



# Surrey Archaeological Society

No 40

April 2024

## E-newsletter

Welcome to the Society's April 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 [info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk), those interested in volunteer opportunities or general outreach can contact me at [outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto: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*)

### Albury Park community test pitting

We will be returning for a second year of test pitting this season at Albury Park to investigate its deserted medieval settlement, displaced in the early 19th century (to the current village of Albury). Though little now remains of the former cottages, with the help of survey and a large-scale series of test pits spread across the site, we are working to uncover and learn more about the original settlement!

Our first week of test pitting will take place from **Monday 10 to Thursday 13 June**. Volunteers are welcome for both finds and digging; no prior experience needed and all tools provided.

A second week will run from **Monday 29 June to Thursday 1 August**, and as part of the Festival of Archaeology, there will be an open day on **Sunday 28 July** (12:00-15:00) where members of the public are invited to see some of the finds and have a go at helping to dig some of the pits. Families welcome! Parking is available by the Saxon Church. A bookable guided walk around the Park will also be available (details tbc). The final week of test pitting is currently planned for **Monday 9 to Thursday 12 September**.

If interested in taking part and wanting to be added to the project mailing list, please contact our community archaeologist Anne at [outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).





## Roman Coins Study Group

George Duncan led the Society's latest new group at its first meeting at Abinger Research Centre on 25 March. Members were introduced to the best reference texts by David Calow, and then agreed on the geographical extent of its remit (Surrey only), the sites to be researched (10 coins or more), and the format of the spreadsheet to be created. Relevant information will be



downloaded from previous studies, with plans for the next meeting in early June. Individual coins will also be studied at meetings. The group is open to all members of the Society, and those interested should contact [info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

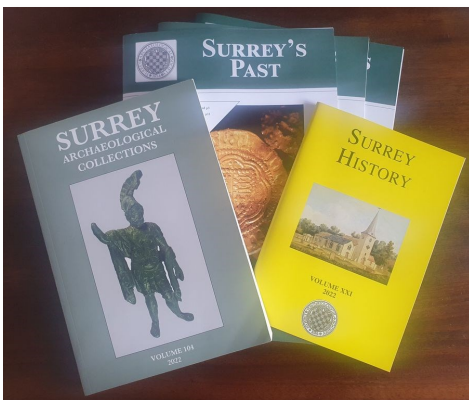
## Excavation at Cock Farm Abinger 2024

Our Summer excavation 2024 will take place at Cocks Farm Abinger, with this year's focus on the field adjacent to the villa, where 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](mailto:romanstudiesgroup@btinternet.com).

## Thinking about joining?



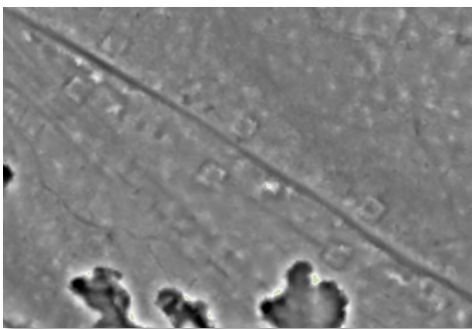
If you aren't yet a member of SyAS, now is the perfect time to join! Rates start at £6 per year for junior members (aged 16-20), with £12.50 for students and £30 for ordinary members (£5 assoc). In addition to three issues of *Surrey's Past* a year, annual journal *Surrey Archaeological Collections* 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](#).

## 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 stories 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. The next introduction session on understanding LiDAR and how to use and record on the Portal will be available on Zoom on **Monday 3 June** (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, contact [outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

The second (and final) 'groundtruthing' sessions of the year took place at Leith Hill in April, 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, mostly related to gravel extraction on the northern slopes of the hill. However, an intriguing historic ornamental drive leading to the tower was investigated whose square-shaped tree enclosures are still obvious on the ground (and in the LiDAR) today. Presumably contemporary to the time of the tower's construction in 1765, the northern extent of the main western drive is at Abinger Common near Friday Street, with another branch known as Jacob's Well to the east. Though there are no signs of the original plantation trees, at least one monkey puzzle tree may date to a secondary plantation on the mounds along the main track.



*Extract of the 1m LiDAR which clearly shows the tree enclosures lining the drive leading towards Leith Hill tower (upper left); recording one of the enclosures, where a sole monkey puzzle survives as a possible (albeit later) plantation tree (middle); extract of John Rocque's map which shows the landscape as it was in 1768 (upper right); the square-shaped banked enclosure of the tree mounds was formed from an external ditch, though the interior is largely the natural ground level (left)*



## Finds from the FLO



This “evasion” halfpenny of George III ([SUR-573B93](#)), found near West Horsley, dates to 1777, a time when the shortage of small change in circulation led to a proliferation of unofficial copies of coins with incorrect legends, to avoid charges of counterfeiting. If a piece was not an exact copy of a regal issue, it was not judged to be a forgery, thus the shape, size and type were imitated, but not the exact legend.

## Free privately-owned excavation tools

Tools no longer needed but still in good condition:

2 Forks

4 Spades

2 Shovels

4 Metal Ranging poles – one with sighting slits for establishing right angles quickly

Collect one or more items from a few miles south of Farnham. Contact David Graham at [kdg@kdg.me.uk](mailto:kdg@kdg.me.uk).

## Recent items acquired by the Library

In March, 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 everyone (including non-members) on Mondays and Tuesdays (10:00-16:00). Please check with the Librarian before visiting to ensure the Library will be open and that the items required are available.



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