ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Published in conjunction with the exhibition

*Memento: Remembering Roman Lives*

Nicholson Museum, Sydney University Museums

26 October 2015 – ongoing

Exhibition curated by Candace Richards and Michael Turner.

Graphic design and app development by Candace Richards.

Object photography by Tim Harland, Dizzy View Photography (with the exceptions: NMR.1066, NMR.1070, NMR.1091 by Rowan Conroy; NMR.1080, NMR.1087, NMR.1116 by Sydney University Museums).

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About the exhibition

The intention of the exhibition Memento: Remembering Roman Lives is exactly that—to remember the people named on these funeral inscriptions. The memorials name sailors from Egypt, Dalmatia and Thrace serving in the Imperial Fleet based at Misenum on the Bay of Naples and their wives; a slave from the Imperial household in Rome; a wrestler from Amastris on the Black Sea; freedmen, freedwomen and their patrons; husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, sons and daughters, as well as foster children (their age at death given with precision down to the last hour).

Their stories can only be guessed at.

In 1857 and again in 1858, Sir Charles Nicholson, Chancellor of the University of Sydney, travelled to Italy where he bought nearly seven hundred Greek, Roman, South Italian and Etruscan antiquities. On his return in 1859, these, along with the four hundred artefacts he had acquired in Egypt, were donated to the University to become the genesis of what is now the Nicholson Museum collection.

Among the objects acquired in Italy were 68 Roman marble funerary inscriptions. Of these, 14 come from Rome and 36 from the Bay of Naples. The reliefs were set up in a variety of places: the outside walls of tombs, alongside roads, in columbaria and in Christian catacombs. They all date from between the 1st and 5th centuries AD, a period that saw a change in Roman funerary practice from cremation to inhumation with the coming of Christianity. Five of the inscriptions are Christian, often indicated at the end by the phrase In Pace, while the rest are pagan, introduced with the letters D M, short for Dis Manibus which translates as To the guardian spirits of the Underworld.
Common Latin words and phrases

Funerary invocations

D M
an abbreviation for DIS MANIBUS
To the guardian spirits of the Underworld.

NOTE: There is no easy translation of these two formulaic words that appear at the top of nearly all non-Christian Roman funerary monuments. The Di Manes were the spirits of the underworld, whether deceased or protective is uncertain, although their intent was clear.

i.e. may the deceased rest in peace

IN PACE
In Peace

B M F
an abbreviation for BENE MERENTI FECIT
‘x’ made this for the well deserving (deceased person)
Relationships

PATER a father
PARENS a parent
FILIUS a son
ALUMNUS/A a foster son or daughter
PRIMIGENUS/A the first born (child)
POSTERUS/A a descendent
LIBERTUS/A a freedman or woman (i.e. an ex slave)
NATUS/A a native of, born in

MATER a mother
CONIUNX a husband or wife
FILIA a daughter
FRATER a brother
HERES an heir or heiress
PATRONUS/A a patron (i.e. slave owner)
ANCILLUS/A a slave

Emotions

INNOCENTISSIMUS/A the most innocent
DULCISSIMUS/A the sweetest
PIENTISSIMUS/A the most dutiful or righteous
CARISSIMUS/A the dearest
AMATUS/A beloved
CUPITUS/A beloved
Time

ANNUS  a year
MENSIS  a month
DIES  a day
KALENDAE  the first day of the month
IDUS  the 15th day of the months March, May, July and October or the 13th day of the other months
VIXIT  he or she lived (for X years, months, days)

The Military

MILES  a soldier or sailor on a naval ship
MILITAVIT  he served as a soldier/sailor (for X years)
MANIPULARIS  a sailor
III  a trireme
III  a quadrireme
LIBURNA  a small fast ship
Funerary Inscriptions
Roman funerary urn for a woman named Perelia Tyche.
1st - 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1013
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary urn for a man named Publius Aelius Cleruchus.
2nd century AD
Found at San Vito, Palestrina (ancient Praeneste), Italy.

