



Internationally important Museum to reopen its doors

Britain's oldest private collection of Roman treasures – sited on the West Cumbrian coast - will re-open its doors to the public for the first time in five months from this Friday 14 August 2020.

A series of planned celebrations and events to mark the [Senhouse Roman Museum's](#) 30th anniversary came to an abrupt halt when lockdown began in March. Now the small staff team – and network of loyal volunteers – are set to welcome people back to rediscover the little-known stories of life for ordinary people in Cumbria during the Roman occupation almost 2000 years ago.

After months of entertaining and educating the kids at home, Museum bosses are hoping families from throughout the county will be drawn to the spacious coastal site overlooking the Solway Firth to reignite their interest in local history and jumpstart their preparations for a return to school next month.

As part of the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site, Senhouse Roman Museum also has a special appeal for couples and older visitors who have curtailed their international holiday plans and are looking for more unusual day trips and 'hidden gems' closer to home.

Museum Manager, Jane Laskey, says, "*I passionately believe that we need to shake off the perception that museums are dry and dusty places with limited interest for non-experts. Museums are for everyone! I think plenty of people who don't see themselves as 'average' museum visitors will be surprised by some of the unique objects they can discover here.*

"There is definitely much more to the history of the Roman occupation than armies marching about in red tunics and we tell the fascinating stories of how ordinary people lived right here in Cumbria –

and how different cultures and traditions melded together to set the scene for the way we all live our lives today. We actually have one of the most important collections of Roman altars and sculpture in Britain; you really don't need to go to London or Rome to see some world-class artefacts."



She adds, *"Of course, we have put some special measures in place to help us manage the flow of people and have strengthened our cleaning regimes. However, booking ahead and spacing out visitors means there is a very real possibility of some people having almost near-exclusive use of the Museum. We have really missed our lovely visitors and are very excited about welcoming people back here in the coming days!"*

With Senhouse Roman Museum dramatically sited directly alongside the Cumbrian Coastal Way, there is also an easy, scenic walking route for day-trippers to follow the shoreline over to Maryport Marina the Lake District Coast Aquarium and the town's Maritime Museum, which is set to reopen imminently. Silloth and the Solway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also lie to the north.

The majority of the Museum will be open from Friday 14 August 2020, daily from 11am to 5pm. A one-way system will be in place, with visitors asked to wear facemasks and respect the 2-metre social distancing rule.

Entry to the Museum should be [pre-booked online](#) and visitors will be allocated a timed slot to explore the Museum at their leisure. The attraction has achieved its official 'We're Good to Go' accreditation to show it is following all the official Government safety measures and public health guidance.



ENDS

Notes to Editors:

For media enquiries, hi-res images and interviews, please contact: Heather Sewell, hsewell@cumbriatourism.org / 07795 487003.

Images attached:

1. Senhouse Roman Museum – exterior
2. Roman soldier in mask
3. Horned warrior god

Senhouse Roman Museum has an internationally significant collection on the frontier of the Roman Empire. Dramatically sited on cliffs overlooking the Solway Firth, this award-winning museum in Maryport, Cumbria, is next to a Roman fort probably founded in the first century AD and rebuilt during the reign of the emperor Hadrian. Many of the objects on display originally come from the fort and Roman settlement around it. The museum displays the largest group of Roman military altar stones and inscriptions from any site in Britain, alongside unique examples of Romano-British religious sculpture. This collection is the oldest in the country and was begun by the Senhouse family in the 1570s.

www.senhousemuseum.co.uk / info@senhousemuseum.co.uk / 01900 816168.