

PRESS RELEASE – (For immediate release)

What happened? - Emperor Hadrian's Birthday Bubble Bath

Where? – Ravenglass Roman Bathhouse

When? – Monday 12 noon 24 January 2022

To celebrate the launch of *Hadrian's Wall 1900* the Emperor Hadrian himself sailed in on Monday from Rome to the Ravenglass Estuary where he enjoyed a bubble bath within the ancient Roman bathhouse. Suitably refreshed and cleansed, he is now ready for the year of festivities along his Hadrianic Frontier. The 24th January 2022 would have been his 1946th birthday and 1900 years since he decreed that a frontier be constructed to define the limits of his Empire. The ceremonies were supervised by Sulis, the Romano Celtic Goddess of thermal springs and healing waters. The Emperor enjoyed a very hot bubble bath, Roman honey cake and of course, mulled wine, newly popularised in the 2nd century throughout the Roman Empire.



The bathhouse at Ravenglass is one of the highest free standing Roman structures in northern England and sits at the start of the Hadrianic Frontier. It is under the stewardship of English Heritage and rests within the Muncaster Estate. The Emperor Hadrian was supported by a small retinue of Roman attendants and the Fool of Muncaster. A large throng of excited local Britons enjoyed the spectacle, amazed at the sophistication and civilizing influence of the Roman Empire.

Following his ablutions, the Emperor travelled by chariot to Muncaster Castle and officially opened a preview of the *Roman Muncaster* exhibition, which will highlight Roman activity in and around Ravenglass, the Parish of Muncaster and the Western Lake District throughout Muncaster Castle's 2022 visitor season.

The Roman general Agricola sailed into the Esk Estuary in 79AD and established the port and fort at Ravenglass in Muncaster Parish. The fort and surrounding vicus is thought to have been more or less continually used by the Romans throughout much of their occupation of Britain. Muncaster Castle & Estate will be closely involved with supporting the Hadrian's Wall 1900 celebrations throughout the year.



The World Heritage site *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* represents the borderline of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent in the 2nd century AD. The 150-mile Hadrian's Wall frontier area runs from the western Roman coastal defences at Ravenglass, through Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport to Bowness-on-Solway, along Hadrian's Wall through Carlisle and Hexham to Newcastle, Wallsend and South Shields. Along the wall there were around 80 milecastles and 160 turrets, a ditch to the north and the great defensive vallum earthwork to the south. The Frontier then continued from the Dutch coast through northern Europe to the Black Sea and from there to the Red Sea and across North Africa to the Atlantic coast.



As Muncaster Parish is also in the Lake District National Park World Heritage Site, it is one of the few places on earth to be within 2 World Heritage Site designations.

ENDS.



Notes for Editors:

1. For more details or press enquiries on this event please contact Muncaster Reception 01229 717614 or email info@muncaster.co.uk Images can be found here: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ug624xy2kvwqzmt/AAAx0ZTholEH3dl-5miU3sYza?dl=0>
2. Most of the characters were played by Muncaster staff and locals with Peter & Iona Frost-Pennington playing Emperor Hadrian & the Goddess Sulis.
3. The bathhouse and fort are within the wider Muncaster Estate and are in the stewardship of English Heritage. For more info on the history of the bathhouse see <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/ravenglass-roman-bath-house/>. Muncaster Estate thanks English Heritage and the team at Hadrian's Wall 1900 for co-operating with this event.
4. Muncaster Castle has been the ancestral home to the Pennington Family since at least 1208 when ownership of the land was confirmed through a charter from King John. Reputedly the medieval tower was built on the ruins of a Roman outpost protecting the approaches to the port & vicus at Ravenglass.
5. The castle sits majestically in 77 acres of wild, woodland gardens with breath-taking views of the Lake District Fells, including Scafell Pike, England's highest mountain. The castle is home to fabulous collections of art, antique furniture & textiles and will reopen for limited winter opening on 12 February 2022. The season fully restarts on the 26 March 2022. See www.muncaster.co.uk for full details.
6. Muncaster is also home to the Hawk & Owl Centre which presents thrilling flying displays twice daily in the main season.
7. General Muncaster opening times can be found at <https://www.muncaster.co.uk/plan-your-visit/opening-times/>
8. **Romans in Ravenglass** was a community-led archaeology project during two summers in 2013 and 2014. Over 900 local volunteers worked with professional archaeologists to uncover the Roman Ravenglass story.
9. The project was a partnership project between the Lake District National Park Authority, Muncaster Parish Council and Muncaster Estate. Kurt Hunter-Mann of York Archaeological Trust supervised the archaeological investigation. See <https://www.lakedistrict.gov.uk/learning/archaeologyhistory/rir> for more details.
10. The impressive ruins of the almost 2,000 year-old Roman fort and bath house can be seen close to modern-day Ravenglass. The aim of the **Romans in Ravenglass** project was to find out more about the ancient settlement that hides beneath the grassy fields.