NMR.1015
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary urn for a boy named Quintus Marcus.
2nd – 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1016
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a named woman Lucella Tyche.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Pozzuoli (anceint Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1063
Formerly in the collections of Barone at Naples.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58
CAELIA ASELLA INNOCENTISSIMA
QVE VIXIT ANNIS XII MENSIBVS
DEPOSITA VII DIE ANTE KALENDAS
SETTEMBRIAS
IN PACE

[THIS IS] CAELIA ASELLA,
THE MOST INNOCENT OF GIRLS, WHO LIVED
FOR 12 YEARS AND (?) MONTHS. LAID TO
REST 7 DAYS BEFORE THE CALENDERS OF
SEPTEMBER [IE. 25 AUGUST]
[REST] IN PEACE
Roman funerary monument for a man named Leo.
1st to 4th century AD
Found in the Molinari vineyard on the Via Appia, Rome.

NMR.1065
Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
DEPOSSIO HILARES QV[A]E
VIXIT ANNVS VII M[ENSE] VNO D[IEBUS]
XIII DEPOSITA DIAE VII IDVS
(SE)PT[EMBRES] RICOMEDE ET CLYARC[H]O
CONS[ULIBUS]

HERE LIES HILARA WHO
LIVED 7 YEARS 1 MONTH 13 DAYS
LAID TO REST ON THE 7TH DAY BEFORE
THE IDES OF SEPTEMBER
[IE. 7 SEPTEMBER]
RICOMEDES AND CLEARCHUS WERE
CONSULS [IE. 384 AD]

Roman funerary monument for a girl named Hilara.
384 AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1066
Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Eufrosyne.
4th century AD
Said to be from a Hypogaea (underground Christian tomb) in Rome.

NMR.1067
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

FOR EUFROSYNE
THE SWEETEST OF WIVES
WHO LIVED FOR 27 YEARS 3 MONTHS
13 DAYS. LAID TO REST 5 DAYS BEFORE THE
CALENDS
OF JANUARY [IE. 27 DECEMBER]
Roman funerary monument for a boy named Primius.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Cumae, Italy.

NMR.1068
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Lucius Aelius and his wife Aelia Capitolina.

150–200 AD

Found at Cumae, Italy.

NMR.1069

Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Euhemeria.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1070
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Sentia Serapias
250–300 AD
Found near Pozzuoli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1071
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Aulus Fraucius Carpus and his wife Fraucia Cyrilia.

150–200 AD

Found on the Via Campana, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1072

Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Quintus Marius Bassus and his wife Marcia Aeliana.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1073
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Valerius Hymnus.
200–250 AD
Found on the Via Campana, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1074
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Junia Theodote.
3rd century AD
Found at Pendio Sant’Elmo, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1076
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Julius Alexander
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1077
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

D[IS] M[ANIBUS]
IULIVS ALEXANDE[R]
PR[INCIPALIS?] 
HIC POSTIVS

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
JULIUS ALEXANDER
A SAILOR(?)
SET UP THIS STONE
THREE DAYS BEFORE THE CALENDAS OF JUNE
[IE. 29 MAY]
Roman funerary monument for a girl named Laudicia.
125–175 AD
Unknown provenance

NMR.1078
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
HERMES ET
LAUDICIA PARENTES CARIS
SIMI FECERVNT
LAUDICIAE FILIAE
SVAE DVLCISSIMAE
D[IEBVS] II

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
HERMES AND LAUDICIA
[HER] MOST LOVING PARENTS MADE THIS
FOR LAUDICIA
THEIR SWEETEST DAUGHTER
WHO LIVED 5 YEARS 6 MONTHS 2 DAYS
D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
FLAVIAE MAXIMIL
LAE VIX[IT] AN[NIS] XIX
VALERIVS VALENS
CONIVGI M[ERENTI] F[ECIT]

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
FOR FLAVIA MAXIMILLA
WHO LIVED 19 YEARS VALERIUS VALENS
MADE THIS FOR HIS DESERVING WIFE

