



Hunterian Museum Press Release

The Romans are coming...

After almost two years of closure, this month sees the re-opening of the University of Glasgow's Hunterian Museum. The Museum re-opens to the public on 16 September and features a new permanent gallery devoted to the Roman frontier in Scotland.

The Antonine Wall: Rome's Final Frontier is located in the Museum entrance gallery and showcases The Hunterian's unique collection of monumental sculpture and other important Roman artefacts recovered from the Antonine Wall. Many items are on display for the first time, allowing greater access to the internationally acclaimed Roman collections.

The Antonine Wall is one of the UK's most important Roman monuments but its precise purpose and short lifespan remains an enigma. Constructed in the AD 140s and stretching some 60km from the Firth of Forth to the River Clyde, it was the most northerly frontier in the Roman Empire.

This feat of engineering consisted of an approximately three foot high turf rampart fronted by a ditch. It is the second of the two great walls built by the Romans in Britain. Inscriptions on an ornate series of distance slabs reveal that the Antonine Wall was built by soldiers of three legions stationed in Britain, namely the Second, Sixth and Twentieth. A group of nineteen slabs have been found over the centuries and the exhibition brings together the largest group for the first time.

Whether a symbol of Roman power intended to celebrate victory over the northern tribes or a barrier to control trade and movement, the Antonine Wall was abandoned by the Romans from the late 150s AD onwards. The new displays of sculpture, together with a rich array of military and civilian artefacts from the wall, some unique to Roman Britain, explore the impact of the Romans on the Scottish landscape and its peoples and questions why the wall was constructed and then abandoned so quickly.

Continues...



Altar to Diana and Apollo



The display has four key themes: the building of the Wall, its architecture and impact on the landscape; the role of the Roman army on the frontier and the life and lifestyle of its soldiers; the cultural interaction between Roman and indigenous peoples and evidence for local resistance and the abandonment of the Wall and the story of its rediscovery over the last 350 years.

The new gallery also reflects the story of over three centuries of collecting and research by the University of Glasgow on what is now a World Heritage Site.

Professor David Gaimster, Director of The Hunterian said:

‘The Hunterian is delighted to launch its new permanent exhibition *The Antonine Wall: Rome’s Final Frontier* at a time when Glasgow is expanding its cultural offer.

The new gallery makes a crucial contribution to our appreciation and understanding of the Scottish cultural heritage and acts as a visitor orientation point for the Antonine Wall World Heritage Site. Our new opening hours, including Sunday opening, will allow greater public access to these unique treasures.

The University of Glasgow was the first to preserve and present this important chapter in Scotland’s history and has been instrumental in the preservation and interpretation of the Antonine Wall for over 300 years. Through its new gallery The Hunterian aims to continue to improve access and understanding for future generations.’

From 10 September, The Hunterian will also introduce a number of new initiatives including Sunday opening, a new look website, gallery tours, a Friends scheme and a new bi-annual exhibition programme which begins with *Colour, Rhythm and Form: J. D. Fergusson and France*, a major exhibition in the Hunterian Art Gallery devoted to Scottish artist J. D. Fergusson.

The Antonine Wall: Rome’s Final Frontier has been supported by Museums Galleries Scotland and the University of Glasgow Chancellor’s Fund.

The Hunterian (Museum)

University of Glasgow
Gilbert Scott Building
Glasgow G12 8QQ

From 16 September, open Tuesday - Saturday 10.00am - 5.00pm
Sunday 11.00am - 4.00pm
Admission free

www.glasgow.ac.uk/hunterian



FUNDED



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Notes to Editors

Founded in 1807, The Hunterian is Scotland's oldest public museum. Built on William Hunter's founding bequest, the collections include scientific instruments used by James Watt and Joseph Lister; a unique collection of Roman monumental sculpture, spectacular architectural fragments and other important artefacts recovered from the Antonine Wall; major natural sciences holdings; one of the world's greatest numismatic collections and impressive ethnographic objects from the Pacific Ocean.

The Hunterian is also home to a major art collection ranging from Rembrandt and Chardin to the Scottish Colourists and contemporary art; the world's largest permanent display of the work of James McNeill Whistler; the largest single holding of the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and The Mackintosh House, the reassembled interiors from his Glasgow home.

There are four Hunterian venues on the University of Glasgow campus - the Hunterian Museum, Hunterian Art Gallery, home to The Mackintosh House, the Zoology Museum and the Anatomy Museum.

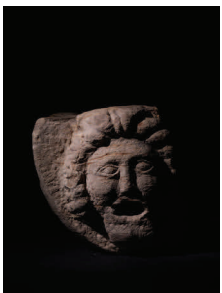
New Opening Hours

From 10 September the Hunterian Art Gallery and The Mackintosh House will open from 10.00am - 5.00pm Tuesday - Saturday and 11.00am - 4.00pm on Sunday. From 16 September, the Hunterian Museum will also open from 10.00am - 5.00pm Tuesday - Saturday and 11.00am - 4.00pm on Sunday.



Press Images

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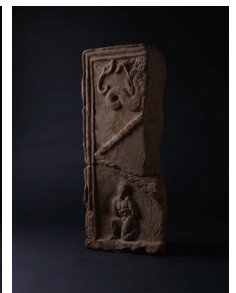
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1. Fountainhead from Bearsden Roman fort
2. Distance slab of the Sixth Legion, recording the completion of 3240 feet
3. Altar to Diana and Apollo
4. Distance slab of the Twentieth Legion, recording the completion of 3000 feet
5. Distance slab decorated with triton and kneeling captive
6. Column capital from Bar Hill Roman fort
7. Amphora fragment from Louden Hill Roman fort
8. Bust of Silenus from Bar Hill Roman fort
9. Statuette of Mars from Balmuildy Roman fort
10. Carved Intaglio from Leckie brooch
11. Fountainhead from Bearsden Roman fort
12. Bronze lamp from Louden Hill Roman fort