



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**

Note from the Editors

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Surrey's Past*, which we are pleased covers a wide range of topics stemming from research around the county, as well as select news and events items. We look forward to receiving more excellent contributions for our summer edition, which is the 500th issue of the original *Bulletin*!

Welcome to new members

Name	Town	Principal Archaeological and Local History Interests
Jane Cockerill	Esher	Most aspects of archaeology, social, political and industrial history
Giles Cockerill	Esher	All periods and areas of archaeology, social, military, industrial and political history
Graham Scambler	Mickleham	Social history
Annette Scambler	Mickleham	Social history
Isabelle Dawes	New Malden	History
Ian Lawson	Epsom	Long-term general interest in archaeology
Andy Cassie	Fetcham	Fetcham Mill Pond project and any other local digs
Elsbeth Whitelaw	Aldershot	Archaeology and the Medieval era
Hugh Baker	Leatherhead	
Tara Youngman	Ashted	
Malcolm Watson	Guildford	Local history, Guildford town, Wey Navigation, Georgian period
Derek Brown	Godstone	Ancient British History
Hester Burnige	Twickenham	Medieval material culture and general field archaeology
Trevor Brook	Guildford	Mainly centred around Albury
Tamsin Dewe	Farnham	Medieval and early modern
James Worley	Surbiton	
Naomi Taylor	Haslemere	
Liam Clifford	Hindhead	
Stephen Groom	East Horsley	Railway history
Annabelle Cooper	Camberley	Classical Civilisation
Alan Pritchard	Epsom	Roman history and local history in general
Luke Harvey	Redhill	Social history, municipal history, natural history, rights of way and access, commons, transportation, early modern and pre modern
Lucia Laurent	Woking	
David Parry	Crondall	Prehistoric and Medieval predominantly
Richard Scrase	Dorking	Neolithic, Roman, Medieval, early industrial, local history

Contributor information

There will be two further issues of *Surrey's Past* in 2025. Next issue **500**: copy required by **12 May** for the **June** issue.

Issue no:	Copy date:	Approx. delivery:
500 June	12 May	9 June
501 October	15 September	13 October

Articles and notes on all aspects of research on the history and archaeology of Surrey are very welcome. Contributors are encouraged to discuss their ideas beforehand, including possible deadline extensions and the proper format of submitted material. Guidelines for potential authors are also available online under the *Surrey's Past* section of the website.

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Further geophysics and test pitting at Albury Park in 2024