Roman funerary monument for a woman named Flavia Maximilla.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1079
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
D[IS] M[ANIVS]
C[AIVS] RVTILIVS RVFVS
VIXIT ANNIS X(III)
MENS[IVS] III DIEB[VS] XII
C[AIVS] RVTILIVS RVFVS
PATER FILIO FECIT

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
FOR GAIUS RUTILIUS RUFUS
WHO LIVED 14 YEARS
3 MONTHS 12 DAYS
GAIUS RUTILIUS RUFUS
HIS FATHER MADE THIS FOR HIS SON
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Lollius Primitius.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1081
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Margaris.
150–200 AD
Found on the Via Campana, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1082
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Gaius Julius Petronianus.
1st to 4th century AD
Found near Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1083
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE UNDERWORLD
FOR GAIUS JULIUS PETRONIANUS OF THE LIBURNA ‘ARMATA’ A NATIVE OF EGYPT WHO LIVED 45 YEARS AND SERVED FOR 22 YEARS HIS HEIR GAIUS LONGINUS CLEMENS OF THE TRIREME FORTUNA MADE THIS FOR HIM WELL DESERVING
Roman funerary monument for a man named Gaius Julius Resus.  
1st to 4th century AD  
Provenance unknown.

NMR.1084  
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE UNDERWORLD MARCUS QUINCTIUS GAIUS MADE THIS [FOR HIMSELF?] AND FOR FLAVIA URBANA AND FOR HIS FREEDMEN AND FREEDWOMEN

Roman funeary monument for a man named Marcus Quinctius Gaius, his wife Flavia Urbana and their unnamed freedmen and women.

1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance

NMR.1085
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
IVLIAE EUTYCHI
DI ANN[IS] XVII
IVLIVS IVLIANVS
PATRONVS ET VLPIVS
ARPOCRATION

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
FOR JULIA EUTYCHIS
[WHO LIVED] 17 YEARS
JULIUS JULIANUS
HER PATRON AND ULPIUS
ARPOCRATION
MADE THIS FOR HIS WELL DESERVING WIFE

Roman funerary monument for a woman named Julia Eutychis.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1086
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Aulus Terentius Augrinus. 150–250 AD
Found on the Via Campana, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1087
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Plutiala Procula.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1088
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Lucius Trebius Atemidorus.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance

NMR.1089

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for the unnamed son of Tyche
1st to 4th century AD
Found on the Via Latina, near Rome, Italy.

NMR.1090
Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

[ENTHADE KEI]MAI
ZESA[S EN THNETOISI] KYKLOUS PI
SYRO[N LYK]ABANTON
KAI MENES HIER[E]S HEX EPI
TOISI KYKLOUS
ALL ETI NEPIACHON ME TYCHE
KATETHEKATO METER
TOID ENI LAINEOI TUMBOI ME
GA PENTHOS ECHOUSA

HERE I LIE
HAVING LIVED AMONG MEN DURING THE
CYCLES OF FOUR YEARS
AND IN ADDITION TO THEM SIX
CYCLES OF THE HOLY MOON
BUT WHILE I WAS STILL A CHILD
MY MOTHER TYCHE LAID ME
IN THIS STONE TOMB
SUFFERING GREAT GRIEF
Roman funerary monument for a boy named Felix.
Written in Ancient Greek.
1st to 4th century AD
Found by the Tor Marancio in Rome, Italy.

NMR.1091
Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

*The (theta) at the beginning of the last line, its roots in the word thanatos, has probably been added at a later date to signify that felix is now dead.*
Roman funerary stele for a girl named Setonia Omfale.
1st to 4th century AD
Provenance unknown.

NMR.1092

Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Gellia Ias.
2nd to 3rd centuries AD
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1093
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a boy named Primus.
1st to 4th century AD
Found near on the Via Domitiana near Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1094
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Caecilius Primion and his wife Aiutrix.
1st to 4th century AD
Found on the Via Campana near Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1095
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Alexander.
1st to 4th century AD
Found in the Villa of the Quintili, Italy.

