



Surrey Archaeological Society

No 2 February 2021

E-newsletter

Welcome to the Society's February e-newsletter, which highlights some of the various conferences, lectures, training sessions and news items which we hope to be of interest to our members. Although general queries should continue to be directed to Hannah (info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk), those interested in volunteer opportunities or general outreach can contact me at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. Please also keep up-to-date via the website and social media ([@surreyarch](https://www.facebook.com/surreyarchaeology)) for group and event updates.

Anne Sassin (*SyAS Projects and Outreach Officer*)

Medieval Graffiti Study Day

In recent years, the early inscriptions and carved artworks in churches have become the subject of large-scale surveys, not least for the fascinating pictures which are represented – heraldic designs, word puzzles, ships, architectural plans, figural scenes and cartoons, etc – and the insight they shed on the artists themselves. This online study day (via Zoom) on **Saturday 20 February** (10:00-13:00) will look at recent studies of medieval graffiti in both Surrey and Kent, focusing not only on some of the captivating scenes which have been discovered, but the methodologies involved in undertaking such work. A discussion will then take place on further plans to see the medieval graffiti survey of Surrey to completion, as well as wider project work on the county's medieval churches.

10:00-10:10 Introduction

10:10-11:00 Abigail Coskun, MA (Durham University), 'Life and Death, Demons and Devotion: the Medieval Graffiti of Surrey's Parish Churches'

11:00-11:10 Break

11:10-12:00 Alan Anskee (Kent Medieval Graffiti Survey), 'How we survey graffiti in Kent'

12:00-12:10 Break

12:10-13:00 Discussion

Attendees are encouraged to watch a pre-recorded talk by Matthew Champion, perhaps the leading specialist on medieval graffiti, on [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...), which will provide an excellent background to the subject for the day.

Although a free event, [registration](#) must be made in advance for this meeting. See the [website](#) for more details.



Compton graffiti (Photo Abi Coskun)



Annual Symposium

This year's Annual Symposium will be run over two days and held online via Zoom. The event is [bookable online](#) via PayPal at a cost of £5 per household for the two half-day events (one ticket will gain entry to both days).



Part 1 – Saturday 27 February (10:00-13:00)

10:00 Chair: Tim Wilcock

10:05 Lidar as a citizen science tool – a Kent case study: Dr Anne Sassin (Kent Downs AONB)

10:40 The distribution of the Mesolithic axe over Surrey's geology: Chris Taylor (SyAS)

11:15 COFFEE/TEA

11:30 St Catherine's Hill cave, Guildford: Dr Michael Shapland (ASE)

12:10 Medieval Spirituality: Dr Catherine Ferguson (SyAS)

12:40 Q&A

Part 2 – Saturday 13 March (10:00-13:00)

10:05 Cocks Farm Abinger, excavation update: Emma Corke (SyAS)

10:40 Ewell pits and quarries: Rebecca Haslam (PCA)

11:15 COFFEE/TEA

11:30 Prehistoric and early historic routeways of the Weald and Downland in South East England: Prof. Martin Bell (University of Reading)

12:10 Recent Finds in Surrey: Dr Simon Maslin (PAS/SCC)

12:45 Q&A



Shining a light on the transition from Late Iron Age to Early Roman SE England

The Roman Studies Group will be hosting this conference originally planned for May 2020, and now re-scheduled to **Saturday 8 May** and run as an on-line event, using Zoom. Tickets are £5 and are now available to book from the [website](#).



The event will be chaired by Paul Booth (Research Associate, University of Oxford), and speakers and titles are expected to be as follows (titles are subject to revision):

Thomas Matthews Boehmer (Doctoral Student, University of Cambridge): Tracking identity change and societal shift in the Late Iron Age and early Roman period

Dr Tom Brindle (Cotswold Archaeology): Coins and material culture

Louise Rayner (with input from Anna Doherty) (Archaeology South-East, UCL): Location, location, location: exploring variability in LIA-Roman pottery assemblages through case studies from SE England

Prof Tony King (Professor of Roman Archaeology University of Winchester): Celtic to Romano-Celtic? The archaeology of religious sites in SE Britain, 1st century BC to 2nd century AD.