By Anne Sassin

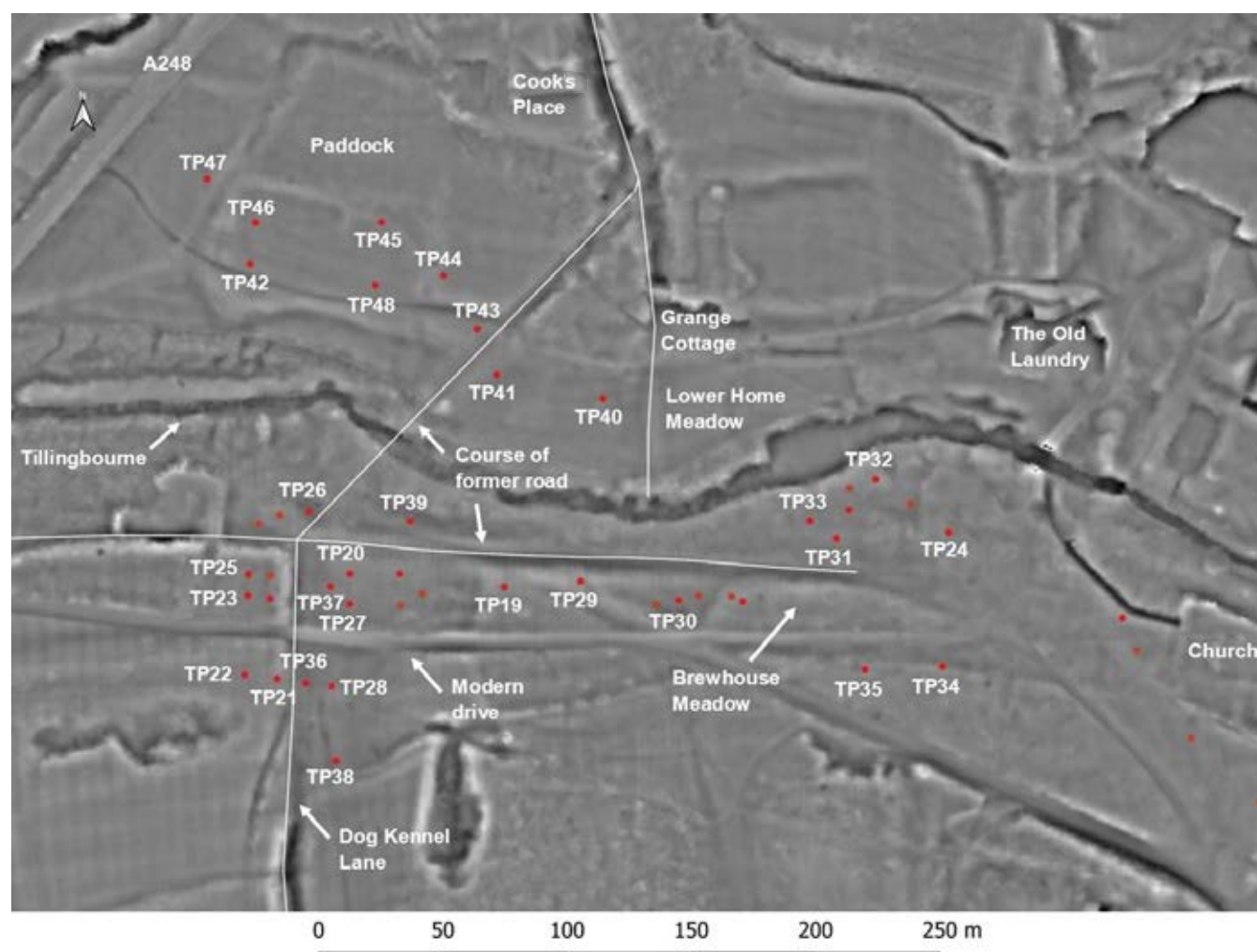
Summary

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

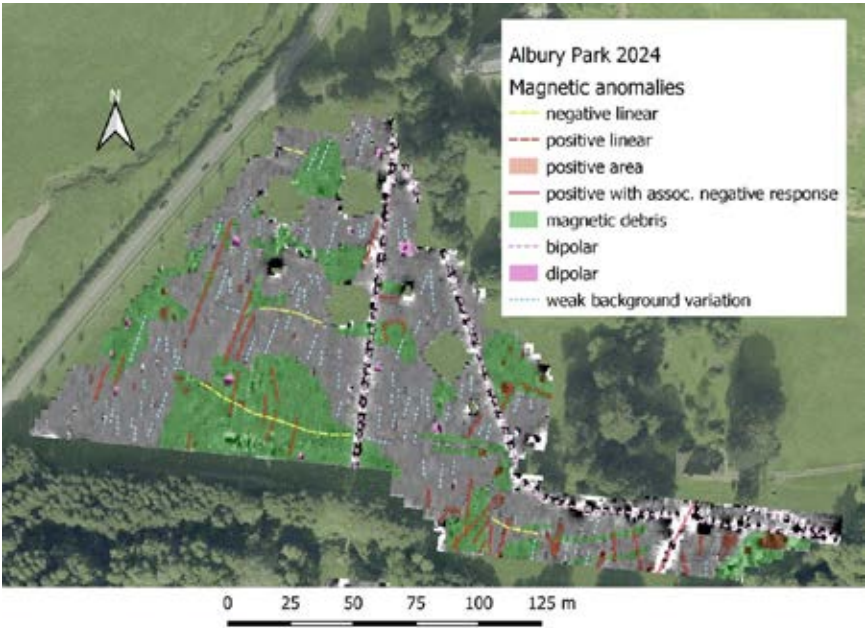
Over the course of 6 days between April and June 2024, a small team of volunteers undertook both magnetometry and electrical resistance survey across two areas which total *circa* 46,843 metres squared (4.6 hectares). This includes the two fields north of the Tillingbourne known as the Paddock and Lower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

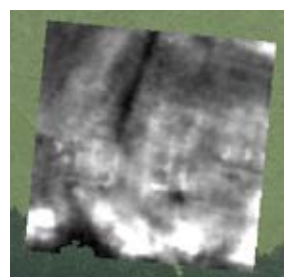
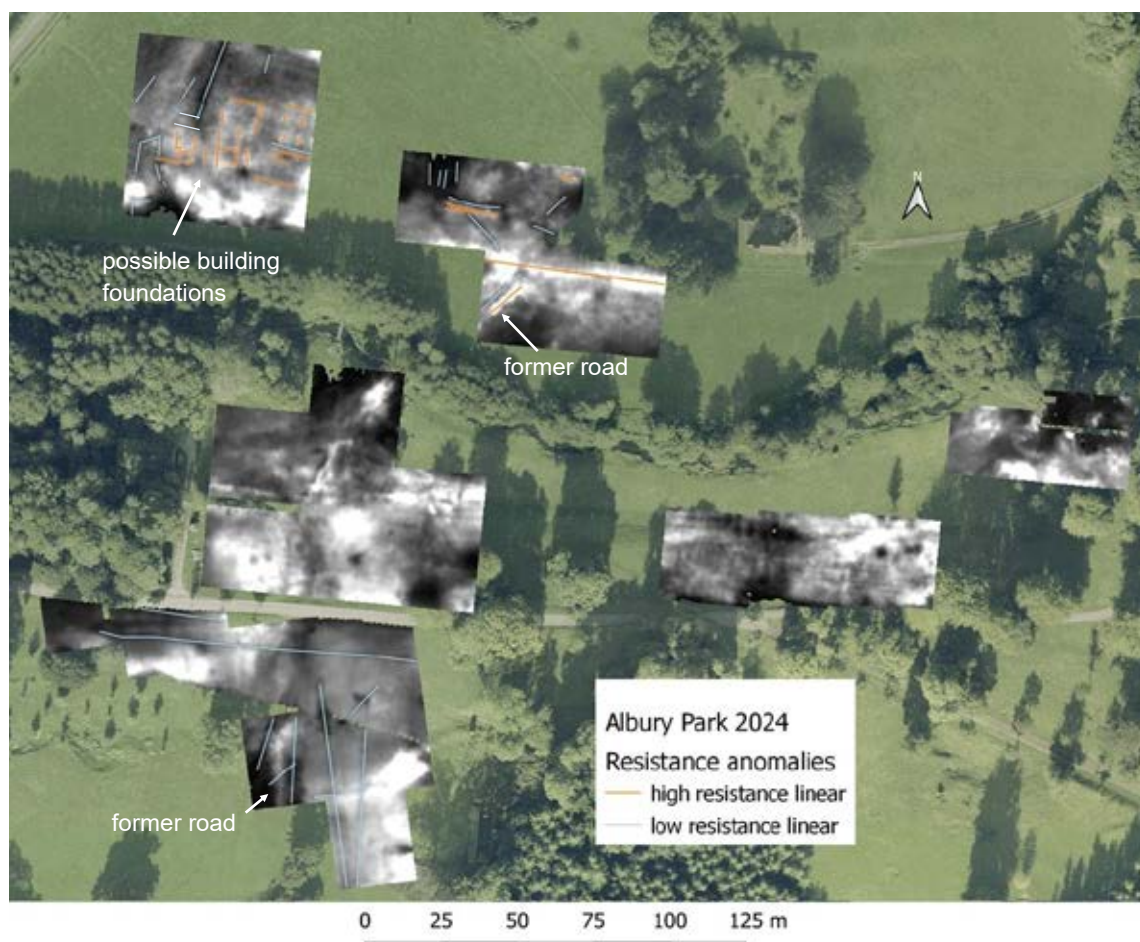


Fig 4 Map of the 2023-24 resistivity survey of Albury Park, with 2024 anomalies highlighted, including the former road and potential building foundations in the Paddock north of the Tillingbourne (shown in orange); the non-annotated image of the Paddock survey is also shown above for more clarity

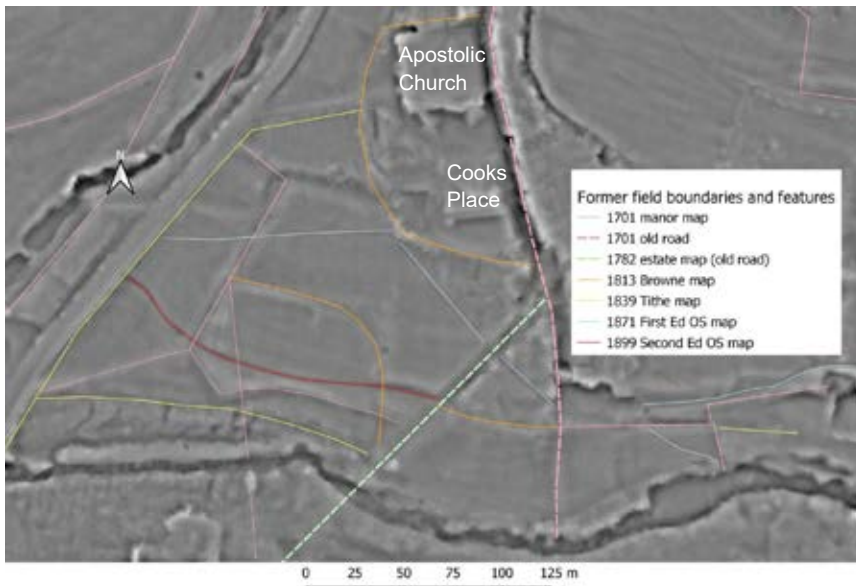


Fig 5 Map of former field boundaries and features as first apparent on 18th- and 19th-century maps, shown over LiDAR imagery

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.

