Elizabeth Parks in the background. Photo: DGR

## Topography Team

The Topographical Survey Team consisted of Philip Griffith assisted by Elizabeth Parks. The team worked mostly in the lower sanctuary but Philip Griffith was also actively working at the altar, setting up the electronic total station each day.



Elizabeth Parks taking topographical points on site. Photo: DGR

## Museum Team

Bekah McKay was in charge of the Museum team that consisted of Grace Gleisner, Alexis Young, Montana Hamel and Delaney Fisher. The team was responsible for the registering and storing of all of the finds and the organization of the data sheets that are filled out by each of the excavation teams. They also help with the recording of all of the data. When possible they also can do some research on individual objects with our internet connection. Once per week Bekah McKay went to Tripolis to work with Mary Voyatzis on a number of common museum issues.

*Dr. Mary Voyatzis and Dr. Bekah McKay categorizing pottery from the altar. Photo: DGR*



## Historical Team

Kostis Kourelis and Nota Pantzou initiated a historical survey in the local area looking for information that relates to the Battle of Ano Karyes, July 22, 1825, when Ibrahim Pasha led the Egyptian-Ottoman army against the Greeks during Greece's War of Independence. They presented a lecture to the excavation team on the subject of their research on July 9.



Kostis Kourelis and Nota Pantzou delivering their talk on the 1825 Project. Photo: DGR

# Excavation Season

## Concurrent 2025 Study Season

Mary Voyatzis was in charge of the study season in Tripolis in our apotheke at 32 Heroon Polytechnion Street. Eight researchers were working in the apotheke at different times during the month of July. Our pottery specialists included Susan Petrakis studying the Neolithic pottery, Susan Rotroff the Hellenistic, Deb Kousiounelos the Laconian Iron Age, and Elli Tzavela the Byzantine.

Our other material specialists included Scott Pike working on marble analysis for architectural fragments at the site, and Florentia Frangokpoulou studying lead wreaths and figurines left as offerings at the altar. Christina Kolb was our artist and Souzana Basimakopoulou was conservator. Irene Romano worked at the site especially in the lower sanctuary. Maria-Athena Markou was an assistant to Mary Voyatzis.

This concurrent study season allowed our researchers to analyze the findings at the site. Much of this work was done in preparation for our Volumes I-III of the Mt. Lykaion Studies reports of findings.



*Scott Pike examining architectural fragments for sampling. Photo: DGR*

### 2025 Mt. Lykaion Team

Dr. Mary E. Voyatzis, *University of Arizona*  
Dr. Rebekah McKay, *University of Evansville*

### Ephoreia Staff

Dr. Konstantinos Kissas, *Arcadian Ephoreia of Antiquities*  
Dr. Eleni Psathi, *Arcadian Ephoreia of Antiquities*  
Dr. Anna Karapanagiotou, *Ephor of Antiquities, Peiraeus*  
Theoni Christophilou, *Arcadian Ephoreia of Antiquities*  
Ioanna Sotiropoulou, *Arcadian Ephoreia of Antiquities*

### Specialists

Dr. Irene Romano, *University of Arizona*  
Dr. Susan Petrakis, *ASCSA*  
Dr. Susan Rotroff, *Washington University, St. Louis*  
Dr. Scott Pike, *Willamette University*  
Dr. Deborah Kousiounelos, *University of Oxford*  
Dr. Florentia Frangokpoulou, *Hellenic Ministry of Culture*  
Dr. Elli Tzavella, *Ephoreia of Western Attica*  
Souzana Basimakopoulou, *Technical Education Institute of Athens*  
Christina Kolb, *Archaeological Illustrator*

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† Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Karabots  
Mr. James H. Ottaway, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Arch Brown  
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Ms. Judith P. Jenney	Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Randolph	

