

# **A DAY IN CERAMICS, GLASS AND METALS. CONSERVATION AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

August 2, 2011 Pippa Pearce Community Archaeology, Conservation, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Environmental Archaeology, Science Anglo-Saxon art, Anglo-Saxons, Britain, British Museum, bronze portrait head, conservation, Hallaton, head, Helen Sharp, Hoard, Leather, Leicestershire Museums Service, M&A, Naucratis, Norway, politics, Purse, Still building, Sutton Hoo, Treasure trove, video conferencing, war, X-ray



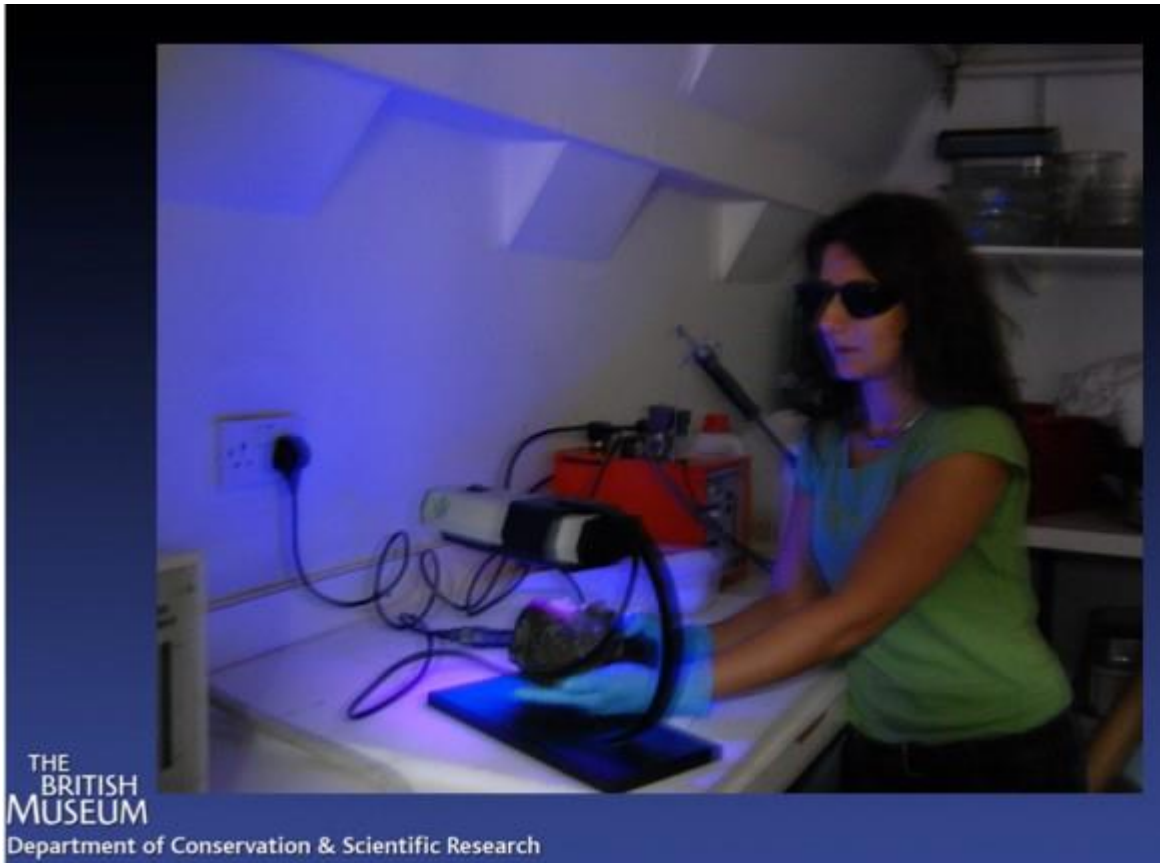
*8.55 am. Misting a waterlogged leather purse inside a pot with deionised water.*

The purse contained a hoard of silver Civil War coins currently going through the Treasure process. If the leather dries out, it will distort. Treatment is delayed while questions of ownership and ultimate destination for the hoard are resolved but we have pressed for a speedy decision!



