



Surrey Archaeological Society

No 39

March 2024

E-newsletter

Welcome to the Society's March e-newsletter, which highlights a few of the various events – conferences, lectures, training sessions, news items, etc – which we hope to be of interest to our members. Although general queries should continue to be directed to Marie (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.instagram.com/surreyarch)) for group and event updates.

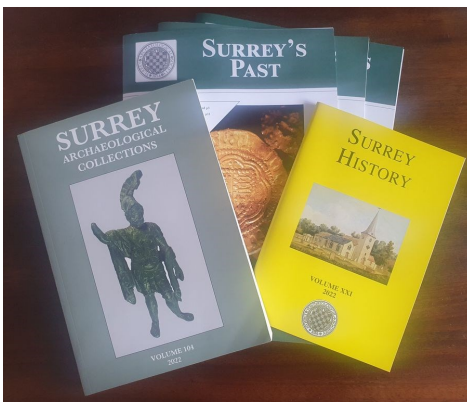
Anne Sassin (*SyAS Outreach Projects Manager*)

Lithics group

A lithics group now meets monthly at the Abinger Research Centre, usually on a Sunday morning. Beginners and more experienced people are welcome to join the group as we learn about prehistoric flints through recording mainly Surrey assemblages with expert support from Chris Taylor. Members also bring their own examples for the group to examine. If anyone has a lithics collection that they would like the group to record, please also let us know. If you are interested in joining, please contact Sylvia Solarski for more details (sylviasolarski@aol.co.uk).



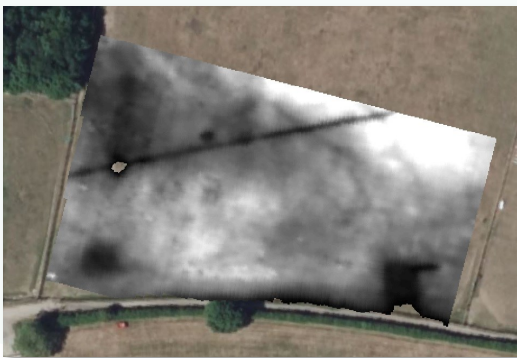
Thinking about joining?



If you aren't yet a member of SyAS, now is the perfect time to join! Rates start at £6 per year for junior members (aged 16-20), with £12.50 for students and £30 for ordinary members (£5 associates). In addition to three issues of *Surrey's Past* a year, annual journal *Surrey Archaeological Collections* and *Surrey History*, members have access to a wide range of fieldwork opportunities, research projects and special interest groups, many of which have their own lecture programmes and study days. To join, please visit our [website](https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk).



Pendell Court Villa geophysics



Following a recently completed magnetometry survey at the site of Pendell Court, Bletchingley, where remains of a Roman hypocaust were uncovered in 1813, two days of electrical resistance survey took place in March which focused on potential features revealed in the paddocks.

The survey was undertaken with both of the Society’s TAR-3 Frobisher machines working alongside each other simultaneously, for maximum coverage of the field. Despite the almost pure sand geology, some clear results were obtained which supplement the magnetometry done last year and provide a clear outline of the hypocaust (shown in black in the SE corner of the field – note that as the Folkestone sand does not retain moisture, it has high resistance compared to the walls of the building).

Many thanks to Paul, John, David, Claire, Jonathan, Mairi and Alison for all their help with the survey!

Excavation at Cock Farm Abinger 2024

Our Summer excavation 2024 will take place at Cocks Farm Abinger. Following excavations on the scheduled Roman villa site our focus has moved to the field adjacent to the villa. Magnetometry indicated a series of field boundaries, ditches, pits and other anomalies (see [interim reports](#) for detail).

This may be the last season of large scale excavation so don’t miss out on taking part! The dates are as follows: **14-15 June** (a RSG visit is taking place on Sunday 16 so the site will be closed), **17, 20-24, 27 June-1 July, 4-6, 11-15, 18-22 July**. The site will be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

Priority will be given to Roman Studies Group and SyAS members but non-member are welcome to apply. At this stage all that is needed is an expression of interest. For any queries, please e-mail romanstudiesgroup@btinternet.com.