*For further information about the project, please contact:*

*Dr. Mary E. Voyatzis*  
*mev@arizona.edu*

*Dr. David Gilman Romano*  
*dgromano@arizona.edu*

*To donate to the project, visit: <https://anthropology.arizona.edu/donate> and indicate "Friends of Mt. Lykaion" in the memo field. Or, checks should be made out to the UA Foundation/Anthropology, indicating the "Friends of Mt. Lykaion" in the memo and may be mailed to the University of Arizona School of Anthropology, 1009 E. South Campus Drive, Tucson, Arizona 85721.*

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## Foundations:

The Karabots Foundation in honor of Constance  
Chrisomalis Karabots from Anavriti, Sparta  
(which overlooks Mt. Lykaion) and George  
Karabots of Malandreni, Argos  
The Arete Foundation  
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## Local Support in Greece:

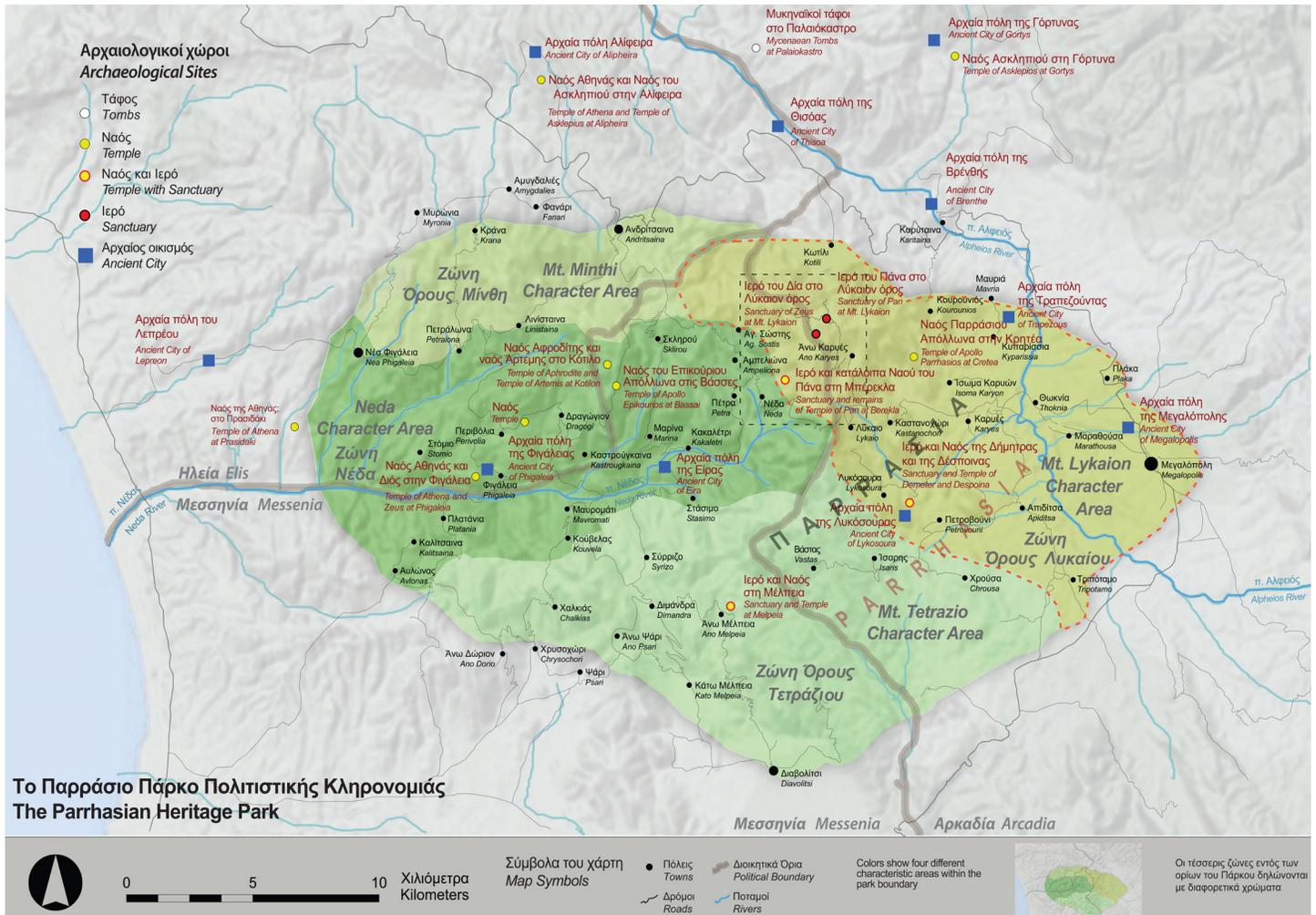
Former President of the Hellenic Republic,  
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Dr. Petros Tatoulis, Former Governor of the  
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*Arch and Laura Brown*  
Stephen Czujko *Brian Kelly*  
Chris Lee *Dick and Kathy Wynn*  
Spiridoula Spathopoulou *Francis and Betty Stafilopatis*  
Anna Tsirakou *Francis and Betty Stafilopatis*