NMR.1096
Formerly in the collection of Giambattista Guidi.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Marius Celsus.  
1st to 4th century AD  
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1097

Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.  
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Hermes.
2nd to 4th century AD
Found near Naples, Italy.

NMR.1098

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Anicius Hermes and a woman named Pompeia Cytherides.
1st to 4th century AD.
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1099
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
Roman funerary monument for a baby boy named Arrius Romanus.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1100
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Herbula Protia.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1101
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Beriola.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Baia (ancient Baiae), Italy.

NMR.1102
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
AELI[VS] AGRIPPA
BERIOLAE QVAE VI[XIT]
ANN[IS] XVII BENE
M[ERENTI] F[ECIT]

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
AELIUS AGRIPPA
MADE THIS FOR BERIOLA
WHO LIVED 17 YEARS AND WAS WELL
DESERVING
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Junia Secunda.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1103
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
M[ARCVS] IVNIVS ...
ENTINVS ET IVN[IA]
FELICITAS FECERV[NT]
IVNIAE SECVNDAE
PATRONAE BENE
(MERE)NTI ET SIBI
(POSTER)ISQV[E]

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
MARCUS JUNIUS (FLOR)ENTINUS
AND JUNIA
FELICITAS MADE THIS
FOR JUNIA SECUNDA
THEIR WELL DESERVING PATRON
AND FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR
DESCENDENTS
Roman funerary monument for a man named Aulus Ammonius
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance

NMR.1104
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a baby boy named Domitus Heraclianus.  
1st to 4th century AD  
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1105
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.  
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE UNDERWORLD
FOR ASCLEPIOD(?)
The daughter of Ermidorus from Nicomedia(?)
Who lived 30 years
Her brother made this [for her being]
Well deserving

Roman funerary monument for a woman named Asclepiod...
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1106
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Ursena Creste
175–225 AD
Found near Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.II07
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE UNDERWORLD
FOR URSENA CRESTE
WHO LIVED 27 YEARS
AELIUS APOLLONIDES
MADE THIS [FOR HER BEING] WELL DESERVING
Roman funerary monument for a girl named Phlegoste.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1108
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for two men named Aulus Terentius and Marcus Lucis Flavianus.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1109
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a girl named Vitellia Felicitas
300–400 AD.
Found at Pozzuoli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.III0
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Onesimus.
1st to 4th century AD
Unknown provenance.

NMR.III
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Octavius Eusebius Gemellus.

1st to 4th century AD

Found on the Via Domitiana near Solfatara, Italy.

NMR.1112

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Laelia Priscilla.
200–225 AD
Found in a tomb on the Via Cumana, Pozzouli (ancient Puteoli), Italy.

NMR.1113
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a woman named Heleae Agrippinae.
1st to 4th century AD
Found at Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1115
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856-58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Quintus Aemilius Trophimus.  
1st to 4th century AD  
Unknown provenance.

NMR.1116

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Tiberius Claudius Amianthus.

50 – 100 AD

Found near a monument in the Vigna Codini (columbarium), between the Via Appia and the Via Latina near Rome, Italy.

NMR.1118

Excavated by J.P. Campana in 1840.

Acquired by Giambattista Guidi after 1840.

Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a girl named Felicitas.
1st to 4th century AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1120
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Diogenes.
Written in ancient Greek.
200–250 AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

Purchased by Sir Charles Nicholson in Naples, 1858.
Roman funerary stele for a boy named Gaius Julius Petronianus
1st to 4th century AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1122
Purchased by Sir Charles Nicholson in Naples, 1858.
D[IS] M[ANIBVS]
FELICITATI QVAE
VIXIT ANNIS V
MENSIBVS VII
DIEBVS XXI HOR[IS] III
BALERIA SPES FECIT
B[ENE] M[ERENTI] ALVMNAE

TO THE GUARDIAN SPIRITS OF THE
UNDERWORLD
FOR FELICITAS WHO
LIVED 5 YEARS
7 MONTHS
21 DAYS 3 HOURS
VALERIA SPES MADE THIS
FOR HER WELL DESERVING FOSTER-CHILD

Roman funerary monument for a girl named Felicitas.
1st to 4th century AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1123
Purchased by Sir Charles Nicholson in Naples, 1858.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Marcus Julius Apuleius.
1st to 4th century AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1124
Purchased by Sir Charles Nicholson in Naples, 1858.
Roman funerary monument for a man named Gaius Gentius Valens. 
98–117 AD
From Miseno (ancient Misenum), Italy.