*9.05 am. Excavating fragments of an Iron Age cauldron from a soil block.*

This is just one of a group of bronze cauldrons, some with iron rims and handles, found at [Chiseldon](#).



*9:15 am: Identifying old restoration on a bronze portrait head of Augustus under ultra violet light.*

The results of the investigation will be published and the head may go on display. You can find out more about the [head of Augustus](#) on the British Museum website.



*9.22 am Revealing silver inlay in an iron Merovingian axe wanted for *The World of Sutton Hoo* exhibition that will open in September 2011.*

Further details on the [handaxe](#) can be found in collections online.



*9:30 am: Two 18 month contract posts have just started to clean coins from the Frome hoard, the largest hoard of Roman coins in a single pot found in Britain. They have calculated that they will have to clean about 40 coins each a day to fulfil their contracts.*

An extensive blog has been posted by the Portable Antiquities Scheme on the discovery of the [Frome Hoard](#) and it will form part of a video conferencing workshop for children.



*9:32am: Piecing together fragments from the old Naukratis excavation.*

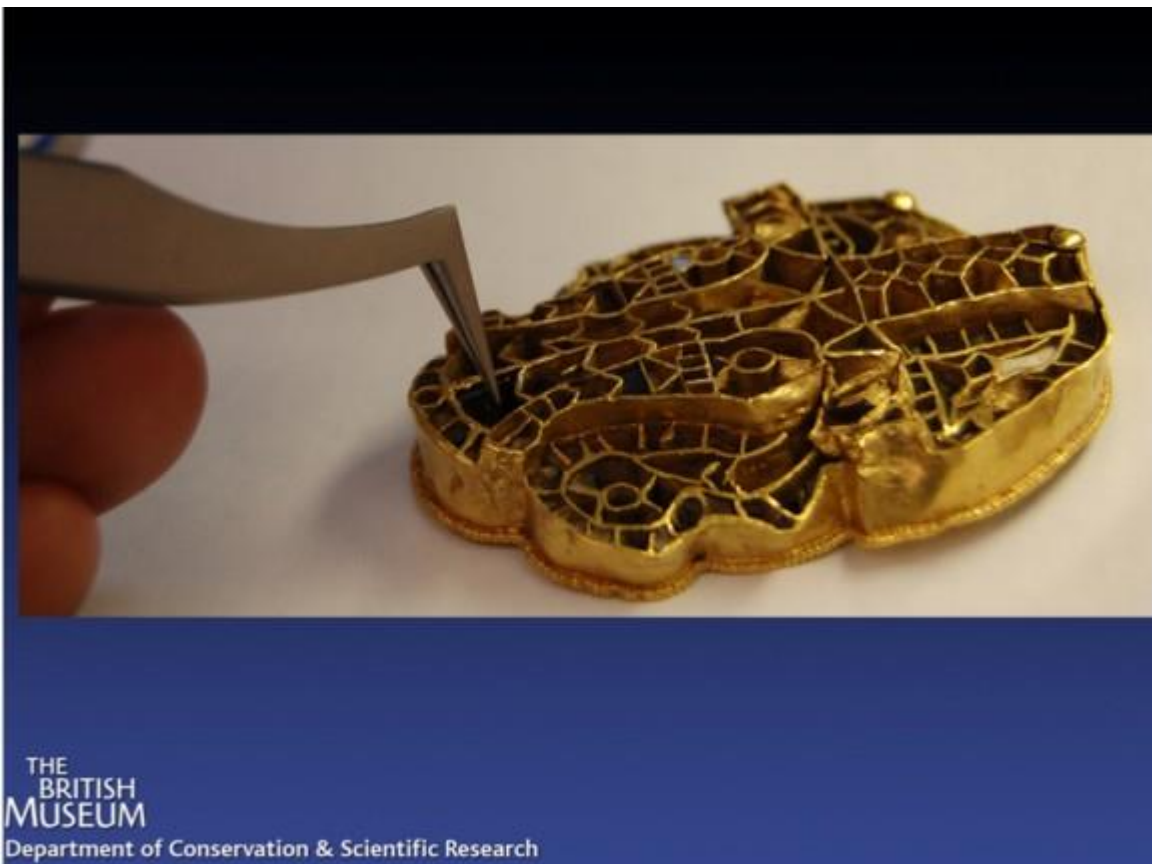
You can read more about the [Naukratis research project](#) on the British Museum research pages.



THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Department of Conservation & Scientific Research

*9:37 am: Reconstructing the bowl that was placed over the mouth of the pot that contained the Frome hoard.*





*9:54 am: Removing a tiny wisp of cotton wool caught in the gold cloisons of part of the Ostrogothic Domagnano Treasure.*

You can learn more about this object on [Collections online](#).



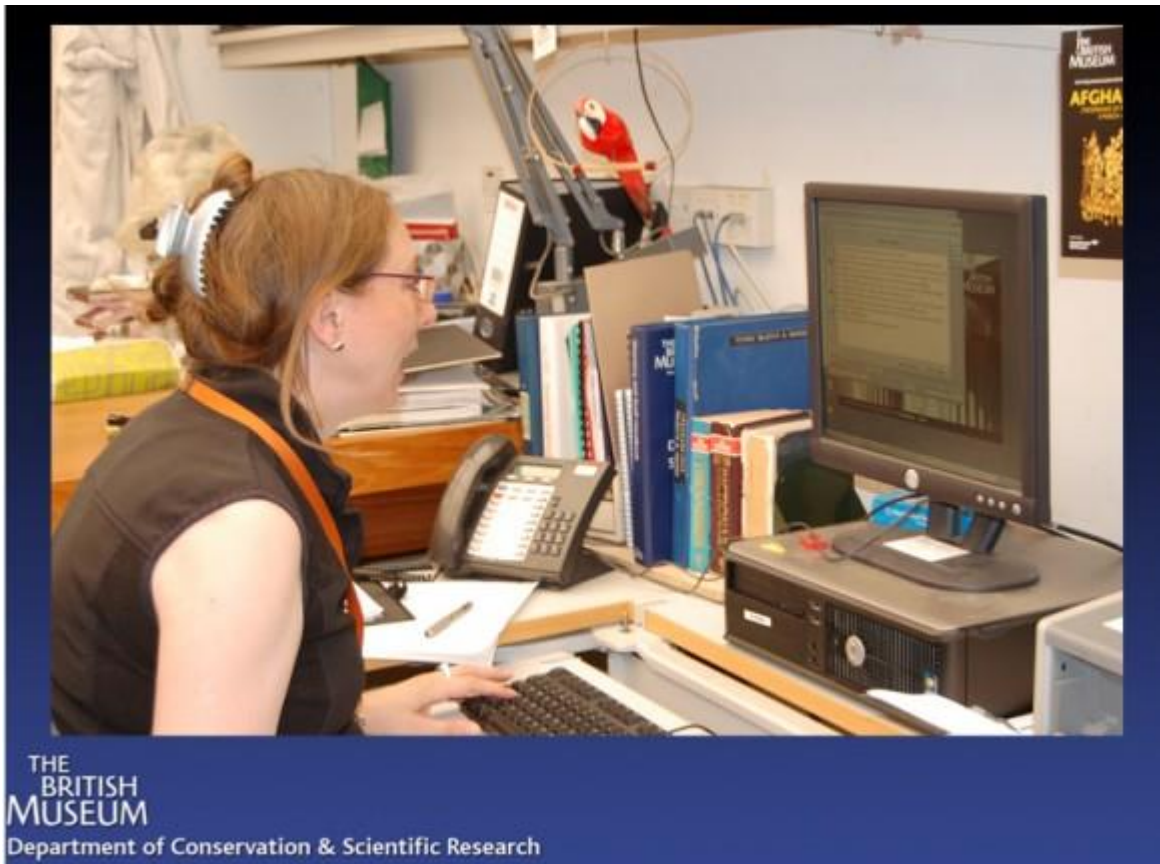
THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Department of Conservation & Scientific Research