# Parrhasian Heritage Park Planning Efforts 2025



Map of the proposed Parrhasian Heritage Park.

The 15th Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School took place August 4-8, 2025 in Abeliona. We worked towards the creation of the Parrhasian Heritage Park of the Peloponnese, the first large-scale national heritage park in Greece. For information go to <https://www.parrhasianheritagepark.org>.

## Parrhasian Heritage Park Timeline

- Park Alliance Created
- 1 + 2 PHP Field School
- Zeus + Pan Trail opens
- Letter of Support from Minister of Culture + Tourism
- 250 Locals Attend Meeting for Park
- Vasta Trail Opens
- PHPS Athens Meeting
- Support from International Society of Arcadia
- Preliminary Support from National Commission for UNESCO
- Lykaion Games
- 3rd PHP Field School
- PHPS Meetings in Andritsania, Messinia, and Megalopolis
- PHPS Meeting in Athens
- Trail of Rhea Opening
- Meeting to Discuss Culinary Event
- 1st Community Outreach Program
- 4th PHP Field School
- Trail Signage Underway
- Park Loop Trail Opens
- Meeting in Nea Phigaleia
- Ethnographic Research
- 5th PHP Field School
- Trail Sign Installation
- Kiosk Installation
- Ethnographic Research
- Meeting in Abeliona
- 6th PHP Field School

2010-2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

# Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School 2025

## 2025 Field School

Much of the work of the Field School was concerned with the maintenance of our existing trails of Zeus, Pan and Rhea. This work took the form of replacing signs for trail way finding posts and trailheads, maintaining kiosks, and creating blazes on the trails for the further needs of orientation and safety. Dr. Nota Pantzou was in charge of this work.

Dr. David Gilman Romano and Dr. Dimitri Papakonstantinou made several trips to visit with the mayors of the region who are directly involved in the Park Planning process underway. Each of the mayors is critical in the overall acceptance of the Parrhasian Heritage Park proposal as the mayors represent the citizens of each district.

*Mr. Dionisios Balioukos, Mayor of Crestena and Andritsaina, DGR, Dimitris Papakonstantinou. Photo: DGR*



*The Megalopolis Mayor and his immediate council. Dimitris Papakonstantinou, Stavroula Kostaridou, Euaggelia, Barla, Vice- Mayor, DGR, Costas Filandros. Photo: DGR.*

*Mr. Sophianos Gyptiadis, General Secretary of the Mayor's Office, Dimitris Papakonstantinou, Mrs. Panagiota Georgakopoulou, Mayor, DGR. Photo: DGR*



## Parrhasian Heritage Park Timeline

- Lykaion Games
- Village Heritage Festival
- Trail of Pan Sign Installation
- Enthographic Research
- Community Outreach Program
- 7th PHP Field School
- Trail of Pan Sign Installation
- Megalopolis City Council Presentation
- 8th PHP Field School
- International Conference in Athens, May 31st
- Trail of Zeus Implementation
- Trail of Zeus Sign Installation
- 9th PHP Field School
- Tenth Anniversary of the PHP Field School
- Virtual Lecture Series
- Virtual 10th + 11th PHP Field School
- Meeting with Ministry of the Environment
- 12th - 14th PHP Field School
- Lecture to Lykaio + community residents
- Lykaion Games 2022
- Lykaio Village Event
- Lykaion Games 2025

2017

2018

2019

2020-2021

2022-2025

## Parrhasian Heritage Foundation Research Center

Work continued on the construction of the Parrhasian Heritage Research Center in Andritisaina.

