



SURREY'S PAST



2024 test pitting / geophysics in Albury Park

Bronze Age pot from near Cranleigh

**Romano-British and medieval finds
from Bocketts Farm and
Norbury Park**

Queering Guildown

**Notes on churchyard
recording at Ewell**

**Mercury figurine
discovered at
Limpsfield**

**News and
events**

Further geophysics and test pitting at Albury Park in 2024

By Anne Sassin

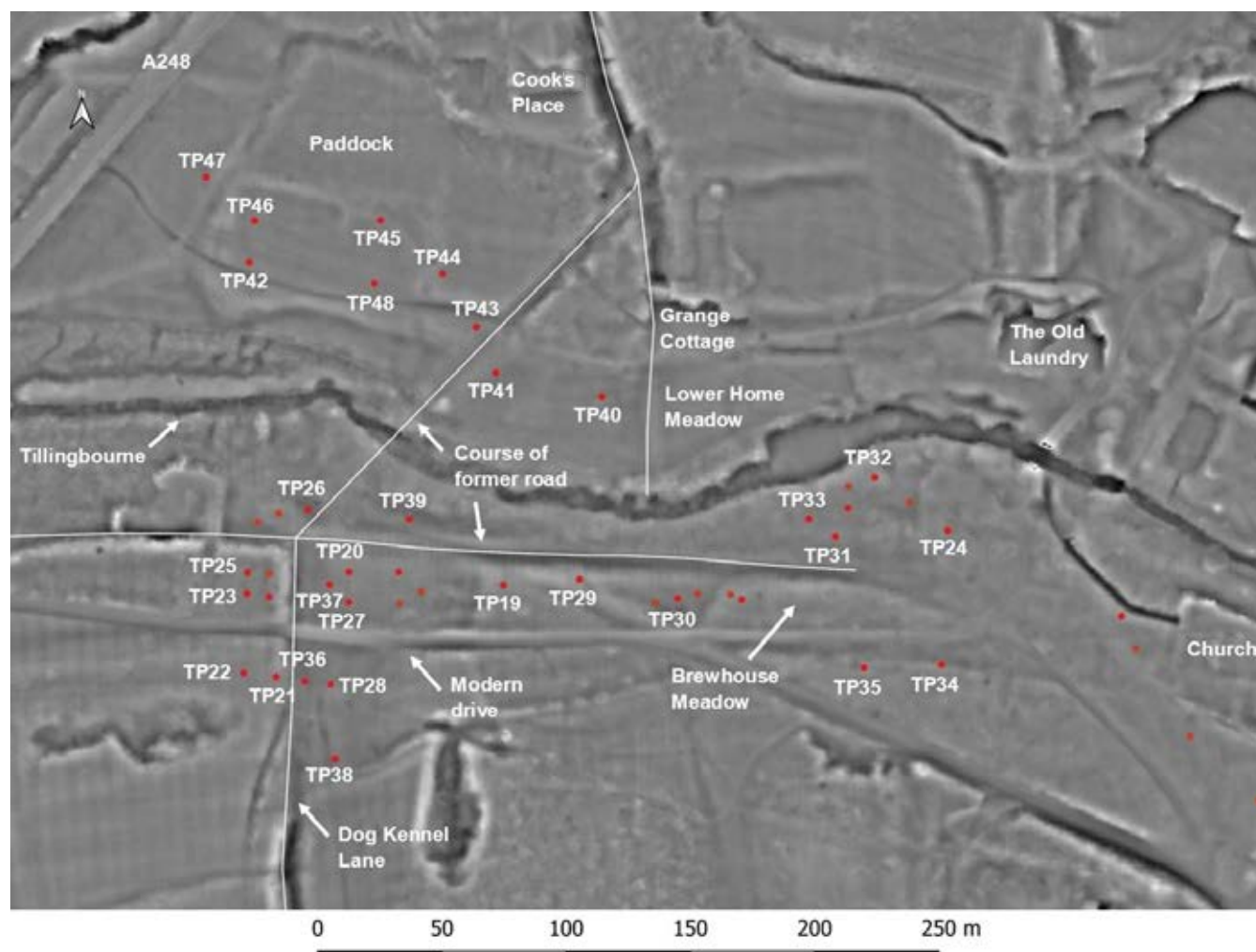
Summary

A second season of the Society's community archaeology project at Albury Park took place in 2024. The fieldwork involved further geophysical survey and test pitting in order to investigate and characterise the development of the original medieval settlement and manor of Albury, which was later displaced and re-located to the current village, originally the manor of Weston, a kilometre to the west. This note follows from the account of the 2023 season (*Surrey's Past* 496) which includes a more detailed site background and history.

