

EVERYBODY'S CHANGING ...

July 2, 2012 Deborah Fox Anglo-Saxon, Day of Archaeology 2012, Finds, Museum Archaeology Bidford on Avon, Bredons Norton, HIVE, Legend, Museums Worcestershire, Upton Snodsbury, Victoria Institute, Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum, Worcester Fourth Plinth, Worcester Museum

These last couple of weeks have seen the biggest changes that [Worcester Museum](#) has witnessed since the 1890s. We have shared our current building with Worcester Public Library since 1896 and before that, a building across the street, but during June 2012 they have moved out of our beautiful Victoria Institute into Worcester's new HIVE building.

Consequently my day of archaeology has been about new and exciting developments as the museum expands into the library space, our new temporary displays and helping our colleagues as they get the HIVE ready to open on July 2nd 2012.

Our new temporary exhibition at the museum is designed for our summer audience and is all about fantasy, film, brave princesses, honourable knights and really beautiful Anglo Saxon archaeology from our collections. We don't have very many Anglo Saxon artefacts and those that we do have were collected by Victorian antiquarians in the main. Our technicians have been building and installing the exhibition all week – big oak doorways, crows with beady eyes, heavy iron chandeliers hanging from the ceiling. We are installing the artefacts today. There is a cruciform brooch, disc brooches and amber beads from Upton Snodsbury, a scabbard chape and spearhead from Bredons Norton, pottery, shield bosses and a beautiful Anglo Saxon bucket from Bidford on Avon that was excavated in the 1920s. Our local archaeological society, Worcestershire Archaeological Society have sponsored the exhibition for us – part of their mandate to become more involved in archaeological work of all types in the county.



Anglo Saxon artefacts from Bidford upon Avon in the new Legend exhibition

Downstairs in the space that the library used to occupy we have installed a fourth plinth (a bit like the Trafalgar Square one but shorter) and today's residency is called Quilos and the Windmill. There is masking tape all over the plinth and it continues to grow. It's called sitewriting and I understand it's to do with mapping experiences and daydreams and the like. I don't entirely understand it but I'm pleased to say that most of those around me absolutely do. We usually walk through this space without a thought but during the fourth plinth project we have a webcam filming the whole thing including the staff!



Worcester Fourth Plinth

The rest of my day is spent at The HIVE. This huge gold building that has sprung up in Worcester over the last year or so is opening on Monday. Our colleagues in Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcester Public Library and Worcester University Library have all moved into the new space. We are working on the content for the display cases. We have been given the theme of memory and we are filling cases full of nostalgia, the results of research projects and items from the collections of museums across Worcestershire. My favourite part of the displays are quotes from some of the County's custodians of memory – the archaeologists, archivists, curators and researchers who are so passionate about what they do have been kind

enough to tell us why they do what they do and why they love it. The results have been poignant and inspiring. The curator of the new Infirmary Museum talks about her responsibility to those who lost husbands, wives and parents in her ex-hospital building, The curator of Kidderminster Railway Museum describes himself as a young boy looking through the steam into the cab of an engine wishing he could be a train driver and our archivist describes the excitement and anticipation he feels when he opens a package of papers for the first time in 200 years to see what lies within it.



Hal Dalwood, Worcestershire Archaeology at the HIVE

As we leave on Friday we are exhausted but Worcester is feeling like a place full of potential for heritage services at the moment – the new HIVE building is daring and ambitious and we who are staying put in our Foregate Street building have new space and new projects and lots to look forward to.