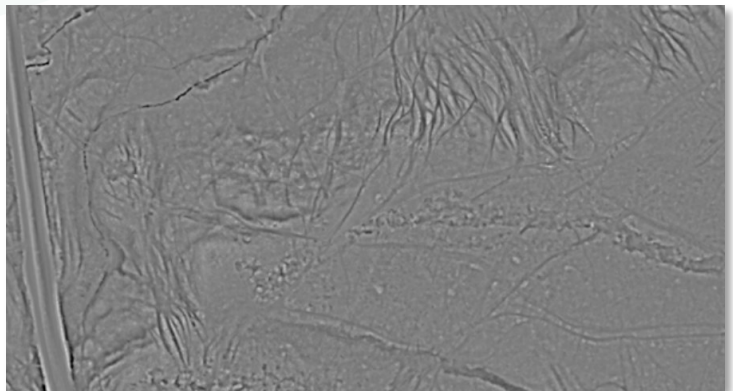
LiDAR groundtruthing

The [Surrey LiDAR Portal](#) is an online interactive citizen science map which includes various LiDAR datasets for all of Surrey, including the historic county, as well as historic maps and HER data to help in analysing the imagery.

LiDAR has enormous potential to uncover previously unknown archaeological features, and by helping map and interpret these sites online, volunteers can work to build a more complete story of the local landscape. Anyone is welcome to register for a free account, which will allow access to the interactive map. Volunteers who would like to be involved and help in digitising features should read the available tutorials and are encouraged to attend online training sessions (please contact us if you are interested, as we can discuss arranging a bespoke session).

The first 'groundtruthing' sessions of the year took place at Holmwood Common in March, where a small group of volunteers used the field recorder to investigate and review features which have been identified online. This resulted in a handful of new features being added to the site's monument database, including quarry pits and braided trackways.

Further groundtruthing work at Leith Hill is set to take place next month, tentatively **Monday 15** and/or **Wednesday 17 April**. Please email us at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if interested in taking part



An online introduction session on understanding LiDAR and how to use and record on the Portal will also be available on Zoom on **Wednesday 3 April** (10:30-12:00). To attend, please [register](#) in advance. If you can't make this session but are interested in another or in being involved in any way with our LiDAR project, please let us know.

Recent items acquired by the Library

In February, the following [new items](#) were acquired by the Library. To view other of our [recent acquisitions](#) or browse the online Library [catalogue](#), please visit the website. Currently, the Margary Room at Abinger is open to all (including non-members) on Mondays and Tuesdays (10:00-16:00). Please check with the Assistant Librarian before visiting to ensure the Library will be open and that the items required are available.

Finds from the FLO

This rather spectacular mudlarking find from Thames foreshore – a near complete Roman pipeclay figurine of Venus ([SUR-B3AC4F](#)) – is probably the best example recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme to date. Dating to AD 100-250, the figurine is 118mm high and depicts the goddess standing in the nude while holding a garment that drapes down beside her left leg. A couple other examples from around London have been recorded with the PAS, and the overall similarity of the type suggests that they were crafted from the same moulds, possibly imported in batches.



For the Ides of March, here are two silver Roman coins of Julius Caesar from the Elstead Hoard ([SUR-EA4D41](#)), recorded with the PAS and now with Godalming Museum. The second coin dates to 44 BC, the year of the assassination on the 15th of March. The coins are of a denomination known as the *denarius* (plural *denarii*). The heavier degree of wear on the earlier Republican coins from the hoard, dating back to 136 BC, demonstrates a longer period of circulation compared to the lighter wear and higher grade of the later Imperial coins. From their close spatial and chronological association it is likely that these coins were deposited together at some point during the AD 40s by either deliberate burial or as a result of a single purse or bag loss.

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