Both the magnetometry and electrical resistance survey identified features of interest in the field north of the Tillingbourne, where several earthwork platforms are apparent on the ground, including an area of potential building platforms at the western end. 28 test pits were excavated across a large area spread either side of the river: Brewhouse Meadow to the south and the Paddock and Lower Home Meadow to the north. The results were varied, but included in situ 12th/13th-century levels along the old Dog Kennel Lane, evidence for Roman and potential Late Iron Age activity, and surfaces related to a possible medieval building north of the river.

The full detailed report will be available soon on the Society's website.

Fig 1 Location of test pits to date (2024 pits labelled) and key landscape features, plotted over 1m LiDAR LRM visualisation (© Environment Agency, visualised by PTS Consultancy)



Geophysical survey

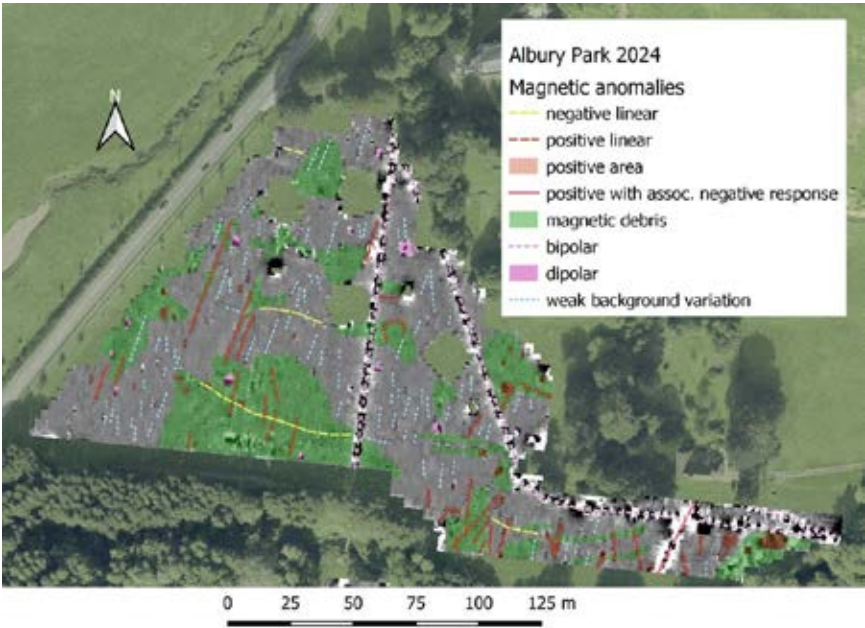
Over the course of 6 days between April and June 2024, a small team of volunteers undertook both magnetometry and electrical resistance survey across two areas which total *circa* 46,843 metres squared (4.6 hectares). This includes the two fields north of the Tillingbourne known as the Paddock and Lower Home Meadow, as well as the area to the south of the current drive including the sheep

paddock (known as Gravel Pit Field), the ‘Plantation’ and very western edge of the Park along the former Dog Kennel Lane). Although most of the survey area was open meadow, select areas of plantation trees and former gravel pits made access more difficult and limited in places. The electrical resistance survey took place across select areas where features were apparent in the magnetometry, covering *c.* 12,891m² in total (1.2 ha).



Fig 2 Map of the 2023-24 magnetometry surveys of Albury Park

Fig 3 Map of the 2024 magnetometry survey of the Paddock and Lower Home Meadow, with associated anomalies



The magnetic gradiometer survey was carried out using the Society's Bartington Grad601 gradiometer. The data was collected in zig-zag mode at 0.25 metres along traverses 1m apart, with 4 readings per metre along the traverses. The electrical resistance survey, conducted with a RM Frobisher TAR-3 Resistance Meter, used a sampling interval of data collected every 0.5m along traverses 1m apart.

