



The exhibition “Memorie dal passato. L’abitato e la necropoli di Pedemonte a Gravellona Toce” originated from the cooperation between the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle arti e Paesaggio per le province di Biella, Novara, Verbano-Cusio-Ossola e Vercelli and the city of Gravellona Toce, that specifically endorsed an agreement for the promotion of historical and archaeological studies in the municipal territory.

The exhibition is specially dedicated to Felice Pattaroni’s excavations at Pedemonte in the 1950s, which highlighted the remains of an ancient settlement (first century BCE - fifth century CE) and of a burial ground (fifth century BCE - fourth century CE). In order to give an in-depth (but necessarily not complete) study of the ancient contexts (both settlement and burial ground) the display follows five thematic sections (body and appearance, manufacture activities and commerce, kitchen- and tableware, the burial ground), housed in the three exhibition rooms.

This exhibition would not have been possible if Fondazione Compagnia di San Paolo did not appreciate the idea and decided to support it.

con il sostegno della



SOPRINTENDENZA ARCHEOLOGIA,
BELLE ARTI E PAESAGGIO PER LE PROVINCE DI
BIELLA, NOVARA, VERBANO - CUSIO - OSSOLA
E VERCELLI

WELCOME BACK ANTIQUARIUM !



Felice Pattaroni

“**Memorie dal Passato**” is hosted in the former city *Antiquarium* (corso Milano 63, near the bridge leading to the main church), which has today been restructured and restyled in order to become the exhibition centre of Gravellona’s local history.

Thanks to the collaboration with the **Associazione Archeologica e Culturale F. Pattaroni**, the exhibition will be open from 2 December 2017

Visit is arranged on demand
(0323 848386 int. 7)



MEMORIE DAL PASSATO

L’abitato e la necropoli di Pedemonte a Gravellona Toce

The ancient settlement and the burial site of Pedemonte, in Gravellona Toce

After 63 years from the discovery by Felice Pattaroni of a burial ground and of an ancient settlement which testify our thousand year old history, an exhibition in the city centre brings back some of the most famous finds, currently kept at the Museo di Antichità di Torino. It is for sure a unique occasion to discover a very important part of our past history, which has much to teach about our present history as well.



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Graphic documentation of child grave
1b, hand drawn by Felice Pattaroni



Lamp imitating an
African model

Felice Pattaroni was born locally in Ornavasso in 1907. He died, aged seventy nine, just down

the road in Gravellona Toce. He was a self-taught enthusiast of local antiquities. In 1951 he started searching for the remains of the early settlement he was certain lay beneath today's Gravellona Toce. For three years he found nothing. On the first of March, 1951, the first few fragments of "terra sigillata" pottery came to light. They emerged from a modern lime pit on a building site in Pedemonte.

Pattaroni's subsequent excavations went on until 1959. They brought to light a vast necropolis and part of a settlement site. The latter lay on the slopes of Monte Cerano.

Founded in the first century BCE, it was abandoned no earlier than the fifth century. In 1960, in this very room, Pattaroni inaugurated an Antiquarium. It displayed finds from Pedemonte's settlement and burial ground.

His magnum opus, illustrating his numerous discoveries, was published the year he died.

MANUFACTURING, JEWELLERY (ROOM 1)

Felice Pattaroni had identified the basis of production in the Pedemonte settlement right from the start. More recent research has been carried out on finds from both the burial ground and the settlement site. The finds provide evidence for a wide variety of male activities, such as livestock and arable farming, grape growing, carpentry and glass manufacture. Female activities revolved around spinning and weaving.

The finds on show here represent only a few of this wide variety of productive activities in Pedemonte's ancient settlement. The focus here is on sheep farming and its offshoots, weaving and cheese production. A selection of jewellery was buried with the deceased of Gravellona Toce. Ornaments are found in both male and female graves. They include brooches, rings, necklaces and bracelets. The choice of jewellery sheds light on different aspects of the culture and personality of their owners. The jewellery on display comes from different cultural traditions, Celtic and Roman. The large Ornavasso type brooches are of the former. The several large signet rings inlaid with gems the latter.



Bronze horse bit from
the House of the

KITCHEN AND TABLEWARE - COMMERCE (ROOM 2)

The selection of tableware used during the late Republic and early Empire sheds light on a transitional period in local society. This was when the local population, living on the far edge of the Insubrian Lepontic Gaulish community first came in touch with the Roman world. Lepontic "spinning top" vases were replaced by Roman pear shaped jugs. Black-glaze tableware, so characteristic of the Roman Republican period, gave way to reddish "terra sigillata" pottery in Imperial times. Towards the end of the Empire there were new trends in kitchen ware, including the introduction of jars with ribbon rims and small lid- cookers.

By late Republican times an intense commercial network had developed. It revolved around a fixed system of waterways, both fluvial and maritime. These were safer and faster than land routes. There was an increase in imports from the Po Plain and the Mediterranean (especially from the Adriatic and the East in general). Gravellona Toce found itself on a water route tying the River Po to the River Ticino and Lake Verbano (Lago Maggiore). Even at the end of the Empire, Gravellona Toce's ancient settlement was still in touch with the Southern Mediterranean.



ROM (—) stamp on
the rim of a Dressel 6B
amphora

THE BURIAL GROUND (ROOM 3)

Between 1954 and 1959, Felice Pattaroni excavated an extensive burial ground. It was in use for about a thousand years, from the fourth century BCE through to the fifth century CE.

At least 126 graves were excavated. Five, including Grave 7, dated back to the end of the Early Iron Age. The deceased of Grave 7, and his grave goods, had been placed within a stone lining.

Grave 15, with a wealthier array of grave goods lay close by; this may have been a relative. The cremated body had been placed in a large drinking vessel with a burnished banded decoration. A large, upturned bowl had been used as a lid. The fragment of a bracelet and two small sheets of bronze were found together with the cremated remains. The grave structures, and the choice and type of objects placed with the deceased have been analysed. This has made it possible to piece together many aspects of the everyday life of the inhabitants of this area. They settled here in the second century BCE. The evolution of the Celtic community into a thriving, fully Romanised settlement can be traced right up to the end of the Empire. Over this period the community's funerary rites also evolved. In the earliest graves the deceased's body had been inhumed. This was a practice common to the Alpine peoples. In the mid first century BCE cremation was introduced. This practice continued throughout the Roman period, right up to the fourth century. From then on there was a return to inhumation.



Seventh century BCE
cinerary urn