Great North Museum:
Hancock Library

History, Classics &
Archaeology Student
User Guide
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The Great North Museum: Hancock library is a fantastic resource for Newcastle University students. It contains three unique collections that cover a wide range of subject areas including history, classics and archaeology and natural history. Within these collections there are a number of rare and historical items which can be accessed on request.

The Library contains Newcastle University’s School of History, Classics and Archaeology’s Cowen Collection. The material this contains is based on recommendations from the School, resulting in a vast selection of course-specific texts which may be difficult to find elsewhere.

We can be found on the 2nd floor of the GNM: Hancock Museum, on the left as you exit the elevator. Please ring the bell and someone will let you in.

The GNM: Hancock library offers study space, as well as access to computers and the University’s wi-fi network. The staff are always happy to assist with locating items of stock and any enquiries that you may have.

Here’s what some of our users have to say about us:

The library has an interesting collection of books that aren’t often to be found elsewhere, as well as providing a comfortable place to study.

I love the GNM library- all that would make it better is longer opening hours, the staff are extremely helpful and knowledgeable and the combination of the SANT and Cowen collections means it has most of what I need.

Excellent resource; excellent staff! Great help. Perfect working environment.
Library Collections

- **The Cowen Library**

The Cowen library came to Newcastle University’s Archaeology Department when it was formed in 1972, and is named after John D. Cowen, who donated his own collection of books in 1976. This collection was moved to the Great North Museum: Hancock in 2009 and now contains around 7,000 books and a subject specific range of journals and offprints.

The main subject areas include: archaeology, ancient history and classics. Areas of particular strength are: Roman Britain (including social and military history); local archaeology; archaeological history and methodology, and the history and archaeology of the Mediterranean (especially the Byzantine Empire).

Books of local interest include topics such as the archaeology of Hadrian’s Wall, including books published from the mid-eighteenth century to newly published works. The collection is added to each year by recommendations from Newcastle University staff.

For more information, see [http://ncl.ac.uk/historical/about/archaeology](http://ncl.ac.uk/historical/about/archaeology)

This fantastic student resource is complemented by the books and journals in the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne’s collection, also housed in the library.

- **The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle Upon Tyne Library**

SANT is the oldest provincial society of its kind in the UK, and since its formation its library collection has been at the society’s heart.

The focus of SANT’s library is on local history, architecture and archaeology, with a particular emphasis on north east heritage. Here you can find a range of books on Roman Britain, including publications on the Roman frontier in the North East and in particular a number of books about the history and archaeology of Hadrian’s Wall. Books on the history of Newcastle contain a wealth of information, and local directories and poll books provide fascinating primary sources. There is
also a large section on numismatics and this includes books on Greek and Roman coinage as well as British mints and seals.

The library holds around 7,000 books, over 1,700 tracts and 300 journal titles. This includes complete sets of the Society’s own publications: the Proceedings of the Society and Archaeologia Aeliana, which contain articles covering all aspects of the history of the North East, from prehistory to present.

For more information about SANT go to [http://newcastle-antiquaries.ac.uk](http://newcastle-antiquaries.ac.uk)

- **The Natural History Society of Northumbria**

The NHSN is one of the largest specialist Natural History libraries in northern England. The primary areas covered by the library are zoology, geology and botany, but the collection also extends into: ecology; the history of natural history; biographical studies on naturalists; scientific exploration and ethnography.

The collection houses over 12,000 books and 500 journal titles. Some important donations to the library include: the library of W.C Hewitson, with many illustrated eighteenth century books in fine bindings; the library of Joshua Alder, including a range of nineteenth century academic texts; the Tully bequest, including many ornithological work (the earliest work in the library, Belon’s l’Histoire de la nature des Oyseaux (1555) is from this bequest); and a number of books from the library of Thomas Bewick.

The Society also currently subscribes to over 100 journals, and obtains more titles through exchange with its own Transactions (now called the Northumbrian Naturalist).

The NHSN Archive houses nationally important material including original watercolours, drawings and proof engravings by Thomas Bewick, as well as manuscript letters, diaries and notebooks from renowned northern naturalists.