As was apparent in the 2023 magnetometry survey, the park is heavily affected by several service pipes (represented by bipolar linears), which though concentrated in Brewhouse Meadow, extend into the 2024 areas surveyed (Fig 2). This may partially contribute to the lack of archaeological features in the southern area, particularly in Gravel Pit Field and area along Dog Kennel Lane, although the underlying geology may also be a factor for this.

North of the Tillingbourne, more features of potential interest were apparent in the magnetometry (Fig 3). This includes former 19th-century field boundaries (represented by yellow dashed lines or negative linears, which are also apparent in Fig 5) and the line of the former road as it crosses the river and changes course towards Grange Cottage (the

former Little George Inn which has been dendro-dated to the 16th century). Another slightly curving east-west linear south of Grange Cottage in Lower Home Meadow is likely to represent a former embankment, though its signs of magnetic debris suggest a different composition (possibly brick) from the other earthen banks (discussed further in the test pitting section). In the southern end of the Paddock, a large area of magnetic debris (shown as green in the figure) is apparent nearer to the river, likely representing demolition or other associated features. Several prominent positive linears (in red) also run through the field, oriented slightly NE-SW and not appearing to respect any of the previous field boundaries apparent from early 18th-century and later historic maps.

The electrical resistance survey (Fig 4) was selectively placed over areas of interest, including the course of the former road at its southern end (Dog Kennel Lane) and north of the Tillingbourne near Grange Cottage. Although the road is apparent in the survey, no other features such as adjacent cottages can be seen, and the majority of other linears are clearly associated with modern services and trackways or late post-medieval boundaries.

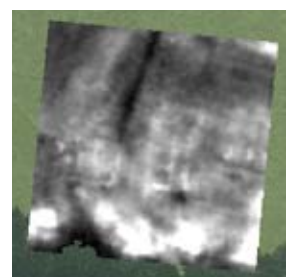
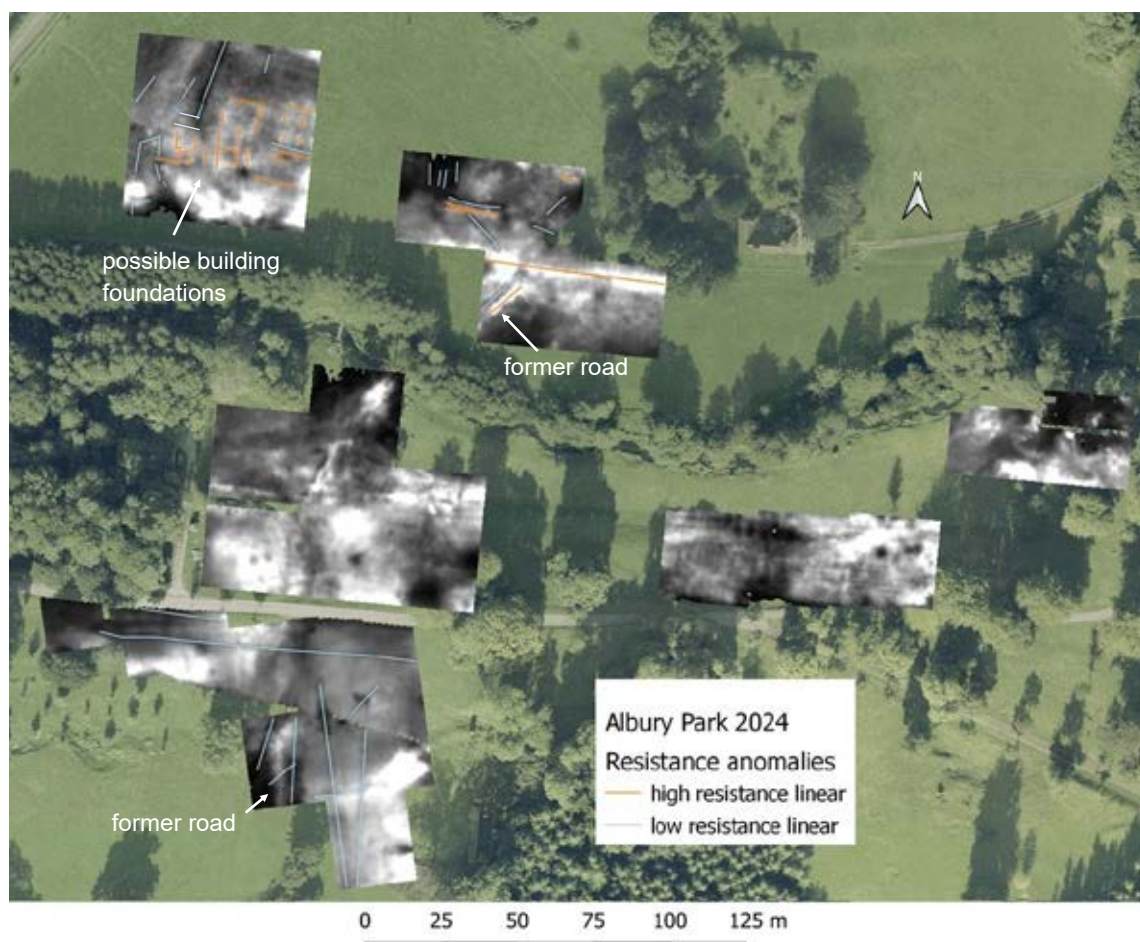