Romano-British and medieval finds from field-walking on Bocketts Farm and in Norbury Park, Fetcham and Mickleham

By Judie English*

Background

Results from recording of the earthwork surveys undertaken as part of the Surrey Historic Landscapes Project (SHLP) in the 1990s have already been reported (Dyer 1996), as has a summary of the pre-historic finds from fieldwalking (English 2024). The aim of this note is to detail the Romano-British (RB), medieval and post-medieval finds, particularly those from the field named Bocketts Park Corner.

Details of the fields involved and the fieldwalking method generally used are given in the recently published summary (English 2024, 5). After that

exercise had revealed the presence of more pottery in Bocketts Park Corner, an area was re-examined by walking in 5 x 5 metre grids.

Romano-British pottery

A total of just over 2kg of RB pottery was recovered; the finds from the entire field are presented in Table 1 and those from the grid-walking plotted in Figure 1. Some 70% was unsourced sand-tempered ware, a further 20% derived from the Alice Holt/Farnham industries, and the remainder from farther afield. The date range encompasses the entire RB period. The grid-walking

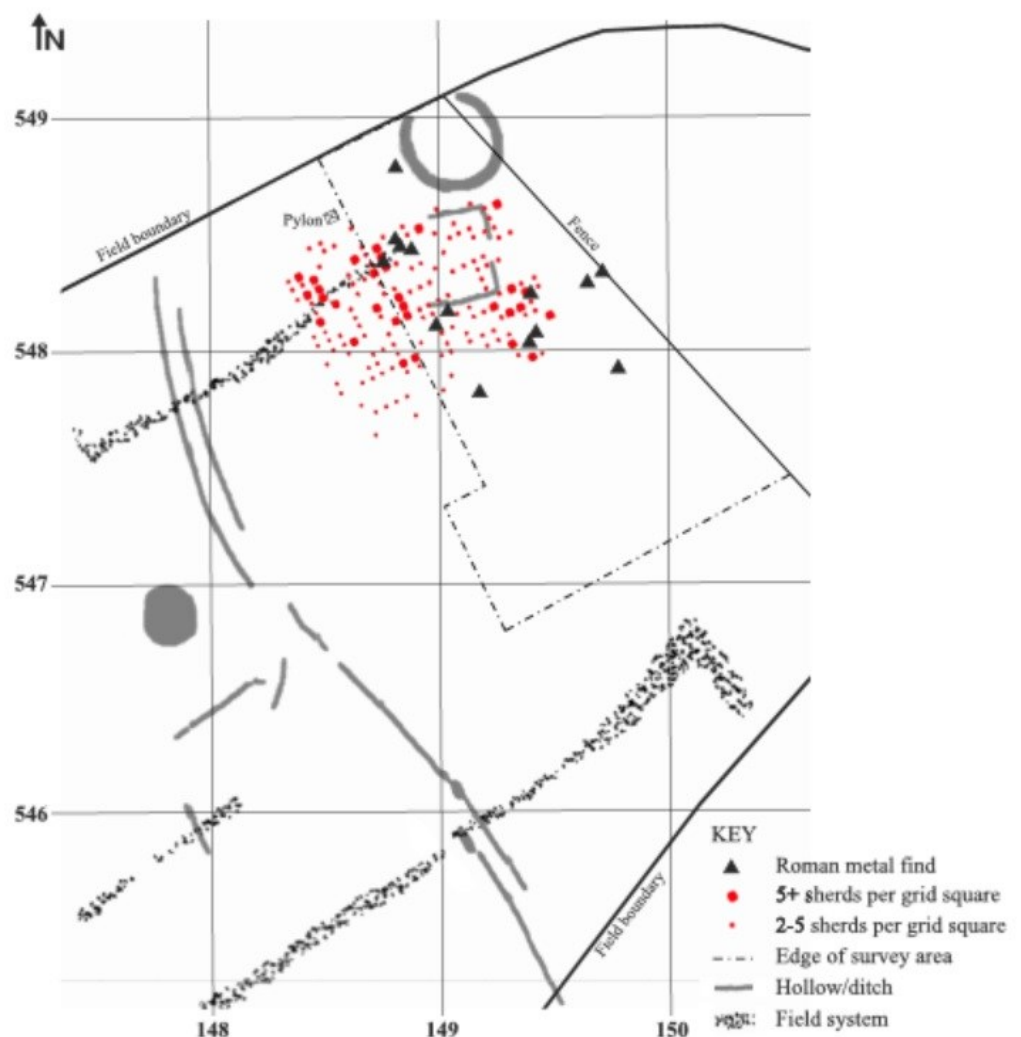


Figure 1 Bocketts Park Corner: distribution of Romano-British pottery and metal detector finds plus a transcription of the crop marks (drawn by Audrey Graham). The dotted line represents the limit of the metal detector survey.

produced a scatter of pottery over most of the area walked and it is clear that this scatter continued both to the east and to the west.

RB pottery recovered from other fields was limited to five sherds or less each from Bocketts Further Longcut, Bocketts Hawkes Hill, Bocketts Round Bush, Bocketts Well Field, Norbury Mark Field, Thorncroft Broad Bent, Thorncroft Lower Freehold and Thorncroft Six Acres.

Fabric code	Sherd count	Total sherd weight (g)	Earliest date (CE)	Latest date (CE)
VRW	2	25	c.43	c.160
SAM	6	71	c.43	c.250
COLCC	1	4	c.43	c.250
SAND	274	1457	c.43	c.400
AH	14	90	c.43	c.400
OXID	7	43	c.43	c.400
OXIDF	3	7	c.43	c.400
FINE	3	11	c.43	c.400
MICA	3	15	c.43	c.400
GROG	1	2	c.43	c.400
RWS	2	5	c.43	c.400
FLIN	2	7	c.43	c.400
AHSU	3	23	c.60	c.160
VCWS	1	10	c.70	c.200
NKGW	2	7	c.100	c.150
BB2	1	4	c.120	c.240
NVWW	1	9	c.150	c.400
AHFA	14	85	c.250	c.400
NFCC	1	3	c.250	c.400
OXRC	8	74	c.270	c.400
PORD	23	122	c.350	c.400

Table 1 Romano-British pottery recovered during field walking Bocketts Park Corner; fabric codes as per Surrey Roman type series

Medieval and post-medieval pottery

A total of 177 sherds (weighing 884 grams) of medieval pottery was recovered from Bocketts Park Corner, with no concentration noted in the portion of the field that was grid-walked. The earliest fabrics can be dated to c.970-1100 (Surrey medieval type series fabric codes Q1 and GQ1) with a further presence during the 11th century evidenced by the

occurrence of small assemblages of fabrics SNC (pre -1000 – c.1100), IQ and S2 (both c.1050 – c.1250). The majority of the pottery, however, comprised sherds of the slightly later fabrics Q2 (57.6% by sherd count; dated c.1150 – c.1250) and OQ (24.9%; dated c.1250 – c.1500). The field produced very little later pottery until post-medieval redwares of fabric PMR, dated c.1580 – c.1900. Details of the medieval and post-medieval pottery from Bocketts Park Corner are given in Table 2.

