

Chronicles

In Turkey, A Side Order For the Gods

By Sarah Booth Conroy
Washington Post Staff Writer

On a brilliant Mediterranean day, when it seemed logical to believe that Apollo the sun god was worthy of worship, Jean and Alfred Friendly Sr. first saw the ruins of a 1st-century temple to the classic deity.

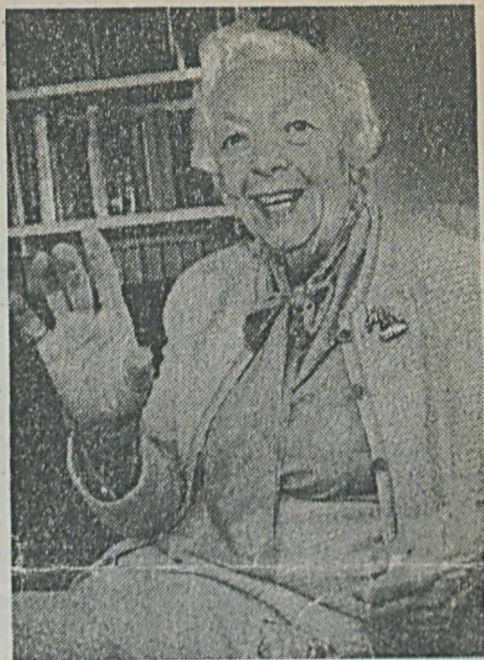
"Only the bases of the ancient columns were still in place, poking through eons of old debris," said Jean Friendly to the *Chronicle* the other day. We sat with tea and cookies in the library of her early-19th-century Georgetown house, her family home for 50 years. "I wondered what it looked like intact. I couldn't quite imagine it."

Thereby begins a tale of an international effort to restore long-lost grandeur of the gods, a fitting memorial to a man whose interests and writings spanned three continents and to a woman who knew how to move marble, if not mountains.

The place was Side, Turkey. "All of history was right here, where everyone of the classic era walked," she said. The time was spring 1964, when Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and author Alfred Friendly Sr. roamed Europe and Asia Minor in search of great stories with his inquisitive and adventurous wife.

She recalled how her project began. "We were exploring all the Roman ruins in Side. In the 1st century A.D. during the Roman rule, Side was called the Pearl City. They brought marble from Egypt, Italy and Greece for the buildings. It must have been glorious." The Friendlys came to Side after he left the managing editorship of *The Washington Post* to be a roving foreign correspondent (and, at one time, London bureau chief) for the newspaper.

Today on the temple's west front, four reconstructions of the six original 40-foot col-



BY MARGARET THOMAS—THE WASHINGTON POST

"All of history was right [there]," Jean Friendly says of the temple site.

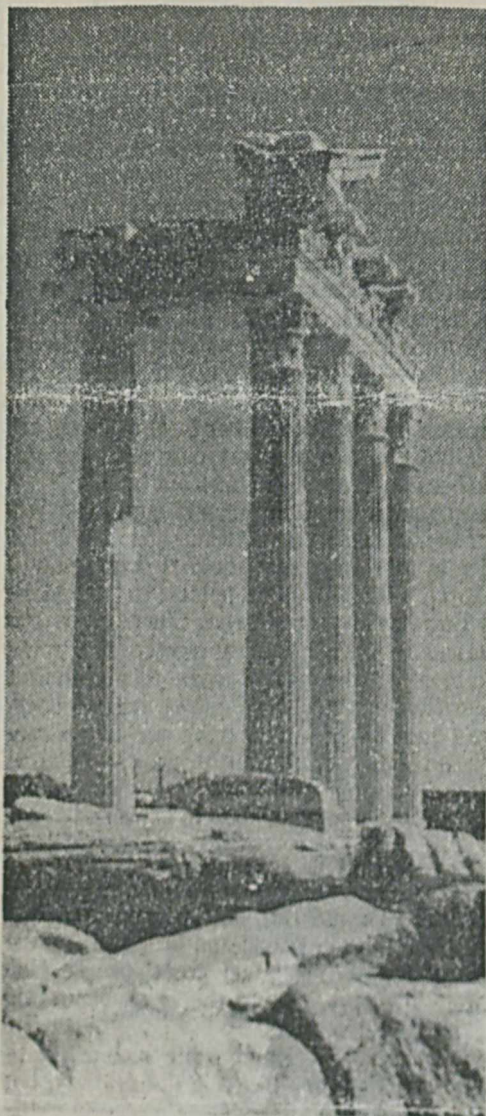
umns, topped with Corinthian capitals, stand reaching for Olympus. One of the 11 columns that once formed a side is up. You can see, as Mrs. Friendly said, the shape of the building, which once had 34 columns set in a rectangle roughly 49 by 99 feet.

The fluted pillars are composed of pieces of the originals, put together with concrete and marble dust. A Medusa frieze has been restored with an original corner piece from a museum. A stone lion's open mouth spews rainwater. The Side government lights the temple at night.

Evidence shows Apollo approved. "When I was there for the installation of the plaque, the sun was gorgeous, and the sunset was magnificent," Mrs. Friendly said.

Mrs. Friendly celebrated her 80th birthday this year. The people of Side made her an honorary citizen. Not long ago, Turkish Ambassador Nuzhet Kandemir presented her the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Museums commendation for her work.

"A friend told us Side was the last unspoiled place on the Mediterranean coast, and indeed it was," Mrs. Friendly said. She and her husband found an artists' studio and warehouse, with a spectacular view of the Mediterranean. She remodeled it into a vine-covered, balconied seaside house that drew guests from all over the world. Mrs. Friendly plans to give the house to the University of Pennsylvania, to house students and scholars working in Side. "I'll keep the right to go there a month a year," she said, "so I can swim five times a day in the sea."



Only the bases of these columns remained when Jean and Alfred Friendly first saw them.

Though the Side citizens, whose ancient heritage had been pilfered more than once, were suspicious, the Friendlys were interested in Side's restoration. Mrs. Friendly took courses in the London School of Archaeology. And then they met Jale Inan, a great expert on Roman culture, who at 80 directs the Side museum.

"Dr. Inan called me here once from Turkey," Mrs. Friendly said. "She'd found a great bargain, a crane to help put up the columns. She told me how much it would cost in liras. I asked Al if we could afford to buy it for the project. He calculated it at \$4,000—and said, 'Go ahead.' Turned out he missed a decimal point; it really cost \$40,000."

The Friendlys established in 1967 the International Friends of Side, a group that eventually had 150 members (half from Washington) who contributed about \$75,000 over 11 years for various reconstructions, including a Roman bath. The Friendlys matched that amount. In 1983, five months before Friendly's death, the Turkish Historical Society honored him for his restoration effects and his writings on Turkish history.

Mrs. Friendly is settled back into Georgetown now. The other day her telephone rang with invitations to political fund-raisers and afternoon bridge. Photographs of the temple stand on the handsome mantelpiece. Paintings, some by her artist daughter, Lucinda Murphy, hang on the tall walls. The shelves are full of biographies, political treatises, six or seven books by Friendly and son Alfred Friendly Jr. and scrapbooks stuffed with pictures and clippings of what Mrs. Friendly called "my wonderful life."

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