*12:32 pm: Reconstructing the pot that contained the Frome Hoard.*

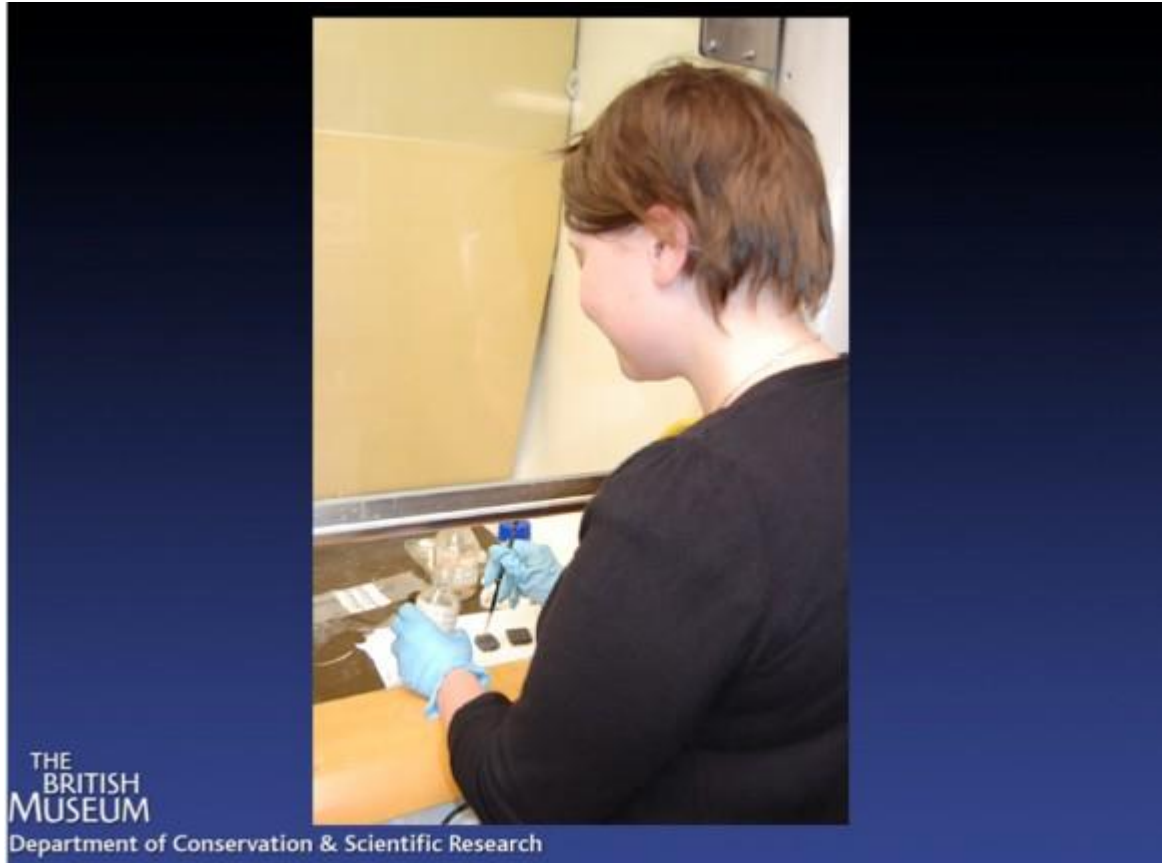


THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Department of Conservation & Scientific Research

12:40 pm: More joins found in the Naukratis material.