Medieval and post-medieval pottery from other fields was sparse by comparison, amounting to no more than ten sherds from each field and the majority of that recovered was post-medieval (mainly PMR).

Fabric code	Sherd count	Total sherd weight (g)	Earliest date (CE)	Latest date (CE)
Q1	1	2	c.970	c.1100
GQ1	1	9	c.970	c.1100
SNC	1	6	pre-1000	c.1150
S2	5	18	c.1080	c.1250
QFL	1	3	c.1080	c.1200
Q2	103	446	c.1150	c.1325
GQ2	1	3	c.1150	c.1250
FQ2	1	3	c.1150	c.1300
IQ	2	11	c.1150	c.1450
WW1B	3	17	c.1240	c.1400
WW1A	9	52	c.1240	c.1550
OQ	49	328	c.1250	c.1500
FOQ	1	4	c.1250	c.1500
RWW	4	16	c.1400	c.1550
PMRE	11	45	c.1480	c.1600
PMSR	1	12	c.1480	c.1650
BORD	5	29	c.1550	c.1700
RBOR	12	60	c.1580	c.1800
PMR	243	1627	c.1580	c.1900
BSGSW	2	17	c.1675	c.1800
STSL	1	1	c.1680	c.1800

Table 2 Medieval and post-medieval pottery recovered during field walking Bocketts Park Corner; fabric codes as per Surrey medieval type series.

Discussion

As part of the documentary research undertaken for the SHLP aerial photographs of the area held as part of the National Monuments Record were examined

and crop marks of interest recognised in Bocketts Park Corner (Fig 1). The circular mark (Surrey HER Monument 17691), partially destroyed by construction of the A246, strongly suggests the presence of a round barrow whose above-ground archaeology has been destroyed by ploughing. The second feature (HER Monument 17690) may represent the partial survival of a square or rectangular enclosure with an east-facing entrance.

The lack of any Roman building material associated with the RB pottery scatter located in Bocketts Park Corner suggests the presence of timber buildings rather than anything more substantial. A similar site was located on the Long Ride, Mickleham Downs (Currie 2000) and it may well have been that the opportunities for trade occasioned by the proximity of Stane Street encouraged these developments. In 2003, the late David Williams oversaw a rally of metal detector users who recovered a small collection of material (Williams 2003) which included two early RB brooches and a possible third example, and up to nine 3rd- and 4th-century CE coins. Given the hilltop location, the proximity of a possible barrow, and the eastern orientation of the entrance to the possible enclosure, a highly conjectural suggestion would be that this represents a site with religious connotations – certainly it is worthy of further investigation.

Bocketts Farm has been identified as a military holding in existence by the second quarter of the 12th century, when it had been alienated from Thorncroft Manor and formed a separate estate (Blair 1977). By c.1300 the farm and its land had become part of the demesne of the manor of Pachenesham Parva. Thorncroft is assessed in the Domesday Book as having been owned by Cola, who had been dispossessed but whose family survived into the 14th century, possibly as tenants of part of their old estate (*ibid*). The original site of the farm buildings is uncertain. The lack of medieval pottery from fields around the present site is surprising but a locus close to the spring point at Bocketts Farm nonetheless seems likely.

The amount of pottery recovered from Bocketts Park Corner, while greater than elsewhere, seems insufficient to suggest a settlement in that field. The field is situated in Fetcham parish and most was previously part of an open field. The immediate area of the ring ditch visible on aerial photographs

(Fig 1) lay within the intriguingly-named Horsehead Furlong, on record since at least 1777. Might this name signify the possible barrow was once used as the base for some sort of emblematic marker (cf. Harvey 1949, 158-9; HER Monument 3315)?

*Minor additions to the text by R Briggs as Editor, owing to the temporary unavailability of the author

Acknowledgments

The pottery was identified by the Medieval Pottery Group – Emma Corke, Andrew Francis, David Hartley, Angela Mason, the late Steve Nelson, Christine Pittman and Lyn Spencer – using codes from the Surrey Roman (Surrey Archaeology Society 2020) and medieval (Medieval Studies Forum 2015) type series.

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Bronze Age pottery from land east of Manfield Park, Cranleigh

By Judie English

Fieldwalking of ploughed land in Cranleigh and the surrounding parishes in the 1990s located a small assemblage of Bronze Age pottery on land between Manfield Park and Cranleigh School at grid reference TQ 050 403. The site lies on a gentle south-east facing slope at a height of 70m AOD. Seven sherds of pottery, with a total weight of 46g, are in fabric belonging to the post-Deverel Rimbury tradition of c.1150-500 BCE (Seager Thomas 2008), and may well have belonged to a single vessel, but the lack of any form proscribes any further description.

Known Bronze Age activity in the area on the northern fringes of Cranleigh village includes a Middle Bronze Age barrel urn of Deverel Rimbury type, packed with lumps of local sandstone of the Hythe Beds series and buried upright, found at TQ 0612 3991 during excavations in advance of development near Wyphurst Road (Hayman 2008; Surrey HER Monument 24686). This was thought to represent a cremation burial although no burnt bone was recovered. Also related to housing development was the recovery of a biconical urn of a form and fabric dated to the middle to later Deverel Rimbury tradition, c.1250 – 1000 BCE, found in a pit at TQ 0629 4011 on land at Amlets Lane (Taylor 2016; Surrey HER Monument 23141).

All these three sites are located on outcrops of sandstone slightly raised above the surrounding Weald Clay. It seems unlikely that pottery, particularly a vessel the size of a barrel urn, would have been carried for any great distance into the Low Weald and the combined evidence, albeit slight, suggests some form of settlement and pottery manufacture in the area.

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Figure 1 Geology of the find spots of Bronze Age pottery: 1 – between Manfield Park and Cranleigh School; 2 – near Wyphurst Road; 3 – Amlets Lane



Queering Guildown

By Rob Briggs

Introduction

In a note published in *Bulletin* 483 (Briggs 2020), I considered the social status of those interred in the later-phase graves uncovered by the 2016 Thames Valley Archaeological Services (TVAS) excavation at 12 Guildown Avenue, Guildford (published in Lewins & Falys 2019). Rob Poulton contributed a valuable rejoinder to this in *Surrey's Past* 490, highlighting how the interpretation of the stable isotope analysis results (and potentially the radiocarbon dating results as well) presented in the excavation report may require revision (Poulton 2022).