NMR.1125
Formerly in the collection of Giuseppe de Criscio.
Acquired by Sir Charles Nicholson in Italy, 1856–58.
Appendix: A statement from the curators.

The aim of *Memento: Remembering Roman Lives* is to do exactly that, to remember the lives of the individuals named on the Nicholson Museum’s collection of 68 Roman funerary inscriptions. The inscriptions themselves date from the first to fourth centuries AD and record brief glimpses of the relationships, social status, occupations, gender, and ages of a disparate group of people from this period in history.

Two curatorial approaches to the stone inscriptions were necessary in order to achieve this goal.

Firstly, each inscription needed to be transliterated and translated in line with modern standards of Classical Latin and Classical Greek. Prior to this exhibition, the Roman inscriptions were last examined as part of the second edition of the Handbook of the Nicholson Museum, published in 1948. Since then there have been new ways of thinking about Latin in funerary contexts, which have been incorporated into the translations for this exhibition, as well as different interpretations or errors in the original publication corrected. These new translations are also reflective of the need to modernise elements of the language for the modern museum visitor, highlighting the emotional elements in each inscription to instill a personal and immediate connection between the visitor and the ancient person memorialised.

Secondly, a new way of providing access to the content and engaging audiences with the exhibition needed to be developed. To provide the visitor with the essential information for each object, including transliteration, translation and museum label information (name date, provenance, number, credit line) via traditional museum wall paneling was impractical due to the volume of textual information, the scale necessary for legibility, and the desire for direct engagement. To

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1 The 68 inscriptions are counted as the complete set of inscriptions collected by Sir Charles Nicholson. This includes 66 physical stones, two of which have inscriptions on either side. Only 62 are represented in the catalogue as throughout the research process it was determined that one inscription was a fake and two others were too fragmentary to warrant inclusion. One further urn was not included as it was on display in the Nicholson Museum exhibition 50 Objects 50 stories and included in the exhibition catalogue, published 2012. Due to the physical limitations of the museum, only 51 of the inscriptions were installed in the final exhibition.

2 Three of the inscriptions are written in Classical Greek and the rest are in Latin.


4 One particular change between the 1948 publication and this exhibition is in the interpretation of inscription numbered NMR.1091 (p. 37 of this catalogue). Examination of the lettering suggests that the θ ‘theta’ at the beginning of the last line of the inscription was not a part of the original inscription, rather it stands for the word thanatos, meaning death, which would have been added after the individual named became deceased.
resolve this issue an exhibition reflective kiosk was designed with touch screen accessibility. Each page of this catalogue represents an individual page within the kiosk. Navigation between these pages is provided in a visual representation of the exhibition, where users can simply touch on the exhibition section they are interested in and then touch on each individual stone to discover the translation. There is no curatorial narrative directing a visitor to engage with the inscriptions in any particular order. Rather each visitor curates their own experience, by engaging with as many inscriptions and stories as they wish in any order. This approach enables the visitor to develop a more personal connection with the ancient individual memorialised.

*Memento: Remembering Roman Lives* connects us to the lives of 107 husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, sons, daughters and foster children, naval officers, wrestlers, nurses, patrons, freedwomen, freedmen and slaves.

Michael Turner and Candace Richards

Further reading

**Publications**


**Online resources**

Campbell, E. “Latin Funerary Inscriptions” *Johns Hopkins Archaeological Museum.*


Sydney University Museums. *Collections Search.*


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5 A kiosk in the museum environment is a digital interface installed in the gallery which is primarily used to convey information to a visitor, usually about the museum or gallery itself, directional information such as floor maps, or exhibition content.