Fig 4 Map of the 2023-24 resistivity survey of Albury Park, with 2024 anomalies highlighted, including the former road and potential building foundations in the Paddock north of the Tillingbourne (shown in orange); the non-annotated image of the Paddock survey is also shown above for more clarity

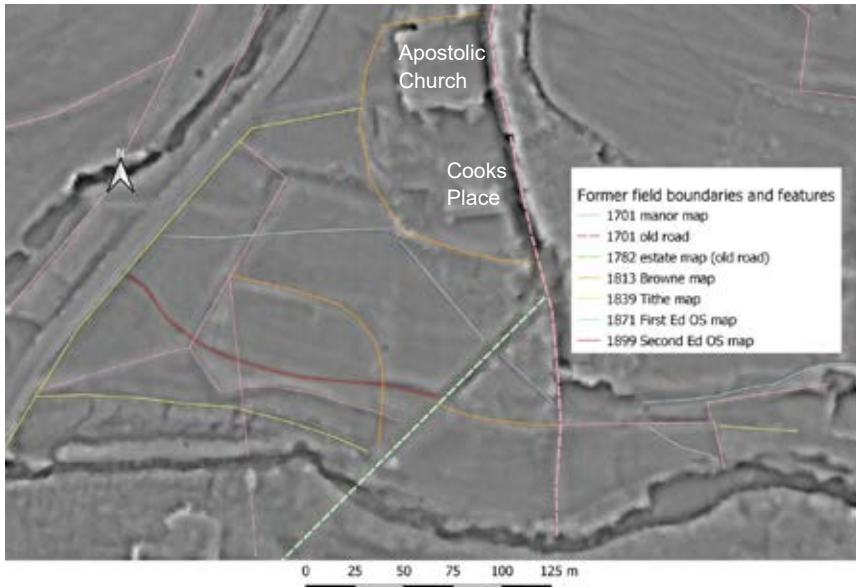


Fig 5 Map of former field boundaries and features as first apparent on 18th- and 19th-century maps, shown over LiDAR imagery

At the southern end of the Paddock, however, in the area of the magnetic debris, several high resistance linears (shown in orange) at right angles are apparent, strongly suggestive of foundations or surfaces, possibly for more than one structure.

As is apparent in Fig 5, the Paddock is heavily intersected by linear banks and terraces, many of which represent field demarcations and embankments put in during the 18th and 19th centuries. A small number of linears, especially near Cooks Place at the northern end, are not accounted for from the referenced maps, although their form is suggestive of similar post-medieval field boundaries or approachways. Others, such as those within the area of potential building foundations, may be older in origin, although this is only speculative until further investigated.

Test pitting

Over the course of three weeks between June and September, 28 1m² test pits were excavated, positioned both to supplement last year's placements and test the stratigraphy in the new areas. All pits utilised the CORS (Current Occupied Rural Settlement) methodology and same procedure of soil being removed and sieved in 10cm spits, with finds from each spit recorded separately.

Brewhouse Meadow and by the church

Test pits 34 and 35 were located in the triangle between the modern drives to the mansion and church, at the northern end of the Park. Both came down to possible late 16th- or 17th-century levels,

before hitting natural sand at c.0.5m. No cottages are known in this area from the historic maps, and the general lack of building material in this area is not unexpected.