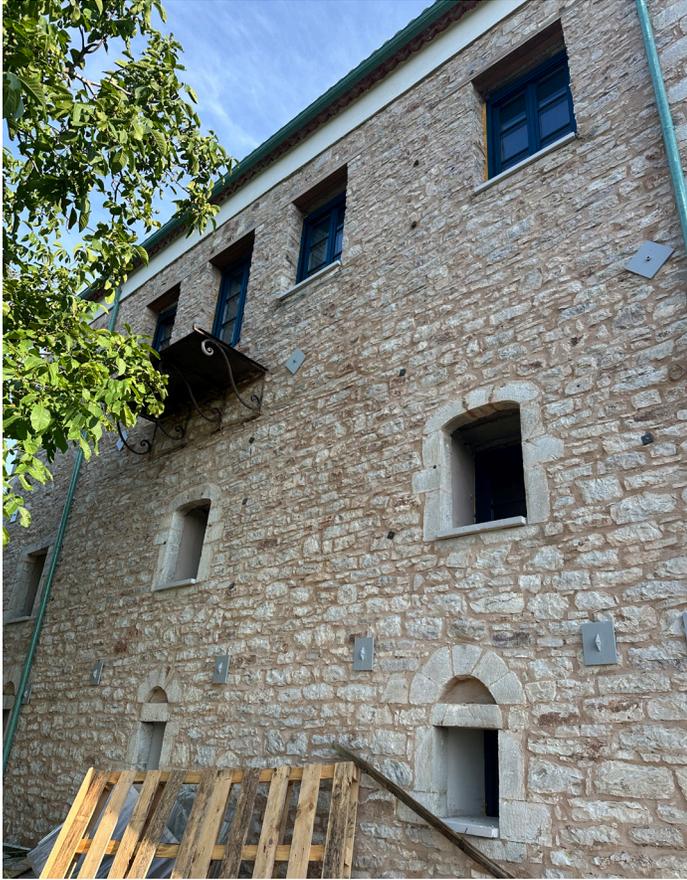
The exterior stone facade has been beautifully restored and many of the interior walls were completed in the three floor building creating the living and working spaces. The rooms include the reception area, bathroom and four bedrooms on the ground floor, the library, lecture room, living space, kitchen and dining room, several bathrooms and a second floor bedroom. New windows were installed in most of the rooms and many of the interior building spaces are taking shape. A new roof has been installed with new gutters and downspouts. The lower ground floor will serve as an equipment storage area and also as a laundry room.

Finishing the interiors, installing the large windows that will face west and planning for and executing the landscaping is what remains to be done on the initial construction. The driveway will be installed leading to the equipment room basement door and there will be created a few parking spaces. The entrance arch will be reconstructed at the edge of the property on the stone walking street and the immediate area will be cleared.

We look forward to using the building soon for study, research, small student and faculty interchanges, university and community lectures and the headquarters for our Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey Project and for the planning for the Parrhasian Heritage Park of the Peloponnesos.



*Research Center facade from the west showing current progress. Photo: DGR*



Northern facade with restored exterior masonry. Photo: DGR.

## Parrhasian Heritage Foundation Endowment Fundraising Goal



We are also working toward establishing an endowment for the Parrhasian Heritage Foundation for general expenses that would include the maintenance and costs related to the Research Center. We have raised \$108,551 for the endowment and would like to see the endowment grow to \$500,000. We plan to sponsor scholarships for students to work at the Center and to foster multidisciplinary research in this central location of the Peloponnese.