For more information go to [http://nhsn.ncl.ac.uk](http://nhsn.ncl.ac.uk)
Finding Items in the Library

All items from the Cowen, SANT and NHSN collections can be located online using libsearch.ncl.ac.uk

Items from the Cowen collection are arranged using the Dewey Decimal classification system. This is the same system that is used in the Robinson Library:

And the collection is clearly labelled in the library.
The SANT collection uses its own shelfmark system. When you have used Library Search to find an item that is in the SANT collection you need to click on the Locations/Request tab and look at Location 2 – see below. This will give you the shelfmark used by SANT.

The catalogue code is listed alongside ‘Location 2’

Some items are marked as ‘Controlled Access’. These items are kept in a separate room and if you would like to view them, please ask a member of staff.

Roman silver in Northumberland
F. Haverfield (Francis), 1860-1919. 1914
Available at GNM Hancock SANT Controlled Access (080 TRA(39))
Borrowing Books

All of the books from the Cowen Collection Public Access area (so, those found in the library) may be taken out, apart from those marked as Reference. The process is very simple. Just take your book to the desk and a member of staff will check it out for you.

**Undergraduate Students** may take out up to ten books for a week long period. Books may be renewed up to four times providing the item is not required by another user.

**Postgraduate students** may take out up to ten books until the end of term. Books may be renewed up to four times providing the item is not required by another user.

Please bring your Student Card in order to borrow items.

It is important that you return books on time, or contact the Library to arrange for a renewal. You can do this by sending an email to [gnmlibrary@twmuseums.org.uk](mailto:gnmlibrary@twmuseums.org.uk) giving details of the books you have borrowed and when they are due for return. You can also ring the Library on 0191 222 3555.

Items that are located in Controlled Access and Rare Books items may only be viewed inside the library. Please ask at the desk if you want to do this.

Books from the SANT collection may only be taken out by members of the Society, though they may be viewed by anyone inside the Library. The student fee for a year’s subscription to SANT is £20. There is a Student Bursary scheme available operating on a first come first served basis available every year. For more information about joining SANT, please visit their website or ask in the Library.

Books from the NHSN collection may only be taken out by members of the society, though, again, they are available for general use in the library. For more information about joining the NHSN, please visit their website or ask in the Library.
Frequently Asked Questions

• Why is the library only open at certain times?

The Library opening hours are Monday - Friday 10.00 – 4.00, during term time and Monday - Friday 1.00 – 4.00 during vacations. The opening hours are constrained by the opening hours of the Great North Museum: Hancock and by staff resources.

• How can I see archive material?

The archives of the NHSN are available to view by appointment; please contact the Library to arrange this.

The SANT archives are housed at Northumberland Archives, formerly the County Records Office, at Woodhorn. You will need to contact them to arrange a visit.

• The catalogue says the book I want is at the Resource Centre. Can I still see it?

Yes – books can be retrieved from the Resource Centre on request. Contact the Library if you would like a book from this location and it should be available for you within 3 working days.

• The catalogue says the book I want is in the Rare Books and Archives Store. Can I still see it?

Yes – by making an appointment. If you contact the Library, you can arrange to see Rare Books and archive material. You will need to bring ID and proof of address along with you.

• The catalogue says the book I want is available, but I can't find it on the shelf. Why?

The system used by the Library to loan and return books is manual and not linked to the online catalogue. This means that items are marked as Available when they may be on loan. This problem is currently being investigated. Please ask at the Library desk for help – they will be able to tell you whether the book has been checked out, and if not they should
be able to locate it for you. If the book is overdue they can arrange to recall it for you.

- **I want to bring back a book but the library is closed. How can I return it?**

If you are unable to wait until the library is open but the Great North Museum: Hancock is open, you can leave your book with a member of staff at the museum Reception Desk.

- **Can I use the computers in the library?**

Yes – they are set up like the computers in university clusters, and may be accessed using your university log in details.

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**Library Contact Details**

You can contact the Library as follows:

Email -  [gnmlibrary@twmuseums.org.uk](mailto:gnmlibrary@twmuseums.org.uk)

Telephone - 0191 222 3555

Website – [www.greatnorthmuseum.org/library](http://www.greatnorthmuseum.org/library)