TPs 24 and 32 were plotted in the area of 'two tenement cottages' and 'a cottage' at the eastern end of Brewhouse Meadow which appeared on the 1813 Anthony Browne map but had disappeared by the time of the Tithe apportionment in 1839. Although TP24 came down onto a service pipe undetected in the geophysics, TP32 near the 'cottage' by the river-bend was excavated to the maximum 1.2m depth. A substantial amount of building debris was uncovered in this pit down to 0.8m, most likely related to the demolition of the cottage at the end of the Georgian period, with the underlying clayey sand layers late 16th/17th-century in date, possibly with medieval levels at the bottom. TPs 33 and 31, slightly further to the west, were not in an area where former cottages were known, although 16th-century levels were also reached at 0.5-0.6m, with the sandy clay below possibly a medieval context. TP39, east of Dog Kennel Lane and as close to the river as the waterlogged conditions allowed, did not produce an abundance of material and was inconclusive. As was the case with all pits nearer to the riverbank, excavation was restricted in the depths which could be reached, leaving it uncertain if medieval deposits lay further down.

TP30 was plotted in an area between the two building foundations uncovered the previous season related to the large cottage to the south of the old road in Brewhouse Meadow (apparent on the 1813

map but not thereafter), on the steep slope north of the current drive. This was dug to the full 1.2m, with spits 8-10 (0.7-1.0m depth) in particular comprised of a substantial amount (over 60 kilograms) of building demolition, both brick and tile. Finds, including bottle glass, support its demolition in the early 19th century, with no artefacts from the underlying silty sand to give indication of when the cottage was first constructed. TPs 19 and 29, further west on the slope before reaching Dog Kennel Lane, did not produce much material, before hitting possible natural (as well as a gas pipe in TP29).

Although Brewhouse Meadow will always be limited in its investigations, not least a result of the excavation restrictions along the riverbank and substantial amount of disturbance from services in the later 20th century, the evidence for medieval settlement along the length of the old E-W road to Shere is much less substantial than that along Dog Kennel Lane to the west.

Dog Kennel Lane

Several pits were located along the old N-S aligned Dog Kennel Lane, at the western end of the meadow, focusing on an area which has produced the highest concentration of *in situ* medieval levels to date. South-east of the junction of the former roads (i.e. the E-W road and N-S Dog Kennel Lane), the most southern pits within the modern sheep paddock, TPs 28 and 38, both came down to 12th- or 13th-century levels, before hitting the natural at 1m and 0.5m respectively. TPs 20 and 37, north of the drive, produced levels of similar date, with TP37 possibly hitting Late Saxon (AD 900-1050) in its spit 7, which also contained four sherds of what has been identified as probable Late Bronze Age pottery. TP27 on the other hand, plotted slightly closer to the current drive, had mixed deposits of likely 19th-century date, including over 6kg of tile and brick demolition which may be related to the destruction of the outbuildings or 'Keeper's Cottage' in this area. The contents of TP36 (also near the paddock approach) mostly comprised large dumps of slate (over 5kg in total), thus assumed to be a relatively modern deposit disturbing any earlier contexts.

In the south-west quadrant of the old road junction, an area which was originally Weston rather than Albury manor, TPs 21 and 22 (on the slopes just south of the main drive) produced very few finds

beyond the occasional 16th/17th-century sherd of borderware, before reaching natural. TPs 23 and 25 on the other hand, closer to the former roads, came down to *in situ* 13th/14th-century medieval layers at c.0.5m depth, similar to the previous year's pits on the same raised terrace. However, it is noted that they did not produce as much medieval pottery (and none of the small finds) as the 2023 pits which were situated slightly east and closer to the old road.

TP26, situated north-west of the road junction, produced mixed deposits down to 1m depth, likely the result of demolition and levelling of the outbuilding in this area known from the Tithe map.

Only small fragments of likely Roman ceramic building material were identified south of the river, but included TPs 20, 22, 25 (and 10 from 2023), where the material was all below medieval levels and, notably, all from pits plotted along Dog Kennel Lane. Of the five fragments of prehistoric (likely LBA) pottery identified from south of the river, they were similarly situated (in TPs 37 and 38), supporting the probable antiquity of the routeway.