## Parrhasian Heritage Foundation Endowment Fundraising Goal



If you would like to make a donation towards this exciting renovation project, please send your checks to:

The Parrhasian Heritage Foundation  
PO Box 64309, Tucson, AZ 85728

*The Parrhasian Heritage Foundation is a US 501(c)(3) charitable foundation and all contributions are tax deductible.*

*Checks should be made out to the Parrhasian Heritage Foundation with the memo indicating Research Center.*

*You can also mail checks to the above address in support of the Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey Project.*

Parrhasian Heritage Foundation  
<https://www.parrhasianheritagefoundation.org>

## Lykaio Evening Reception

On the evening of July 25, the village of Lykaio sponsored a reception and evening occasion to honor the work of the Mt. Lykaion Excavation and Survey Project over the past 25 years. Those honored included Anna Karapanagiotou, Mary Voyatzis and David Gilman Romano. Mary Voyatzis' and David Gilman Romano's English texts are included here. In addition all of the students and workmen present were also honored. The President of the village of Lykaio, Tasos Athanasopoulos was the most cordial host for the evening.

## Presentation by Mary Voyatzis

Thank you very much, Mr. Athanasopoulos, for the invitation to speak to you tonight at this special event. I would also like to warmly thank the Region of Peloponnese, the Municipality of Megalopolis, Mayor Costas Michopoulos, Christos Koumoundouros, coordinator of the Lykaion Games 2025 committee, the president of the Lycian community, Elias Korolis and in general all the contributors to this special event. It is my great pleasure to tell you a few words about the work we are doing on Mt. Lykaion. (You have already heard about this topic from Anna Karapanagiotou and you will hear more from David Gilman Romano). It has now been 21 years since we began our research on Mt. Lykaion with Dr. Romano. We feel incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to work and live in this place. In fact, our entire team loves working here in the Arcadian mountains. It is a very special place.

For me, personally, this part of the Peloponnese has a special place in my heart. My father, Yannis, was born and raised in Andritsaina, not far from here. He left in 1952 to do postgraduate studies in the USA where he met my mother, they got married and had children. At every opportunity, however, he brought us to Greece. During these visits, we also went to Andritsaina. So we, the children, were lucky enough to get to know the family home, and the places around it such as the temple of Apollo Epikourios at Bassai.

It is perhaps no coincidence that I eventually became an archaeologist. My research on the ancient sanctuaries of Arcadia has been ongoing for 45 years. I had been working on another Arcadian sanctuary for many years, the sanctuary of Athena Aleia in Tegea, before we began our work on Mt. Lykaion. When David Romano and I met in 2002 at an Arcadian Conference in Athens, we began to discuss the possibility of one day excavating at Mt. Lykaion. But it seemed like a distant dream. It is a miracle that we managed to obtain the permits, find the funding and implement this project here in Greece. We did this with the valuable cooperation of the Ephorate of Arcadia and the local communities around the site, especially the community of Ano Karyes and the cultural association of Ano Karyoton Arcadia "O Lykaios Dias". We also had the help of many excellent students, as well as colleagues from various disciplines.

Tonight I would like to tell you three reasons why I believe this area, and especially Mt. Lykaion, is so important and has such great archaeological significance, something we did not know when we began our research here 21 years ago.



*Tasos Athanasopoulos and Mary Voyatzis at the presentation.  
Photo: Nota Pantzou*

1. The first reason is the long history of use of the site: from the Neolithic to the Late Byzantine period: 4500 BC-1400 AD, over 5000 years of human presence. There is something about this mountain that has attracted people for millennia, starting from the Neolithic period. People would climb to the southern peak of the mountain, where the altar of Zeus was later established, and they would bring with them the handmade vessels for drinking and cooking. And these actions continued for a very long time until the Early and Middle Bronze Age, around 1600 BC.