Dr Martyn Allen (Oxford Archaeology): The countryside in the South-East, from Iron Age to early Roman

Dr David Rudling (Honorary Research Fellow University of Roehampton): 'Becoming Roman?' The Late Iron Age to Early Roman transition in Sussex

Prof Mike Fulford (Professor of Archaeology University of Reading): Silchester: from Iron Age oppidum to Roman City

Surrey Industrial History Group Meetings

There are three more online Zoom lectures from SIHG for Spring 2021, all Thursday mornings starting at 10:00.

18 February 'Guildford Industries': David Rose

4 March 'Calcutta and Beyond – India's Industrial Heritage': Paul Whittle

18 March 'Barnes Wallis and his Inventions': Peter Hoar

To be added to the SIHG mailing list and for any enquiries, please email the programme co-ordinator, Bob Bryson (email meetings@sihg.org.uk). See the [website](#) for more details.





Archaeology and Climate Change Conference

A one-day Zoom conference on urgent climate heritage issues, co-organised by the CBA-SE and Sussex Archaeological Society, will take place online via Zoom on **Saturday 17 April** (9:15-16:15).

During 2019 East and West Sussex County Councils respectively 'declared' and 'noted' the Climate Emergency which has also been declared by Sussex University. A past perspective is important in understanding the climate changes we now face, how they may impact on society and the strategies that may be developed to cope. Studies of the end of the last ice age have shown that once critical thresholds are crossed, affecting, for instance, patterns of oceanic circulation, climate change can be exceedingly rapid. Global warming and related increases in the incidence of extreme weather events increases coastal erosion, creating a need for sea defence upgrading and managed realignment, all of which have implications for coastal heritage. Global warming will also affect habitats of nature conservation importance and the archaeological sites they contain. Increased storm incidence may lead to greater soil erosion and flooding in some areas impacting heritage.

The way historic properties are conserved and managed are also likely to be affected.

Many organisations and interests have a part to play in ongoing debates which will identify more sustainable ways of managing the environment and heritage for the future. Sustainability as a concept cannot be conceived, or measured, in the short-term; it needs a long-term perspective and to this Archaeology and History can make important contributions.

The speakers will be: Lara Band, Professor Martin Bell, Professor John Boardman, Dr Hannah Fluck, Tor Lawrence, Professor Robert van De Noort, Dr Robyn Pender, Dr Matt Pope and Dr Marcy Rockman.



For a full programme and to book for this event, visit the [EventBrite page](#) or event page on Sussex Past's [website](#). Tickets are £10 for CBA-SE and SAS members and students; £20 for others.



Local heritage sites

As we continue the year still in the midst of the pandemic, we have been reflecting on some of the incredible heritage and landscapes within our county, much of which we can still experience while undertaking local socially-distanced walks in our areas or read about from the safety of our homes. A few of our staff, trustees and committee members have continued to share their favourite sites, which have featured on our social media pages.

Holmbury Hillfort

One of Judie's favourite sites is the small, scheduled multivallate hillfort of Holmbury Camp on the south-facing spur of the spectacularly sited Holmbury Hill, a topographical position clearly chosen for visibility over, and from, the Low Weald. First excavated in 1930 by S.E. Winbolt, the hillfort produced numerous finds including flint tools, sling-stones, quern fragments and pottery, now known to date the site to the Middle Iron Age, before being abandoned, possibly forcibly. It was further excavated in 1974 by F.H. Thompson, showing construction to be of one phase, and more recently had its visible earthworks surveyed by a team from Historic England and SyAS, led by Rose Hooker and Judie English. You can read about this work from the *Collections* on the ADS (Volume 38, 1930 <https://doi.org/10.5284/1068771> and Volume 99, 2016 <https://doi.org/10.5284/1069415>), [survey report](#) on the Society's website and HE [list entry](#).



