

Julius Caesar - Dictator of Rome

In 46 BC Caesar returned to Rome. He was now the most powerful man in the world. The Senate made him dictator for life and he ruled like a king. He made many changes to Rome. He put his own supporters in the Senate. He built new buildings and temples in the city of Rome. He even changed the calendar to the now famous Julian calendar with 365 days and a leap year.

Murder

Some people in Rome felt that Caesar was too powerful. They were worried that his rule would put an end to the Roman Republic. They plotted to kill him. The leaders of the plot were Cassius and Brutus. On March 15, 44 BC Caesar entered the Senate. A number of men ran up to him and began to attack him and killed him. He was stabbed 23 times.

Interesting Facts about Julius Caesar

- The date of Caesar's death, March 15th, is also called the Ides of March.
- While in Egypt he fell in love with the queen of Egypt, Cleopatra. He helped her to become pharaoh and had a child named Caesarion with her.
- Caesar's heir was his nephew Octavian. Octavian became the first Roman emperor changing his name to Caesar Augustus.

Augustus Caesar – 1st Emperor of Rome

With Marc Antony dead Octavian was the most powerful man in Rome. In 27 BC the Senate gave him the title of Augustus and he would be known by this name for the rest of his life. He became the ruler and emperor of Rome. The basic government of the republic, such as the Senate and other officials, was still in place, but the emperor had the ultimate power.

A Good Leader

When Augustus became emperor, Rome had experienced many years of civil war. He brought peace to the land and began to rebuild much of the city and the empire. He built many roads, buildings, bridges, and government buildings. He also strengthened the army and conquered much of the land around the Mediterranean Sea. Under Augustus' rule, Rome once again experienced peace and prosperity.

The next 200 years were years of peace for the Roman Empire. This period is often called the Pax Romana, which means "peace of Rome". Augustus is often given credit for establishing the infrastructure that led to such a long period of peace.

Death

Augustus ruled up until his death in 14 AD. His step-son, Tiberius, became the second emperor of Rome.