2. The second reason is the establishment of a sanctuary on the mountaintop in the early Mycenaean period, around 1600 BC. An open area of worship was then created on the southern peak. An architectural platform was constructed with flat stones oriented North-South (with another piece oriented East-West recently found). Many fine drinking vessels were found in the area, as well as clay figurines. As were large quantities of burnt animal bones from the thighs of sheep and goats, which suggests that ritual sacrifices were taking place. This ritual activity continued throughout the Mycenaean period, and it seems that it did not stop even after the destruction of the Mycenaean palaces in the 12th century BC. We found a lot of pottery from the so-called Dark Age, while many other sites have fallen into disuse during this period. It is significant that Olympia has no such evidence for a sanctuary in Mycenaean times, the sanctuary being in use around 1050 BC.

3. And third. In the historical period, the site develops very differently from most other sanctuaries. But it becomes very famous. No large, impressive stone temple to Zeus was built on the mountain, and during the 8th century, when many sanctuaries flourished, there was limited activity on Mt. Lykaion. But animal sacrifices continued on the altar of Zeus until the Hellenistic period, over a thousand years. The site comes back to life during the Archaic and Classical periods and the sanctuary then extends to the lower level of the mountain meadow, with many buildings, a stoa, a hippodrome and a stadium, a sanctuary of Pan and other structures created during the late Classical period. The site is mentioned by many ancient writers and was famous and had an aura of mystery around it. Even Plato mentions it! We have found indications of continuous use of the site during the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods. The church of Prophet Elias was probably built under the altar, in the 18th or 19th century, at the end of which the first Greek excavations in the site began.

One of the goals of our project was the preservation and protection of Mt. Lykaion and the region. The proposed Parrhasian Cultural Heritage Park will include parts of Messenia, Elis and Arcadia. It also includes Andritsaina, where my father was born and raised. We have long wanted to establish a Research Center within the proposed Park and decided to consider the possibility of converting my father's family home into such a building. We found a team consisting of an engineer and an architect, and we began our collaboration. The house was first designated as a historical monument by the Ministry of Culture, as it was a building from 1867 and contained interesting features of traditional Andritsaina architecture. We were fortunate to receive a significant donation that allowed us to begin construction work. And since then we have raised almost all the money to build the house. We are now very close to its completion.

My father died in 2005. However, I believe that he would have been happy and proud if he knew that his beautiful stone house in Andritsaina is being transformed into a Research Center and will become an international headquarters for scholars, students, researchers who will promote archaeology, history, literature, etc. In closing, over the past 21 years we have seen many exciting and important discoveries on Mt. Lykaion and have made significant progress in the creation of the Park and the Research Center. It is our honor to participate in these efforts and to share the results with you. Thank you for your attention.

## Presentation by David Gilman Romano



*Tasos Athanasopoulos with David Gilman Romano during the presentation. Photo: Nota Pantzou.*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to be here together with my colleagues Mary Voyatzis and Anna Karapanagiotou. Our hosts have been most gracious to organize this occasion and I am very grateful.

Our archaeological fieldwork at Mt. Lykaion with my colleague Mary Voyatzis followed in the footsteps of Konstantinos Kourouniotis and Konstantinos Kontopoulos from the late 19th and early 20th century. Our project was a synergasia for many years with our Greek colleagues and I want to pay tribute to the Archaeological Ephors who have assisted us in our work at the site, Theodoros Spyropoulos, Anastasia Panagiotopoulou, Michalis Petropoulos, Anna Karapanagiotou and our current ephor Konstantinos Kissas.

Also the members of the Cultural Society of Lykaion Zeus of Ano Karyes, especially Nikos Kostopoulos, and Christos Koumoundouros were of important help to us. All of our archaeological work has been under the auspices of the

American School of Classical Studies at Athens and I thank the successive Directors of the School for their assistance.

When I first arrived at the southern peak of Mt. Lykaion in 1978 with my wife Irene and friend Robin Rhodes we had hiked to the summit of the mountain from Isioma. There were no roads. It was a hot day but we were young! I did not know then that it would be the first of many trips to the Koryphi over the years. After I had seen the view and felt the prestige of the site, I pledged to myself that I would come back one day and work there. We then hiked down the mountain back to Isioma. I could never have imagined then that I would be able to bring over 500 students and colleagues to the site in the future to help me in pursuit of my interests. I am very proud of all of them and the work that they have done.