Northern ramparts and ditch (Photo Rose Hooker)



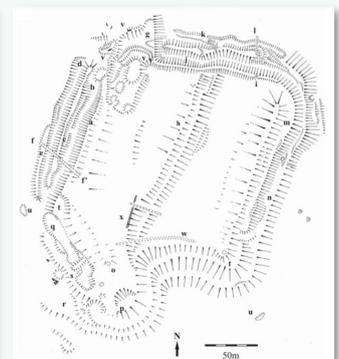
Ramparts and ditch during Winbolt's 1932 excavation (SyAS)



Surveying of the banks (Photo Rose Hooker)



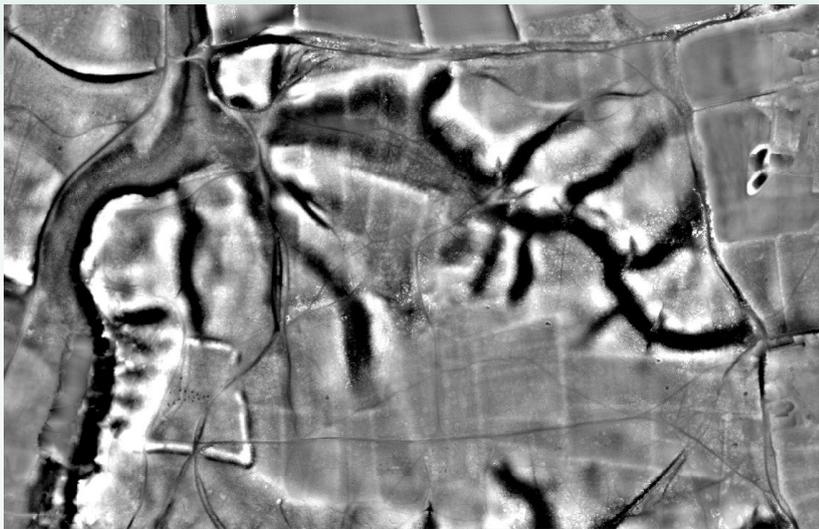
Group of quern stones (SyAS)



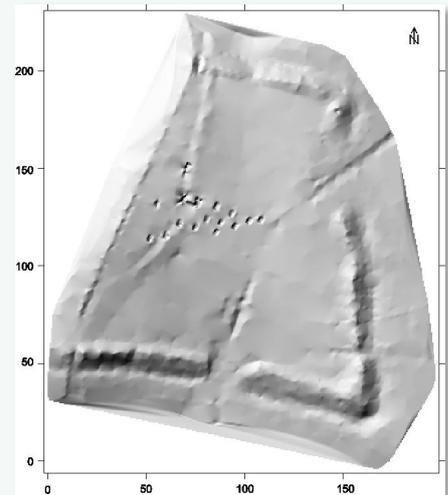
Plan of Holmbury (Judie English and Rose Hooker)

Puttenham Common and Hillbury Hillfort

Another site within the AONB is the favourite of Rob, the Surrey HER Officer, that of Puttenham Common and the hillfort at Hillbury, which represent multiple periods of use. The hillfort itself, reputedly Iron Age (though no dating evidence was found in the 19th century excavations under F James and F Lasham), is univallate and positioned at the western end of the Hillbury Ridge, with ramparts on three of its sides and original entrance to the south. The low bank on the western side is presumed to date to later (possibly medieval) use as a stock enclosure, and the series of trenches and pits across the fort's centre are the result of military training in the Second World War, when used for anti-aircraft guns and searchlights. The Common was the subject of an historic landscape survey undertaken in part by Chris Currie and David and Audrey Graham in 2001, and more recently, assessment of the LiDAR imagery by Rob Briggs. The latter revealed extensive earlier field system earthworks on Hillbury Ridge which, though difficult to date with any certainty, may be later prehistoric or Roman in date, given the presence of two Roman building sites and considerable quantity of Romano-British and earlier artefacts from the Common. You can read more about this survey work in short entries from the *Bulletins* [346](#) (2001), [360](#) (2002) and [460](#) (2017), as well as the HE [list entry](#).



