

Waking the Dead

Members of the C3A Limassol Archaeological Group were privileged to be given a tour of an ancient burial site at Amathus by Yiannis Violaris, Archaeological Officer at the Department of Antiquities.

The visit was so popular that the group had to be split so that all could see the archaeologists at work.

The Department of Antiquities knew that the burial site (which is opposite the Amathus hotel) existed and started their rescue excavations earlier this year before the proposed plans to develop the site were approved. The costs involved, which include the team of archaeologists and other staff involved in the project, recording and preserving the finds and preparing and publishing a report on the project, are partly funded by the development company.

Several tombs have been discovered dating back to the archaic period and some were re-used in Roman times. Although many of the tombs (like the one in the photograph) have been robbed of their contents, one had remained intact and its skeletal remains, votive offerings and grave goods were recorded in situ, excavated and taken to the Limassol museum.

Once the site has been fully excavated and recorded, the tombs will be preserved. Amathus was one of the ancient

city-kingdoms of Cyprus and the coast road passes over its western necropolis where many tombs have been discovered. One of the more interesting and largest tombs in the area that can

be visited by the public was discovered in the 1930s and located at the exit of the Amathus Beach Hotel. It is accessed by a 13 metre flight of stone steps and consists of two vaulted rooms. The archaeologists discovered a libation table and a sarcophagus in the richly furnished first room together with luxury items of faience, alabaster and glass for the deceased.

The Limassol Archaeological Museum is currently staging a temporary exhibition "Amathus of Cyprus, a city most ancient" from prehistoric to Christian times. The exhibition will continue until 7 July 2017.

To find out more about C3A Limassol activities and how to join, please visit:

<http://c3a-cyprus.org/limassol/>