You see, in the beginning I was brought to Mt Lykaion by my interest in ancient Greek athletics, and the stories of very early competitions being held here. There are the accounts from Simonides, Pindar and Pliny. It was also the place where I could actually see the only hippodrome in the ancient Greek world and the dromos of a stadium nearby, already published by Kourouniotis. I felt that if I could do work here, I could possibly discover evidence for the early competitions in connection with the “Birthplace of Zeus.”

In fact, we have found very early ceramic evidence from the southern peak of the mountain from the Neolithic period in what very likely was cult activity of some kind. And then a more or less continuous sequence of ceramics for thousands of years following from ca. 5000 BCE until the time of the Zeus figurines in the late 7th – early 6th century.

We now know that we have a very robust Mycenaean shrine at the southern peak dating perhaps as early as the 16th century BCE. The Marmor Parium, a Hellenistic chronographic inscription gives the date of the beginning of the Lykaia in the 14th century BCE. We have a perfect place for early competitions in the form of a long and

## Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School 2025

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We have discovered a manmade surface in the area and I suggest that Mycenaean athletic competitions took place on this terrace as a part of what Mary Voyatzis and I are calling a Late Helladic or Mycenaean Panhellenic-like festival site at the southern summit. The Lykaia were originally held on the mountaintop until they were transferred below.

We have located the ancient hippodrome and stadium and found them to be a part of two parallel terraces and just as Pausanias describes, a hippodrome in front of which is a stadium. In the lower sanctuary we have recently discovered the entrance from the sanctuary to the north through the corridor and its entrance into what is likely to be a formidable theatrical area for spectators to watch some of the agonistic events of the Lykaia.

I would like to warmly thank here Konstantinos Tzevelekos who today has given the walnut grove property next to the stadium for the continuation of our archaeological research. We have arguably the earliest Sanctuary of Zeus in the Greek world and my colleague Mary Voyatzis and I have postulated that our sanctuary was the model for Olympia. As the “Birthplace of Zeus” this makes perfect sense. We have also written about what attracted the earliest people to this site, including thunder, lightning and earthquakes that are very common on the mountain. Mt. Lykaion is one of the best places in the Peloponnesos to see lightning and hear thunder.

After several preliminary reports, our first volume of the Mt. Lykaion Studies is now in production through the Publications Office of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens.

We have recently discovered the Sanctuary of Pan at Mt. Lykaion which appears to be a very early example, another being at Berekla near Neda. Pan may also have been “born” on Mt. Lykaion. We know from Livy and other Latin authors that Lykaion Pan was transferred to Rome and became the Lupercalia at the foot of the Palatine Hill, a very important Roman festival. I have established the Parrhasian Heritage Foundation, a US 501 (c)(3) charitable foundation to support our efforts in Greece. The Foundation has assisted with research, student participation, publications as well as assistance to the local communities. We are in the midst of creating a Greek sister foundation of the same name.

We are very close to establishing Greece’s first large scale national heritage park, The Parrhasian Heritage Park of the Peloponnesos. Encompassing aspects of Arcadia, Messenia and Elis. It will unify and protect 675 square km. of land including ancient cities and sanctuaries, mountains and rivers, flora and fauna, villages and most importantly people. We are discussing this now through the Ministry of the Environment. Through 15 years of Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School my colleagues and I have worked with 145 Greek and American students. We are building The Parrhasian Heritage Foundation Research Center in Andritsaina, in the house that was once Mary Voyatzis’ fathers birthplace, to be dedicated to future archaeological research in the general area, for generations to come. We are encouraging our students to continue to undertake research in this area.

I could not have imagined all of these accomplishments during that first visit in 1978 nor pictured all of the students and colleagues that I have worked with during this time. It is in fact a lifetime of active research and through it all I have always been welcomed by the local communities including this one.

