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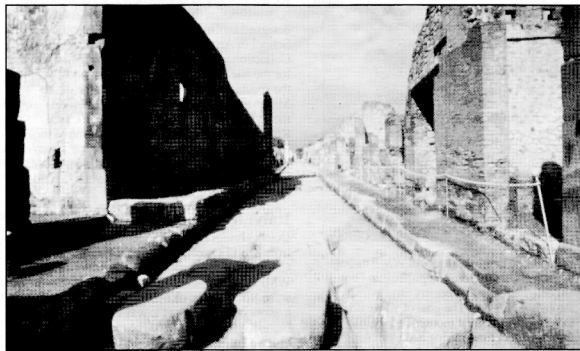
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## The WORLD MONUMENTS FUND Special Projects

### Pompeii, Italy

The whole site of Pompeii is of crucial importance to the WMF ever since it placed it on the World Monuments Watch list in 1996-97. Some people were surprised to see this famous site on a list of the world's most endangered buildings but its inclusion was justified because of the immense difficulties facing the site. 1,500 buildings on the 165 acre open-air site present an appalling management and conservation challenge. Until the listing the income from the large numbers of tourists was transferred directly to Rome. What was clearly needed, as the WMWatch listing pointed out, was a comprehensive site survey and a strengthening of the effective legal entity that controls and carries out the maintenance and repair of the entire city. The key to the success of any long term conservation work is the preparation of a plan and programme. With substantial funding from the Kress Foundation, a three-year conservation study is underway. Close collaboration with the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei ed Ercolano and WMF produced the first document, *Un Piano per Pompei: Piano programma per la conservazione e la gestione del patrimonio storico-archeologico della città antica*, and this was presented to the world at the Italian Ministry of Culture by the then minister Walter Veltroni. The basic premise of this document was that each insula (ancient city block) should be the subject of a conservation plan and that the entire area of some 120 acres should be divided and managed in this way. These conservation plans will encompass detailed repair, stabilisation and restoration programmes for buildings of particular significance and in-depth maintenance plans for structures of lesser importance. This approach is intended to combine the concrete achievements in the short term, that will be visible to the public, and longer term management achievements for the Soprintendenza. Initially it has been decided to select one insula and appropriate structures as pilot projects. After a lot of deliberation the decision was made to select insula two in



#### The insula now under survey

regio five and to focus on the restoration of the House of the Silver Wedding Anniversary. The house is one of the major monuments of early domestic architecture and it acquired its name because its excavation coincided with the Silver Wedding of the then King Umberto I and his Queen of Italy. It is a remarkable house by any standards, with its great atrium dating from early in the first century BC, an enormous garden and double peristyle plan, as well as impressive decoration: frescoes from two periods, the first from around 40 BC and the second from a redecoration in approximately 60 AD. Both periods are represented by examples of painting of the highest artistic quality. The entire insula is considered by numerous experts to be the most representative and one where the Soprintendenza could begin to provide the public with newly organized itineraries that could ease the pressure on some of the over-worn tourists routes. The selected insula also coincided with future plans to change the access routes in Pompeii. The

chosen area is nearly 6,000 square metres of excavations with a small area yet to be dug. There are some ten houses, six shops, with a few other structures thought to be inns, restaurants and places of entertainment. Within the area are also two important houses, the House of the Silver Wedding (which has rarely been seen by the public) and the House of the Cenacolo, which is tiny but important. A team of experts has been assembled under the direction of Professor Pietro Giovanni Guzzo, Soprintendente Archeologico di Pompei ed Ercolano. The team includes: Professor Wolfgang Ehrhardt, the prominent Pompeii scholar from the University of Freiburg, Germany. He is completing his tenth monograph on individual houses in Pompeii, which will be devoted to the House of the Silver Wedding. Dr Maria Paola Giacobbeddi and Dr Fabrizio Pesando are two key archaeologists and they will be working with three restorers: Dr Maria Gabriella De Monte, Laura Lucicoli and Eugenio Mancinelli. There is an architectural team consisting of Professor Paolo

Marconi with Antonio Pugliano and Professor Christiano Bedoni. Engineering is under the direction of Professor Salvatore D'Agostino with his assistant Luigi Stendaro. Four other experts are helping with the urban planning and graphic design, they are: Giovanni Longobardi, Andrea Mandara, Alfredo Galmuzzi and Giovanna Spadafora. To complete the list there is the database programmer Enzo Sommela and the field supervisor, Augusta Cyrillo Gomes. This whole team is administered and managed by WMF's man in Italy, Stephen Eddy, who has successfully managed projects for WMF since 1987. Work on this magnificent project is continuing at a steady pace and the long term objectives are best explained as they were summarized in the 1998 Kress/Pompeii annual report. At the end of the third year there will be: a thoroughly articulated conservation and preservation plan for the entire insula; a detailed description of the architectural fabric of the entire insula from the archaeological, structural, urban and conservation points of view; a catalogue raisonné of conservation issues; a lexicon of conservation treatments relative to the catalogue raisonné; a conservation and maintenance manual that documents the work completed during the three-year Kress project. A Geographic Information System (GIS) database programme containing at least the fundamentals of an interactive archive of textual research and documentation and graphic images (photographs and drawings). This will be the first complete survey of a whole insula and one that will be of immense value for the future of the whole site. It is exactly the kind of activity that an organisation like the WMF can carry out with a group of experts and whose results can be applied to other sites. It is something of an illusion to believe that the world's major archaeological sites are entirely safe; many of the most important are suffering from the pressures of tourism and the inadequacies of state and government funding. An independent body can provide really effective catalytic help—the outcome of the major survey at Pompeii will be very important.