Poulton accepts in his note the interpretation of the later phase(s) of burials in the Guildown cemetery as Late Anglo-Saxon to Saxo-Norman-period executed criminals, drawing in particular on the work of Andrew Reynolds (specifically Reynolds 2009). The appellation execution cemetery applied to Guildown and other sites where comparable burials have been uncovered is not ideal, for it implies a monocausal explanation for how the graves that form such a site came to be. Reynolds paid particular attention to Guildown owing to the sheer number of relevant burials excavated in 1929–30 (many of which, given the nature of some burials and later history of the site, surely do represent those of executed criminals), and concluded that:

‘Guildown could be regarded as a type-site in terms of representing, at least partially, the convicted deviant population of the adjacent Late Anglo-Saxon mint and market town of Guildford [...] although the cemetery will have also received the burials of wrongdoers from the hundreds which lay either side of the boundary location of the Guildown cemetery **and others precluded burial in consecrated ground.**’ (Reynolds 2009, 245; bold formatting added).

Reynolds’ use of the term deviant does not represent a moralistic judgement, rather it signifies deviation from certain norms in life – here, the law – and hence mode and place of burial after death (cf. Mattison 2016, 58). But he also cites denial of burial



in consecrated ground as a separate route to the same outcome, building on the work of Victoria Thompson who highlights the distinction between crimes and sins, while noting both could lead to burial in unconsecrated ground (Thompson 2004, 174–5). These together dovetail with what Old English-period texts term variously “heathen” (*hæthen*) or “foul” (*ful*) burials (e.g. Reynolds 2009, 220; Thompson 2004, 179), either of which would be a superior descriptor for such cemeteries were it not for their less subtle modern implications!

Deviant burials can also be termed non-normative, and this serves as the stimulus for the attempt made here to consider two burials placed in one grave within the Guildown cemetery excavated in 2016 through the lens of queer archaeology, which is offered as a contribution to LGBT+ History Month 2025.*

Burials SK64 and SK65

The skeletons designated SK64 and SK65 were contained in grave 9 found during the 2016 excavation (Fig 1). The nature of the evidence was such that all indications are the two skeletons were buried at the same time. SK64 yielded a radiocarbon dating result of cal AD 888–1015 (1096±33 Before Present (BP)) at 100% probability; Lewins & Falys 2019, 20, 37), pointing towards interment occurring some time in the 10th century. They share characteristics of burial common to the others of the same phase and in contrast to those of earlier date uncovered during the same excavation. some time in the 10th century. They share characteristics of burial common to the others of the same phase and in contrast to those of earlier date uncovered during the same excavation.

- South–north or south–west–north–east burial orientations (head facing north/north-east), as opposed to west–east (*ibid.*, Fig 3).
- All adults and biologically male from the characteristics of the skeletal remains (earlier-phase graves 2 and 3 contained skeletons identified as being those of a biological female aged 36–45 years

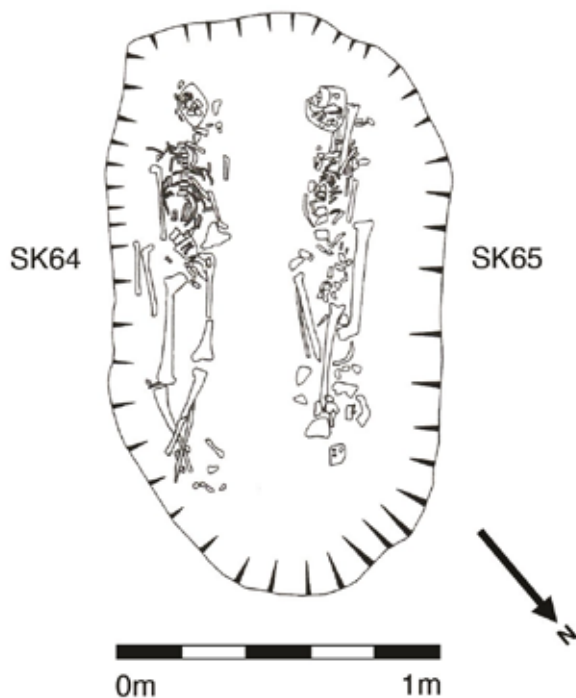


Fig 1 Plan of Guildown grave 9 showing the excavated arrangements of the bones of SK64 and SK65 (redrawn from Lewins & Falys 2019, Figs 9 & 10 by Katja Alissa Mueller)

at death, and a 14–17 year-old child: *ibid.*, 17-18).

- Only the later-phase skeletons provide compelling evidence for traumas in life including falls from height and musculo-skeletal stress, the latter in particular consistent with the lengthy performance of hard labour (*ibid.*, 40).

In other respects, SK64 and SK65 stand out from their contemporaries. The lower leg bones of SK64 were found to be crossed, which is a non-normative burial trait (*ibid.*, 12), but it is SK65 that is the truly atypical of the two in terms of the arrangement of the bones. It represents a reburial of the remains of an individual (estimated age-range 26-35 years old; SK64 is estimated to have been 18-25 years old) who had died and been interred elsewhere, most likely months earlier (*ibid.*, 13). Without going into too much gory detail, the corpse was unable to be exhumed intact, as natural decomposition had begun to take effect at the original burial place, but care was taken to reassemble SK65 in five blocks of partly-articulated remains in a way that resembled a human body in terms of ‘length, width and overall shape’, albeit minus a few small hand and foot bones (*ibid.*, 6, 12-13, 21).

The evidence from grave 9 suggests a very strong relationship between two individuals, one that was recognised and respected by others after their deaths,

hence the grisly series of tasks undertaken and completed with a significant degree of care: disinterment of SK65 after the death of the second individual, with almost all bones being collected; cutting a sufficiently capacious double-sized grave into the chalk bedrock; laying both corpses to rest alongside one another, not overlapping and with considerable effort taken to reconfigure the disinterred remains in a recognisably human bodily form; and sealing the grave. The treatment of SK65 may stem from the corpse being thought to retain a measure of consciousness and ‘personhood’, and salvation of the soul was held to be possible only if the body was intact – although the sentiment that execution cemeteries were “closer to Hell” may call this into question (Hadley 2010, 111; Walker, Clough & Clutterbuck 2020, 96; Mattison 2016, 305).

Grave 9 through the queer lens

In the published report it is posited that the two individuals buried in grave 9 may have shared a ‘familial or other relationship in life’, which is followed by a proposal that ancient DNA (aDNA) testing might establish if they are genetically linked, with the example of brothers given (Lewins & Falys 2019, 40-1). This is in one sense even-handed, acknowledging a plurality of possible explanations. Yet why is it a familial or fraternal relationship that is specified, rather than another possibility or a broader range of possibilities?

Queer archaeology, and queer theory more generally, deems this type of approach as hetero-normative; that is to say, treatments of questions of gender, sex and sexuality couched in ‘expectations of a heterosexual, monogamous family structure’ (Aimers & Rutecki 2016). It would be wrong, however, to fall into the trap of thinking queer archaeology is solely the search for homosexuality or non-cisgender identities in the archaeological record (Blackmore 2011, 79; for well-regarded queer studies on the aforementioned topics, see Reeder 2000 and Pinto & Pinto 2013). It gives a means by which to ‘provide a critique of normative interpretations to illustrate the way in which intersectional and fluid identities are identifiable in material remains’ (Rutecki & Blackmore 2016), and the queering of archaeological evidence has been applied to matters

of socio-economic status and everyday material culture (Blackmore 2011; Cobb 2006).