North of the river

The 2024 season saw test pits excavated to the north of the Tillingbourne for the first time, within the two fields known as Lower Home Meadow and the Paddock, the latter area where earthwork banks and terraces particularly dominate the present landscape. Unlike south of the river, there is little evidence for cottages here from the 18th-century maps, other than Grange Cottage, the former Little George Inn which has been dendro-dated to 1544, and Cooks Place to its north-west, which though remodelled in the 19th century is likely to have 15th/16th-century fabric (Grade II listed, list entry no. 1294853). A 'cottage belonging to Godshall' is also apparent on the 1813 map in the Paddock, though has disappeared by 1839 and never appeared on the estate map of 1782, suggesting it may have been short-lived.

TPs 40 and 41 were excavated within Lower Home Meadow. TP40 encountered a large consolidated dump of brick (27kg) in its northern end, likely part of a linear embankment (possibly related to flood prevention) which runs E-W across the meadow and is faintly evident on the magnetometry. This feature was cut into a dark silty clay which appears to be a medieval layer, with 35 sherds of late 10th- to 14th-century date in its spits 4-6. TP41, just to the east of

the old road as it leads to Grange Cottage, similarly came down to probable 14th-century levels, in which a composite copper-alloy strap end was also found (Fig 6), before hitting the natural flinty sand. Seven sherds of Roman pot were mixed in with the upper levels of the pit, the furthest east Roman pot was found at this part of the site (notably adjacent to the old road?).



Fig 6 14th- or 15th-century strap end SUR-E24A7B which contains a small patch of woven fibres from the original belt or girdle in its interior

TPs 43, 44, 45 and 48 were all placed in the eastern half of the Paddock, west of the old road. Although they were variable in depths, all had medieval levels from spit 4 down to the natural sand, mixed with Roman pot throughout (21 sherds coming from TP44 alone). At the field's far western end, TP47 produced few finds, but similarly had a medieval level, which included an intrusive sherd of LBA pot.

TPs 42 and 46 were the only two pits placed over the probable structural feature(s) in the middle of the field. In spit 3, TP42 came down onto the edge of a surface constructed mainly of large pieces of clunch and ironstone (see *cover image*). Almost all of the pottery from above and adjacent to this surface was medieval, with a copper alloy, hinged book clasp of 15th- or 16th-century date found in the upper level (Fig 7) and probable medieval buckle ([SUR-E21E90](#)) uncovered in spit 5 (likely the layer the surface was built upon). TP46, c.16m to the north, uncovered what appeared to be a chalk surface and adjacent burnt area comprised of thin sandstone tiles and small number of box flue tile and tegulae fragments, underneath a c.0.25m thick spread of large ironstone and flint (Fig 8). Six sherds of Roman and ten of medieval pot were uncovered from the pit, although the lower levels predominantly contained Roman material.

It seems likely that the Roman finds are residual and the surfaces are medieval in date, although the excavation was limited, and Roman activity in this area is clearly evident. In total, 39 Roman sherds have been uncovered to date, all from the Paddock



Fig 7 15th- or 16th-century hinged book clasp SUR-E2014D of Howsam type A.6.2



Fig 8 Test pit 46

(TPs 41, 44, 45, 46, 48), and though generally mixed in medieval levels, the similar concentration of Roman building material from these pits is notable.

Overall, the 2024 season proved to be rewarding both as a research dig and as an outreach project, with school groups and families able to take part on open days, as well as the core group of volunteers. We look forward to the upcoming season where further investigations can reveal more about the early settlement at Albury.

Acknowledgements

As always, the fieldwork relied on the dedication of an incredible volunteer team, all of whom need to be thanked for the work undertaken. In addition to all those helping with the dig, this included the finds team (Sylvia, Anne V, Ann M, Rosemary, Janet, Irene and John); John Peters and the survey team (Andrew, Mairi, David, Claire, Tony E, Tony M, Jonathan, Peter and Mary K); Lyn Spencer and the Medieval and Roman Pottery team for assessment of the pottery; Ann Russel, Ann Isenberg and Simon Maslin for work on the clay pipes, CBM and small finds. A special thanks must also be made to Michael Baxter and the Albury Estate, for their kind permission and support throughout the project.