

## SMALL STEPS FORWARD

July 24, 2015 Martha Lawrence Archives, Community Archaeology, Curation, Education, Experimental Archaeology, Explore Posts, Finds, Museum Archaeology cataloguing, Curation, Finds, Museums, Museums Sheffield

I'm a museum archaeologist, Curator of Archaeology at Weston Park Museum in Sheffield. Today I have been working on the final touches to a list of objects we want to include in our new gallery. The new displays won't be created until next year but the list for this case is already overdue (the final, final deadline for supplying it to my colleagues was 16 June!). I had a good draft by then and have been steadily refining it over the last month. Today, I just had to measure three final objects – a glass bowl, an iron horseshoe and a perforated tusk. I already knew where the glass bowl was stored but I used our computer catalogue to find the location of the other two items and then set off into the store to try to find them. There is always a sense of excitement when looking out objects in the store, mixed with worry that you won't come across them – all the more so because I have only been working at Museums Sheffield since April and am still learning my way around. Luckily, this time I managed to find and measure all 3 items and, in the process, discovered that the iron horseshoe was recorded as being in the right box but on the wrong shelf. I added the information to the Excel list and updated the computer catalogue. Small steps towards that perfect catalogue which is the holy grail for museum curators!



*Perforated tusk that needed measuring. Copyright Museums Sheffield*

Also today, some of our volunteers have been cataloguing flints collected by Thomas Bateman, a 19th century antiquarian who investigated and collected from many sites in the Peak District. They have been measuring, photographing and describing the objects. As there were only two volunteers in today they documented straight onto the computer catalogue but normally they use a paper form to record the

information as we only have 1 spare laptop. My colleague and I then create the computer catalogue entries later.

I have also been emailing information to my contact at the Friends of Wincobank Hill. We are working with this community group on part of the new displays. Wincobank Hill is an Iron Age hillfort in the east of Sheffield. The group visited the store on Wednesday to look at the objects that past excavations have found and also photographs, notes and drawings created during these investigations (the documentary archive).

Other things I've been doing this week include arranging with a colleague in our learning team to discuss the prehistory session she is developing, speaking to a member of the public about how to access the collections not on display, supplying information to an academic about the exterior decoration of one of our objects and running an activity with a group of 8-10 year olds about bronze working where chocolate stood in for bronze in an experiment to create their own bronze working moulds.