You have a very rich and interesting heritage which will continue to be studied for many years and our students and colleagues will carry on this work in the future. On Sunday I will compete in the Modern Lykaion Games for the 6th and final time in the dolichos in the Veterans category, and I am looking forward to it.

Thank you very much.

# Δωρητές Ιδρύματος Παρράσιας Κληρονομιάς Parrhasian Heritage Foundation Donors

The Field School is supported by the Parrhasian Heritage Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charitable foundation in the United States. The Foundation provides scholarships for each of the students from Greece and the US, to attend the Field School. The Fellowship includes transportation and room and board in the village of Abeliiona.



**Estate of Annette Merle-Smith**

**James H. Ottaway, Jr.**

**Frederick Frelinghuysen**

**Adaline Frelinghuysen**

**Cole and Jeannie Davis**

**Dick and Kathy Wynn**

**Tom Keating**

**Arch and Laura Brown**

**Chuck Adams and Margot Ellis**

## Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School 2025 Student Participants

Tabitha Rodriguez, *Studio Caban, Tucson*  
 Andrea Riehle, *Richard Kennedy Architects*  
 Elizabeth Parks, *University of Arizona*  
 Gene Olga Mae King, *University of Arizona*  
 Vasilis Barkoulas, *Technological Educational Institute of Western Greece*

Maria-Athena Markou, *University of Patras*  
 Olga Karype, *University of Patras*  
 Dimitris Tzimas, *University of Patras*

# Parrhasian Heritage Park of the Peloponnesos



*Field School participants enjoying dinner. Clockwise from bottom left: Vasilis Barkoulas, Dimitris Papakonstantinou, Nota Pantzou, Hunter Hogue, Dimitris Tzimas, Maria Athena Markou, Elizabeth Parks, Andrea Riehle, Gene Olga Mae King, Tabitha Rodriguez, Nicky Pasterfield, and Kyle Mahoney. Photo: DGR.*

The 2025 Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School Planning update has been produced in partnership with the local communities, Greek planning professionals, the University of Arizona, and the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, working with and under the direction of the Ephorate of Antiquities of Arcadia, Tripolis. The Field School is supported financially by the Parrhasian Heritage Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) charitable institution in the USA.

Text by David Gilman Romano, Mary E. Voyatzis, Nota Pantzou, Dimitris Papakonstantinou, and Lauren Tomanelli. Photos by D.G. Romano and Nota Pantzou.

PHP back photo: D. G. Romano, Vasilis Barkoulas, Nota Pantzou, Dimitris Tzimas, Maria Athena Markou, Andrea Riehle, Dimitris Papakonstantinou, Hunter Hogue, Tabitha Rodriguez, Gene Olga Mae King, Elizabeth Parks, Kyle Mahoney, Nicky Pasterfield, and Baby Theo at the Abeliona Retreat. Parrhasian Heritage Park Field School, Summer 2025.

For more information on the research, Field School, Park or how to get involved in the project, visit our website at <https://www.parrhasianheritagepark.org> or write to [davidgilmanromano@gmail.com](mailto:davidgilmanromano@gmail.com).

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Mr. Mark Davison, Boulder Open Spaces and Mountain Parks, Boulder, Colorado. Associate Field School Director, Director of Park Planning.

Dr. Dimitris Papakonstantinou, National Technical University of Athens. Director of Legislative Efforts, Parrhasian Heritage Foundation.

Dr. Kyle Mahoney, Swarthmore College. Assistant Director of Historical Research, Parrhasian Heritage Park.



ΣΧΕΔΙΑΖΟΝΤΑΣ ΤΟ ΜΕΛΛΟΝ

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

# Το Παρράσιο Πάρκο Πολιτιστικής Κληρονομιάς στην Πελοπόννησο

## The Parrhasian Heritage Park of the Peloponnesos



Οι Προσπάθειες Σχεδιασμού του Πάρκου το 2025  
Park Planning Efforts 2025