EA 1m LiDAR of Common (LRM visualisation, Anne Sassin)



Topographic survey of Hillbury (David Graham)



Eastern rampart, Hillbury (Photo Anne Sassin)



WW2 practice training area at site's centre (Photo Anne Sassin)



Rotherhithe

The area south of the Thames, from Wandsworth to Deptford, became part of the County of London in 1889, but falls within the historic county of Surrey. As a resident of south London, some of Christine's (our Honorary Librarian's) favourite local walks involve wandering the Thames foreshore – a quiet world of its own – and admiring the views along and across the river, including the atmospheric back streets with their warehouses, pubs and cottages. One such site of note is Rotherhithe, a settlement whose origins are not certain, though may be of Saxon origin (Rederheia or 'landing-place for cattle'), and is only first mentioned in 1127 when granted to the monks of Bermondsey Abbey. In the post-medieval era, Rotherhithe became a bustling maritime hive (even being the sailing point for the Mayflower in 1620), with shipbuilding and ship-breaking amongst its many waterfront activities. You can read more on this site from an early [article](#) in the *Collections* (Volume 20, 1907), as well as the Thames Discovery Programme's [Riverpedia entry](#) and Layers of London interactive [website](#). (For more info on obtaining a Thames foreshore permit, visit the Port of London Authority [website](#)).



Thames foreshore at Rotherhithe (Photo Christine Pittman)



Group of reused nautical timbers (Photo Nathalie Cohen)

Audio guided walks from Surrey County Archaeological Unit

Using the latest research and results from excavations, SCAU have launched two new audio guided walks around archaeological sites: the First World War Witley Camp and Tudor period Woking Palace. The walks each offer an introduction to the sites using a variety of sounds and images to engage all ages. To access either tour, you will need to download the [izi.TRAVEL app](#) on to your phone. After this has downloaded you can search for 'Surrey County Archaeological Unit' and select the walk you would like to do.





Chertsey Abbey walking tour

Three new guided walks have been created by Chertsey Museum – Chertsey Abbey, a Chertsey Abbey family tour, and St Ann’s Hill, Chertsey – for the free izi.Travel app, downloadable from www.izi.travel/en/search/chertsey.




CHERTSEY ABBEY
walking tour



"Of that noble and splendid pile, which took up four acres of ground and looked like a small town, nothing remains, scarcely a little of the outer wall of the precincts. I left the ruins of this place with a sigh for the loss of so much national magnificence and national history." Dr. Stukeley, 1752

Discover the history of this once great site. Download the free **izi.TRAVEL** app
the storytelling platform

www.izi.travel/en/search/chertsey

DigVentures half-term activities

A series of online family-friendly activities and lectures, offered by DigVentures and Earth Trust, are taking place in the next month and over the February half-term, featuring a newly discovered Iron Age settlement and Roman villa near Wittenham Clumps, Oxfordshire. This includes the half-term family sessions ‘Ancient Homes: Where did the Romans Live’ on **Tuesday 16 February** and ‘Ancient Homes: What were Iron Age houses like?’ (**18 February**), and the free evening online experiences ‘Life in Iron Age Oxfordshire (800 BC)’ (**25 February**), followed by ‘Life in Roman Oxfordshire’ (**4 March**). See <https://digventures.com/calendar> for more info and to register.



For more information on opportunities in your local region, be sure to follow SCAU (education.scau@surreycc.gov.uk and [@diggingsurreypast](https://twitter.com/diggingsurreypast)), as well as the Council for British Archaeology South-East (www.cbasmouth-east.org and [@CBASouthEast](https://twitter.com/CBASouthEast)).