To find our more information on the Hadrian's Wall 1900 Festival visit :

<https://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/hadrianswall1900>

Press Enquires for general HW 1900 events caraprangle@live.com

Hadrian's Wall 1900 will celebrate the 1900th anniversary of the beginning of the construction of Hadrian's Wall. It will commemorate 1900 years of history of the UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS), recognised locally, nationally, and internationally, as a cultural and historical asset of Outstanding Universal Value to humanity.

Throughout 2022, a programme of events and activity which celebrates 1900 years will be presented by local societies, interest groups, community and arts organisations, creatives, local authorities, visitor attractions, venues and individuals. This will be across the length of the Hadrian's Wall Frontiers of the Roman Empire UNESCO World Heritage Site, from Wallsend to Ravenglass (73 miles/118km of Wall, and 140 miles/215km in total).

From community events to high profile arts commissions, Hadrian's Wall 1900 will provide opportunities for everyone to celebrate and find their connection to the World Heritage Site whether it be Roman history, dark skies, the natural environment, cultural diversity, food, music, the arts and more. Over 1m people live and work in the regions of Hadrian's Wall WHS.

Hadrian's Wall 1900 is a huge opportunity to unleash the recognised economic potential of Hadrian's Wall's cultural and heritage capital, and to spring back stronger after Covid-19.

The Festival will be made up of activity presented by local societies, interest groups community organisations, arts organisations, local creatives, local authorities, visitor attractions, venues, and individuals.

Hadrian's Wall 1900 is coordinated by the Hadrian's Wall Partnership in collaboration with local organisations, communities and individuals.

The Hadrian's Wall Partnership is a voluntary body made up of organisations responsible for the UNESCO World Heritage Site status of Hadrian's Wall.

Find out more about the partnership via [Hadrian's Wall Management Plan | Visit Hadrian's Wall \(hadrianswallcountry.co.uk\)](#) <https://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/hadrians-wall-management-plan>

Hadrian's Wall Country is the brand used by the Hadrian's Wall Partnership to promote the World Heritage Site to visitors. The brand was introduced in 2002 by the Hadrian's Wall Tourism Partnership and conveys and reinforces values that encourage visitors, linking the World Heritage Site to the rural and urban landscape through which it runs.

2022 is the 35th anniversary of the inscription of Hadrian's Wall on the UNESCO World Heritage List, one of the first World Heritage Sites to be created in the UK. Today the Hadrian's Wall frontier is part of the transnational World Heritage Site - Frontiers of the Roman Empire - which includes the Antonine Wall in Scotland and the roman defences across Europe from the Dutch coast to the mouth of the Danube . This represents the borderline of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent in the 2nd century AD.

Visit the Hadrian's Wall Country website via [Visit Hadrian's Wall | Official visitor information \(hadrianswallcountry.co.uk\)](#) <https://hadrianswallcountry.co.uk/>

Directions to Muncaster & Ravenglass – Ravenglass can easily reached by train with a 10 to 15 minute walk to the Bathhouse.

If travelling by car follow signs for **Western Lake District** from the motorway. Ravenglass is on the A595. No parking at the bathhouse itself or vehicular access. Please use designated carparks in Ravenglass village if travelling by car.