Reynolds cites ‘sexual deviancy’ as a potential explanation of some double burials in execution cemeteries, but does not elaborate on what he means by this (2009, 170, 174). In a blog post that very probably represents the first attempt at considering early medieval same-sex double burials through a queer lens, Charlotte Bell criticises this for diminishing the possibility for queer representation in early medieval English society (Bell 2022). It is true there could be sexual reasons behind the denial of consecrated burial – but this was not true for all sexual sins (Thompson 2004, 171). Indeed, English lawcodes of the period do not set out penalties, capital or otherwise, for same-sex acts. Some ecclesiastical penitentials, on the other hand, do contain such prohibitions, although they are adjudged to have had ‘no bearing on non-clerical attitudes to this behaviour’ (Clark 2009, 58-67; also Monk 2014).

It is not possible to state categorically one way or the other whether either occupant of Guildown grave 9 was executed. There are no osteological signs of execution on either skeleton, but these are exceedingly uncommon (certainly in relation to hangings: e.g. Reynolds 2009, 39; Mattison 2016, 55, 203). But texts confirm that “foul” burial awaited those who were socially or spiritually excluded; even sinners who died of natural causes before atoning for their sins were buried in execution cemeteries, not churchyards (Thompson 2004, 179). Thus, we can look beyond capital punishment for explanations of the evidence from grave 9.

One interpretation is SK64 and SK65 might have been buried as they were because they were men in a same-sex relationship, something not prohibited by secular law but not looked upon favourably by the Church, which exercised control over consecrated burial grounds. Faced with limited options, the decision was taken that SK64 would be buried alongside his exhumed partner (wherever he might have been buried previously) in a double grave in the Guildown cemetery. Poulton (2022, 10) seems to misinterpret my argument as suggesting the burials were somehow surreptitious; the archaeology of grave 9 embodies the contrary. This was a collective endeavour that, at the very least, involved one other

person additional to that represented by SK64 (assuming they were active in making arrangements for their burial in a new grave with SK65).

Bell’s aforementioned brief but groundbreaking contribution to the scholarship and a subsequent article by James Davison (focusing on an earlier period *c.*450-750 CE; Davison 2023) interweave approaches from trans studies to question the applicability of the male/female gender binary. It must be acknowledged that the interpretation offered in the previous paragraph rests in no small part on the biological sex of the skeletons being in alignment with the performed gender identities of the two individuals in life, something that cannot be assumed from the available evidence. A queer reading of the grave could be founded alternatively on the observation of skeletal indications indicating the two were perhaps ‘physically distinct from their community’ (Lewins & Falys 2019, 40). Drawing on theory derived from disability studies, it could be posited that this shared characteristic was the basis for their relationship in life and hence burial. Again, this is not to state that such a line of interpretation is preferable to what has been advanced previously, merely that it is important to spell out the range of possibilities and acknowledge the assumptions inherent in them.

Conclusions

Reynolds’ assessment that it ‘is likely that among the burials at execution sites is a proportion of individuals precluded from burial in consecrated cemeteries for reasons beyond the judicial process’ (2009, 178) is one that seems highly applicable to Guildown, despite its type-site status for English early medieval execution cemeteries. Priory Orchard in Godalming, an even more extensively excavated burial ground of the 9th-12th centuries adjacent to a minster church, recommends still more nuanced understanding of burial culture in this period. While burials there were all oriented west–east in the Christian tradition, instances of non-normative burial practices have been identified: a possible double inhumation (burials 3281s and 3283s), and another biologically female skeleton (3075s) to which had been added a humerus deemed to have ‘phallic symbolism’ (Randall & Poulton 2023, 19, 20, 61). Queer analyses of these burials could be made, ones that would be different to what

has been offered here in respect of Guildown grave 9. Thompson (2004, 179) concluded burial in 9th–11th-century England was a spectrum, one that also changed over time; Guildown and Priory Orchard demonstrate how excavations in Surrey continue to add to this picture of complexity.

To be clear, there are many scenarios that might be advanced as explanations for Guildown grave 9, and I am not arguing that SK64 and SK65 indisputably represent two gay men who were buried together outside Guildford in or around the 10th century. Instead, what is set out above is the case for according equal weighting and expression to the alternatives to their being brothers or other male relatives, based on the currently-available evidence. Future analyses may refine our knowledge and rule out some of the present possibilities.



Fig 2 The grave of Edward Carpenter and George Merrill in the Mount Cemetery (photo by Rob Briggs, taken 22 August 2024)

I close with something of a thought exercise. Not far from the site of the Guildown cemetery is another double grave. Should this grave be excavated at a point far in the future, it would be discovered that both occupants were inhumed, almost certainly one buried above the other (on vertical versus horizontal multiple burials, see Reynolds 2009, 64–5). Osteological analysis would indicate both were biological males not of the same age; probably the two sets of

bones would be in comparable states of preservation. We know the equivalent information about the occupants of Guildown grave 9. A heteronormative explanation would alight on the occupants of this other grave being related, perhaps father and son. Were aDNA analysis to be undertaken on their remains, however, the results would show they were not related. Historical research, or the belated identification of the associated gravestone, would reveal the truth; the grave is that of Edward Carpenter (1844–1929), noted left-wing intellectual and ‘founding father of gay rights in England’, and George Merrill (c. 1867–1928), who, as their gravestone at once poignantly and defiantly declares, were together ‘about 40 years’ (Fig 2; Exploring Surrey’s Past n.d.). It is a remarkable coincidence that Carpenter’s and Merrill’s grave lies so close to one from nearly a millennium earlier which might just represent the same reason for the burial of its occupants together.

* This piece reworks one posted online in June 2024 at <https://surreymedieval.wordpress.com/work/queer-archaeology-in-theory-in-practice-in-surrey/>. I have also produced a zine (10 copies only) as another outlet for this work; to obtain a copy please email surreymedieval.blog@gmail.com.

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Notes on churchyard recording in Ewell

By **Jeremy Harte**

Jeremy Harte reports from St Mary's churchyard where he has been recording gravestones for Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society. St Mary's is the parish church of Ewell with monuments dating back to 1736 in the original churchyard and its three extensions of 1848, 1902 and 1935.

Inscriptions were copied in the last century but they needed photographs to go with them – a project more complicated than you might have thought. These notes are offered for anyone considering a similar record elsewhere. The full record of St Mary's is at Bourne Hall Museum and it is partly online at <https://eehe.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/StMarysEwellGraveyard2.pdf>.

Clearing the ground

As bells chimed in a lonely tower and the full moon glimmered through the trees, I wondered if this was the best time to be letting my blood drip onto an ancient grave. Fortunately it was only a scratch and the cold night air soon closed up the cut but I had learnt the first rule of graveyard recording: take out the brambles first.