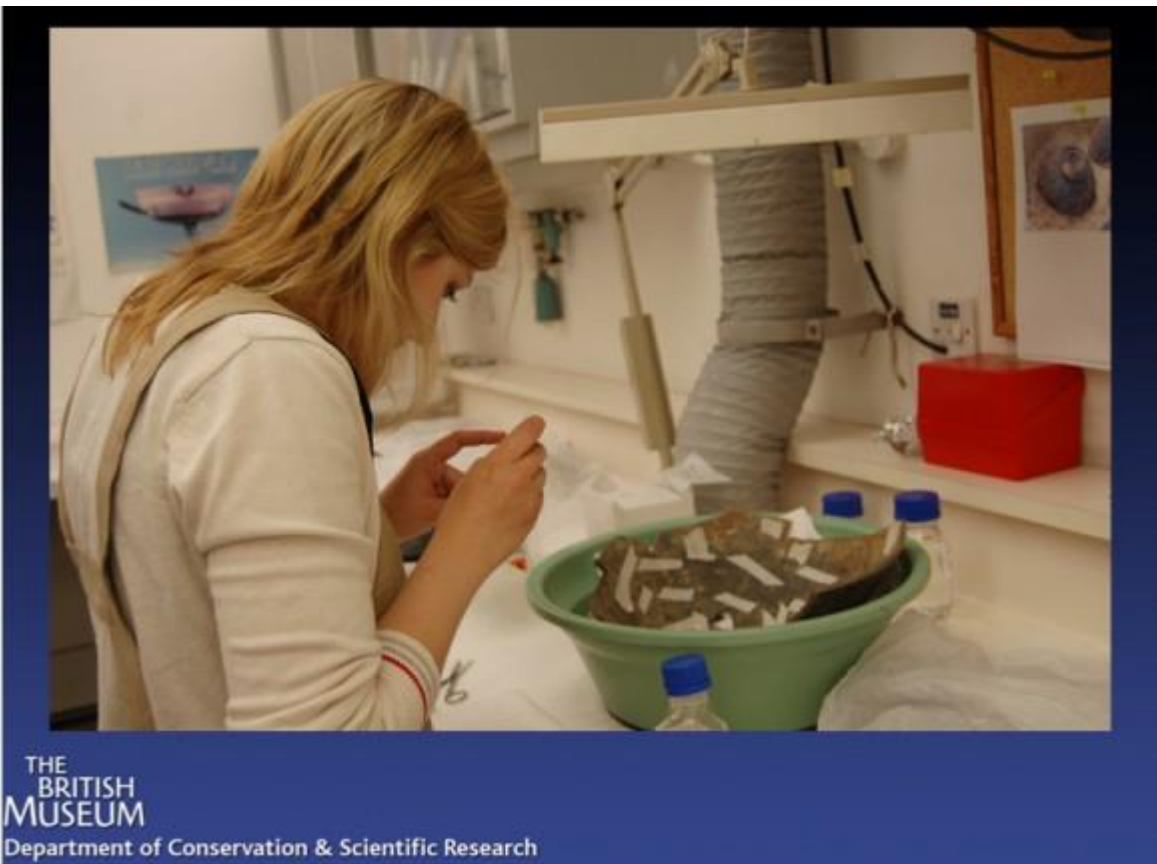
12:43 pm: Editing a conservation record on the British Museum computer system. Recently it was announced that the 2 millionth record had been generated and most of these are open to the public via the BM Collections On Line website.



*1:58 pm: Consolidating lead items that have formed part of a comparative study of galvanostatic and potentiostatic methods of reduction.*



*2:23 pm: Still gluing the Naukratis fragments.*



2:26 pm: Still building up fragments of the Frome pot. (Note picture on the wall of the pot still in the ground.)



2:59pm: Investigating the Lilleberge assemblage, a collection of Viking objects that includes items still in the small blocks of soil in which they were excavated in 1886 from a long barrow in Norway.

For more details on the Lilleberge assemblage, visit these [pages](#).



THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Department of Conservation & Scientific Research

*3:01 pm: Filling gaps in the Frome bowl.*



THE  
BRITISH  
MUSEUM  
Department of Conservation & Scientific Research

*4:58 pm: Examining an X-ray of a cheek piece from the East Leicestershire helmet made from iron overlaid with silver gilt. The helmet, which dates from just before the Roman invasion of Britain, was part of what was originally called the Hallaton hoard and was buried full of Iron Age silver coins*

The [Hallaton hoard](#) has been acquired by Leicestershire Museums Service and [Helen Sharp](#) blogs about the treasure elsewhere on this site.



*5:23 pm: Removing tarnish from an Anglo-Saxon silver gilt buckle for The World of Sutton Hoo exhibition that will open in September 2011.*

You can find more information on the [buckle](#) on the BM site.