

# MORE POST- EXCAVATION TASKS

July 29, 2011 Paul Belford Archaeological Prospection, Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Education, Excavation, Post Medieval, Survey archaeologist, Archaeology, Blast furnace, Chairman, Community Archaeology, Excavation, Historical Metallurgy Society, Industrial Revolution, Man-Made Disaster, Metallurgy, society's 50th anniversary, Steelmaking, the Historical Metallurgy journal, Wales

After completing this morning's interim report on the Stirchley Station watching brief, I have now turned my attention to the various odds and ends which have built up during the week and really need to be sorted before the weekend.

First amongst these was finishing the archive for the [blast furnaces community archaeology](#) project which we completed in May. Yes, I'm afraid to say that the drawings and finds have been littering the office for the last three months or so – but I am pleased to report that they are now all boxed up and ready to be sent off. Part of the reason for doing this now is that I am preparing a paper on the site for the *Historical Metallurgy* journal – the site may contain the remains of the first 'hot blast' iron smelting furnaces in the world!

Archiving of projects is one of the big issues in commercial archaeology at the moment – with museums finding it hard to take stuff... and even I do sometimes wonder if some of that stuff is really worth keeping.

Something else that has been in the office for a couple of weeks – and this is definitely worth keeping – is this lovely early nineteenth century mixing bowl which has been converted to a flowerpot by someone drilling rather crude holes in the bottom. We found this on another watching brief in Wales.



Also today I have been speaking with one of our team who is working on a site in Cheshire, and dealing with a couple of questions from clients. I have hardly had time so far to get down to work on the big excavation write-up, but I think I can have a good crack at it in the next couple of hours.

Here I am at my desk in contemplative mood!



I guess one of the things about being an archaeologist is that it never stops! I am currently the Chairman of the [Historical Metallurgy Society](#), so inevitably bits of the day (and much of the evenings) are taken up in dealing with the activities of our various committees and thinking ahead. It is the society's 50th anniversary next year, and we have a meeting on Monday to do some intensive planning – so I need to think about that over the weekend.

Tomorrow, just for fun, I am spending the day with a friend (another archaeologist, of course) looking at urban industrial sites and comparing their condition today to how they were when they were officially surveyed 25 years ago. I expect that this will take about 12 hours of our free time!

You do need to be quite mad to do archaeology – but still after 20 years it is very enjoyable!