There are churchyards and churchyards. If you're lucky, you will find a well-maintained open space with carefully tended stones. Sometimes you may have to do your own mowing, and there are some where you will need to use a chainsaw to find any graves at all. By that stage people will be wondering what you're up to, so be sure to get support (and permission!) from everyone you can – the vicar, the PCC and the neighbours. Be polite to the dead too, because you're going to be spending a lot of time with them.

To record an overgrown churchyard, you'll need to cut back hanging branches of yew and other churchyard trees, shrub growth of hazel, holly, ash and elder, undergrowth which is mostly brambles, and ivy (Fig 1). Clearance is best done in a dry winter season, when you can get at the woody growth without leaves. You will need scruffy clothes and bin bags for the waste, which will have to be carried off site. Most tree growth can be trimmed with a

pruning saw. Undergrowth can be cleared with bagging hook or a strimmer. Tie some colourful, reflective tags on your tools, as it's surprisingly difficult to keep hold of them otherwise. It helps to always put them down at the same kind of place, such as the northwest corner of a table tomb.



Fig 1 St Mary's churchyard no. 1 before clearance, January 2024

Finding your way

Before taking any photos, you will need a map of the churchyard with numbers for the monuments. In mapping, it helps to divide the churchyard into sectors: pathways are the best way to divide up the area as they already exist on the ground, and orientation relative to the church is the next best, although you may need to mark out divisions with tape. In a Victorian or later churchyard the numbering of graves is easy, as they are laid out in rows, but older churchyards were less regular and your number sequence will have to compromise between running in neat lines (which is straightforward to follow on the map) and following the sequences of monuments as they were actually set up (which makes more historical sense).

It is a good idea to take general photos of the churchyard, to record the historic layout and help readers orient themselves when they consult the archive. Some aspects of natural growth, for instance the planting of trees, will have historical relevance.

Even after clearance, you will still need secateurs to trim around the monuments. Dead ivy sticks to stone, but when live it comes off quite easily: if you cut it with secateurs and carefully peel it away there should be no damage, as long as it isn't growing through cracks or under flaking surfaces. A stiff brush followed by wiping with a gloved hand will remove dead ivy from vertical surfaces and litter from flat ones. You will need a trowel to clear soil which has accumulated round the base of a monument.



Fig 2 E003, Henry Marshall 1855, in churchyard no. 2

Detail is lost from monuments through weathering (which mostly affects limestone, because of acid rain) and flaking (which affects sandstone; Fig 2). Side-lighting can recover weathered texts, but when a stone flakes, everything is lost, so in an unrecorded graveyard, or one where only partial recording is possible, you should give priority to the sandstone monuments. Apart from clearing them, it is best to leave the tombs as they are: a headstone which has toppled face down is at least preserving the inscription. Fragmentary pieces and crosses laid flat in front of their bases can be digitally reconstructed after the survey. Some stones appear to have broken not long after erection and are held together by sunken iron brackets. Others have disintegrated more recently. Fragments of stone can wander around the churchyard some distance from their parent monument (Fig 3).



Fig 3 114, George Wood 1865, in churchyard no. 1

Day or night?

To make the inscription as legible as possible, the monument should be sidelit. The angle varies, depending on the cut of the inscription: very eroded thin lettering on limestone needs an angle of about 10° to be clear (Fig 4), whereas a well-preserved deeply cut inscription on sandstone will look better at 30° or 40°. The light should shine directly on the stone without any obstructions. If you are recording a graveyard without any overshadowing growth, then the sun will do your side-lighting for you, if you take the photos in summer, when the light is high enough to clear hedges and buildings. If you are in a neglected graveyard overshadowed by trees, you will need to record it by night with artificial light. This is best done in late winter, during clear frosty nights when nothing is growing around the stones and darkness comes early.



Fig 4 163 John Booven 1810 in churchyard no. 1

Graves are oriented with head to the west and feet to the east, and at first, since viewers were assumed to stand outside the grave itself, writing was west-facing on the headstone and east-facing on the footstone. However, inscriptions were also cut on the east-facing rear of headstones once there was no more room on the front, while some early graves had an east-facing epitaph, if they fronted eastward onto a path where people would be walking by and reading them. After footstones fell out of use and churchyards had become more regular in their layout, Victorian monuments began to have east-facing inscriptions, since the reader was assumed to be standing on a path looking at the monument from beyond the foot of the grave.

If you are photographing by night, none of this matters, as you can place your lights accordingly, but if you are taking daylight photos with raking sun, then the west-facing monuments will need to be taken at a different time from the east-facing ones. If a grave lies east and west, then the sun will shine directly from the right on an east-facing inscription at noon (12:00 winter time, 13:00 summer time), but since you want oblique rather than direct light, you should be by the grave at about 13:30 summer time for a good daylight photo of an west-facing inscription with light from the right, or at 12.30 for an east-facing one with light from the left. However, graves seldom lie true east and west. In older churchyards they were laid out in clusters, as different parts of the space were filled up; later they followed the orientation of the church itself; and at all times they have tended to line up on paths. So you need to work out when the light will fall best on each grave. Those directly north of the church will never get noonday sun and if you want them sunlit at all you will have to come early or late on a long summer day (Fig 5).

Preparing for photos

Every monument should have a number, and you need to know the number before you take the photo, recording it as metadata or by photographing a written slip. If working by daylight you can check against a map, but this is next to impossible at night: instead, go round the monuments during the day and put numbered blocks beside them, picking them up afterwards as you work in the dark.



Fig 5 E040 Harold Cole 1862 in churchyard no. 2

In an hour, assuming that the ground has been prepared, you can photograph up to 20 monuments. This means that an ordinary country churchyard can be recorded in some 15 to 20 working hours. If you are relying on the sun for sidelighting, you have an hour or two before it moves too far west. For night work, most rechargeable LEDs currently last on full strength for two hours. The lights should be mounted at intervals on a vertical staff about 1.5m high; four are enough to provide continual side-lighting. To hold the staff upright, a right-angled garden spike is more effective than a tripod base. The lights should be about 0.5m to one side of the stone – always, for consistency, to the same side – and should be turned slightly towards the stone to prevent dazzle.

Monuments should be photographed in dry weather, because rain creates a blotchy image. But flat figurative carving, especially on slate, photographs much better when wet as the gloss on the surfaces brings out detail: make a note of these monuments and return to them after a shower of rain (Fig 6).

In an ordinary archaeological record, all the photos would include a scale bar. However this isn't necessary for headstones as they are invariably as wide as their graves (standardised at 2 feet) and the height can be calculated in proportion.



Fig 6 Ledger slab
John Bulkeley 1710
in churchyard no. 1

Taking the photos

For recording purposes, monuments come in three sorts. Headstones and footstones are in a single vertical plane; stepped crosses and table tombs often have inscriptions on four sides; while ledger slabs and the tops of table tombs need to be photographed from above. You will need to light them from different directions, or wait for the sun to do so. When clearing headstones, check the back for additional text, or for a credit to the monumental mason; these will require separate photographs. It is better to take several photographs at a time than to have to return because your one shot was unsatisfactory.

