

A WEEK WITH THE HALLATON TREASURE PROJECT

July 29, 2011 Helen Sharp Community Archaeology, Day of Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011, Education, Finds, Iron Age, Museum Archaeology, Prehistory,Roman Boston, British Columbia, British Museum, Carlisle, cavalry sports helmet, Charnwood Museum, Counties of England, Great Bowden, Hallaton, Hallaton Treasure, Harborough, Harborough Museum, Helmet, Leicestershire, Leicestershire County Council, Leicestershire Finds Liaison Officer,Netherlands, Nijmegen, Only Fools and Horses, Project Officer, Roman Frontier Gallery, The Netherlands, Treasure trove, Tullie House Museum, University of Leicester Archaeological Services,Wendy Scott

Today, I'm not being very archaeological at all (currently watching a repeat of Only Fools and Horses on my day off) so thought I'd write about the last week of my job as Project Officer working with the Hallaton Treasure.

The [Hallaton Treasure](#) is an internationally important Late Iron Age find comprising over 5000 Iron Age and Roman coins, a Roman cavalry parade helmet, the remains of around 400 pigs and other unique silver objects which were all buried at an Iron Age shrine in south east Leicestershire between 50 BC and AD 60ish. Many of the finds are displayed at [Harborough Museum](#), Market Harborough where I'm based most of the time.



Coins from the Hallaton Treasure, copyright Leicestershire County Council

Saturday 23 July

Spent the day working at the museum's I Love Archaeology! event as part of the Festival of British Archaeology. I was joined by Leicestershire Finds Liaison Officer, Wendy Scott, who kindly gave up her Saturday to talk to visitors about Roman coins and show them some of her handling collection. I had fun showing kids (and a few adults) how to strike their own replica Corieltavian coins with our bespoke coin striking kit. Also got to show off a few coins from the Treasure which aren't usually on display and allowed visitors to carefully handle them. A lovely day.

Sunday 24 July

Hallaton Treasure Roadshow visited a Festival event in the village of Great Bowden near Market Harborough organised by the very active [Great Bowden Heritage and Archaeology](#) group. They were launching their new book "Furlong and Furrow" and I had another enjoyable day talking to people about the Treasure and doing more coin making. My roadshow events usually involve me dressed as "Seren the Iron Age" woman and this was no exception. Had a go at making a thumb pot out of clay which was one of the fun activities organised by the group for the event. It turns out that Seren is a rubbish potter and I gave up after my third disastrous attempt. Was good to get out of my itchy, woollen tube dress at the end of the day!

Monday 25 July

My first full day back in the office for a while was spent catching up on emails and working towards the next major stage of the project – the displaying the Hallaton Helmet at Harborough Museum following three years of conservation at the British Museum. Conservation work will finish in December this year and the helmet will be displayed at the end of January. It's such an exciting project to be involved in, but there is still lots to do before the public get to see this magnificent example of a 1st century AD, silver-gilt, cavalry helmet.



*Cheekpiece from the Hallaton Helmet,
copyright University of Leicester
Archaeological Services*

Tuesday 26 July

Another Hallaton Treasure Roadshow, this time at [Charnwood Museum](#), Loughborough. A great museum featuring lots of local archaeological finds, well worth a visit. About 100 people took part in the day which included kids craft activities such as making a “Roman helmet” out of card or an Iron Age torc from glittery pipe cleaners. Older visitors could chat to me about the Treasure. Hopefully I didn’t bore them too much, once I get started it’s difficult to stop!

Wednesday 27 July

Back in the office, more helmet planning. Took a call from a Roman re-enactment group who we hope to work with at the public launch of the helmet at the end of January. Chatted about hiring stunt Roman cavalrymen and ponies to ride around the town centre. Also sent some emails to the conservation team working on the helmet regarding photographing the finds and timescales etc.

Arranged to visit [Tullie House Museum](#), Carlisle to see their new Roman Frontier Gallery which currently has a Roman cavalry sports helmet from Nijmegen, The Netherlands. This helmet as loaned to the museum following their unsuccessful bid for the Crosby Garrett Helmet. Can’t wait to see it and chat to staff about Roman helmets next month.

Thursday 28 July

Another Roadshow event, this time at [The Guildhall](#), Boston where the Hallaton Treasure Travelling Exhibition is on display. This exhibition has been touring the East Midlands for two years and is another interesting aspect of the Hallaton Treasure Project. The Guildhall recorded their highest ever number of visitors in one day, hope in part due to the free activities we were providing. Was impressed by the many finds being displayed in the Guildhall which have just been dug up in an excavation taking place in the town’s Market Place. A wooden patten was the latest find and staff had to spray it with water every hour!

Friday 29 July

Welcome day off. Getting ready for last Festival of Archaeology event taking place at Harborough Museum tomorrow. Re-enactors in for Celts V Romans – should be a great way to end a hectic few weeks.