



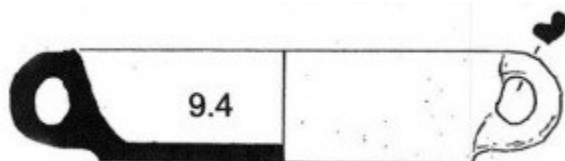
## Christmas update

### Finds progress

All of the Roman finds have now been washed, counted and weighted (so that we know how much there is). The Iron Age pottery is much more fragile to clean, but is nearly finished too. Thanks for everyone's help in making this happen. The next step is analysis by our finds and environmental archaeologists, which is pencilled in for around March. In the meantime, we thought you'd like to see some highlights so far.

### Roman fish dish

This weird looking pot is very shallow with a small handle. Several pieces fit back together and the pot surface is oddly mottled grey and orange. Our finds archaeologist, Laura, has had a quick look and suspects that it's an oval fish dish! So called as a fish would fit well in these dishes, but they may not have been used for just fish – or any at all. It's a type of pottery called Black Burnished ware, which was made in Dorset. This one seems to have been burnt, hence the odd colours.



Fragments of the Black Burnished ware 'fish dish' (below) and illustration of what it was probably like whole (above).

### Cow skull

Following advice from zooarchaeologist Alison Foster, the cow's teeth have been carefully excavated. The skull was lifted from site in a block of soil, as it looked very fragile. As the top has been crushed in the ground, the horns and teeth are the surviving elements that'll give us the most information.

To our surprise, the upper jaw and teeth are all intact! Interestingly, the skull was buried without a lower jaw. We'll hopefully learn more when Alison studies the teeth and measures the horn size.



Upside down cow skull being excavated in the office by Ken and Hazel (left) and upper jaw with teeth (right).

### Jigsaw anyone?

Several sharp-eyed washers spotted pot sherds that fit back together. The finds from Trench 3's big ditch in particular seem to have been dumped in large, freshly broken pieces. This ditch was clearly the go to rubbish dump at one time.



Two large fragments of Roman Severn Valley ware, probably a tankard.

### Possible writing

One pot base has sparked a debate – are there letters scratched on to the bottom or is it just damage? Afraid we don't have an answer to this one yet, but it's an intriguing possibility.



Scratched pot base – damage or writing?