

Press release

The governor's guards

Sensational discovery in Carnuntum

The evaluation of results related to the “Comprehensive prospection study of core area Carnuntum“ has produced a new sensational discovery after the gladiator school and early military camps detected in 2011 and 2014 respectively. On the western edge of Bad Deutsch-Altenburg, evidence of barracks belonging to the governor's guards attached the governor's palace, was detected. Within the entire Roman Empire, this finding is so far unparalleled in regards to its dimension and unambiguousness.

Sandwiched between Vienna and Bratislava, Carnuntum is by far the largest archaeological landscape in entire Central and Southeastern Europe. Nearly the entire ancient Roman city once spanning 10 square metres is still preserved underneath the fields and vineyards of Petronell-Carnuntum and Bad Deutsch-Altenburg.

The Federal State of Lower Austria not only set new international scientific standards with the project “Comprehensive prospection study of core area Carnuntum“. It also designed a model in regards to land use planning and archaeological monument conservation how to shape future concepts destined to balance history, spatial planning and economy.

Commissioned by the Federal State of Lower Austria, core area Carnuntum was examined with magnetic field sensors and georadar by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Archaeological Prospection and Virtual Archaeology (LBI ArchPro) in close cooperation with the Central Institute for Meteorology and Geodynamics and the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures of the Austrian Academy of Sciences. Currently, the large body of data is being scientifically evaluated.

New sensational discovery in Carnuntum

Following the discovery of the gladiator school in 2011 and early military camps in 2014, evaluations of the measurement results of the next meticulously examined case study revealed archaeological evidence completely unknown up to now: located on the western edge of Bad Deutsch-Altenburg in the southern part of the governor's palace, evidence of barracks harbouring the governor's guards (*equites* and *pedites singulares*) was found. The barracks being only a few metres across of the palace suggest these guards were at the disposal of the governor of *Pannonia Superior* at all times.

The fact that Carnuntum is so far the only place in the entire Roman Empire where both the governor's seat and that of his guards were retrieved makes this new finding a true sensation. No other place along the limes boasts any similar proven traces and even in Rome evidence of the Praetorian Guard is very limited.

Only a minor structure in Lambaesis/Algeria might give similar indications, but it is in no way comparable to the extraordinary scientific data from Carnuntum. The discovery of the barracks also now explains why the governor of *Pannonia Superior* was in a very secure position: for his protection, he was not in need of the soldiers of the XIV. legion permanently deployed in the adjacent legionary camp, but could fully rely on his troops temporarily garrisoned in the barracks from all limes settlements throughout the province. The high level of efficient organisation involving multicultural protagonists still remains stunning today.

Once again, not only for Lower Austria, but for Europe as a whole, Carnuntum has produced a unique finding of its ancient Roman past when the city occupied an important role in world politics over several centuries. It thus becomes more and more apparent that Carnuntum actually was one of the Roman Empire's most important cities within Europe. And the evaluations of the measurement results conducted by the Federal State of Lower Austria and the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute have not yet been entirely completed!

“This absolutely sensational new finding highlights once more Carnuntum's historic significance and encourages the Federal State of Lower Austria to further invest into research and methods of presentation of the ancient Roman metropolis. Findings of such contribute to heighten Carnuntum's position as an international tourist magnet“, says regional minister Dr. Petra Bohuslav.

Mag. Franz Humer, scientific director of the Roman City Carnuntum, adds: “I have been working in Carnuntum for nearly 30 years. Thanks to consistent fundamental research by the Federal State of Lower Austria in conjunction with scientific partnerships, new archaeological highlights continue to be unearthed every year which we did not expect despite nearly 170 years of research. From a historical viewpoint, Carnuntum once more consolidates its reputation as a hot spot of Roman Antiquity beyond the Mediterranean.“

Managing director Dr. Markus Wachter looks forward to a sustainable boost in cultural tourism: “The prominence and percentage of international visitors in Carnuntum have visibly increased ever since the discovery of the gladiator school. Findings like the military barracks back up Carnuntum's international significance and support its distinct positioning as reborn city of emperors.“

Images and further press information: <http://carnuntum.7reasons.net>

20 years of Roman City Carnuntum: The past begins here.

In Carnuntum, the time of the Romans does not lie in the long-ago past, which can be seen only by a few remains of walls, but it is the present which can be experienced with all one's senses. Visitors can saunter in the footsteps of Roman emperors who wrote world history 1700 years ago.

Public baths heated all year round entice guests in the reconstructed Roman city quarter, while the amphitheatre and gladiator school take them back to the world of gladiators. In the Museum Carnuntinum, timeless treasures are witness to the former inhabitants' zest for life and culture.

In 2014, the European Commission honoured Carnuntum's importance and its unique presentation by awarding the European Heritage Label.

For the past 20 years, thousands of visitors have annually flocked to Carnuntum's Roman Festival. To mark this occasion as well as the 20th anniversary of the Roman City Carnuntum as a cultural institution, an improved six-day Roman Festival with numerous living history events will be staged on three consecutive weekends at all major venues (28/29 May, 4/5 June, 11/12 June).

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