The best photographs are taken face on, at a distance of about 1.5m from the stone, with the camera central to it, and without distortion of horizontals or verticals. Most people stand and look down at a headstone, taking a splayed photo: to avoid this you should hold the camera low, or better still kneel (which is why you need scruffy clothes). However, some monuments cannot be completely photographed face-on, because the churchyard is crowded and a footstone or the end of a table tomb gets in the way, in which case it is best to take one photo straight on to show the monument type, and another at an angle to record the inscription.

Editing The Photos

Back at the computer, number your photos against the checklist, rotate them so the monument is square in the image, and crop them to a standard view. If your lighting has been good, the inscription should be more legible in the photo than it is on the ground. A plan, a full set of photos, and a systematic

transcript provide everything that is needed to understand a graveyard. It is worth photographing broken or partial monuments since it shows later researchers how things stood at the time of the record.

Gravestones are texts, and to copy them you should follow standard rules for transcribing historical documents. The best rule is to respect line breaks, spelling, and capitalisation of individual words: if you file photo and transcript side by side, the reader can see other features such as variations in the script. A surprising number of inscriptions were wrong and had to be recut, something usually concealed by cement which filled in the erroneous cuts and will now have fallen out. Further inscriptions would be added to stones for subsequent burials, or for members of the family who died and were buried elsewhere (which may explain why the formula *Sacred to the memory* superseded the literal *Here lies the body*). Subsequent lettering seems to have been carved on site, rather than the stone being taken away and returned. Most stonemasons managed to match the earlier hand although there are some instances where they wouldn't or couldn't (Fig 7).



Fig 7 325 Ann Hards
1829 in churchyard no. 1

Inscriptions consist of personal details (the epitaph) followed by lines of verse or commentary (the tag). In later graves the tag is more likely to be taken from Scripture. Both verses and scriptural quotations are so standardised that, although they appear in smaller lettering and are more prone to weathering, they can be reconstructed from parallels elsewhere.

For more on official guidance from DEBS (*Discovering England's Burial Spaces*) and the Council for British Archaeology on recording and analysing burial grounds, visit www.debs.ac.uk/guidance.html.

A figurine of Mercury discovered at Limpsfield

By Simon Maslin

During 2024, a cast copper alloy Roman figurine of Mercury was found in the grounds of an estate on the eastern border of Surrey by a metal detectorist who was detecting with the permission of the landowner. Initially reported to Surrey County Archaeological Unit by the landowner, the find was subsequently recorded with the British Museum's Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) as record ID [SUR-9AB9B3](#).

Description

The figurine stands 124.2mm high and depicts the god standing nude, wearing a winged hat (*petasos*) with a pronounced rim and two wings projecting from the top. Beneath the hat, the hair has finely incised texture and the face below is youthful, with well executed features. The torso features well-defined pectoral and abdominal muscles, navel and genitalia. A folded cape (*chlamys*) drapes over the left shoulder and falls in a straight line down the left side of the front and back with finely moulded curves and grooves suggestive of the folds and texture of cloth. The left arm is outstretched but the hand is incomplete; a groove down the centre

indicates a fitting for a separate item, probably a staff (*caduceus*), now lost. The right arm has considerable surface loss from corrosion, but the hand is complete and holds a coin purse. The figure is posed with right leg slightly bent at the knee and the legs and feet are complete, however there are no indications of any fittings for a stand.

The features of this figurine, specifically the *petasos*, coin purse, youthful face and *chlamys* are typical attributes of depictions of Mercury (Durham 2010, 37-8). This is the most common of the Roman deities to be found depicted as statuettes or figurines in Britain, with finds particularly concentrated in the southern part of the country (Durham 2010, 102-5). The PAS database (www.finds.org.uk) now has, at the time of writing, over 130 examples of figurines both of this god and of the various familiars and companions attributed to him (cockerels, turtles and goats). The ubiquity of this deity as a subject for portable depictions is down to the god's attribution as responsible for financial and commercial success, making him a popular focus for religious activity amongst both everyday people and elites.



SUR-9AB9B3, Roman cast copper alloy figurine of Mercury (© Surrey County Council)

Interpretation

An object like this immediately invites the question of what it actually represents in terms of evidence for the character of local Roman settlement or occupation. The interpretation of isolated detecting finds like this one is typically hampered both by a lack of archaeological context and also by the potential for sampling bias from the detectorists themselves, who usually favour recovery of non-ferrous metal objects over potentially diagnostic associated materials such as ironwork, ceramics and building materials. Typically when we examine such items as stray detecting finds we are therefore largely forced to an interpretation purely on the merits of typological comparisons and the intrinsic qualities of the object itself.

So what can we say about this object in isolation? The specific composition of the depiction seen here is certainly paralleled by others from Britain, such as a figurine in the National Museum of Wales/Amgueddfa Cymru from St Donats, South Glamorgan (Green 1978, Plate 8) and an 18th-century antiquarian discovery from Exeter (Henig 2024, 194). Most other British examples however, particularly those recorded by the PAS, demonstrate a more insular take on the design, typically being smaller and modelled with far less detail and accuracy. From that we can see that the example from Surrey is comparatively unusual in its size, realistic style and fine execution. This points to the figurine being an import, probably from Gaul where figurines of such quality and form are much more widely encountered (Martin Henig, pers. comm). It follows that the original owner had wealth and trade connections and was of some status.

Further evidence to add to the interpretation can come from looking at the wider area to provide clues about the contemporary situation. Interestingly, the find location is in the immediate vicinity of the projected line of the London-Lewes Roman road which provides an obvious focus for occupation and economic activities. This is locally evidenced by several finds of groups of pottery sherds and coins recorded on the Surrey Historic Environment Record (HER). A nearby archaeological watching brief by SCAU (1997-99) recorded notable quantities of Roman finds consistent with occupation at the site, albeit of uncertain character or precise location. In

addition, there are also a number of Roman coins recorded from within a 1km wide general area on the PAS database, including a poorly documented (antiquarian) coin hoard.

Further afield, the site sits within a rural landscape which was extensively farmed and settled, with an important villa complex and probable temple site both around 3km to the north at Titsey (see Calow 2022 for more on recent fieldwork at Titsey). The proximity of the findspot of this votive object to a temple site is obviously interesting, but there is nothing to immediately suggest that this figure was associated with such a site as opposed to a *lararium* or household shrine. In conclusion, these local finds and nearby sites can all add to a generic picture of contemporary activity, although they don't inform much directly about the specific origins of the figurine. Perhaps it came from a local high-status occupation site or perhaps it represents a traveller's loss on the road? In the absence of a secure context it is difficult to be more certain.

Having been recorded by the PAS, the record of this find now forms part of the wider corpus of archaeological information preserved on the national database (www.finds.org.uk) and also the county's HER. The figurine itself was returned to the landowner, who retains legal ownership and intends for it to be placed on public display within their estate.

References

- Calow, D, 2022 Geophysical and metal detecting surveys on and around the site of a Romano-Celtic temple and Roman road at Titsey, *Surrey's Past*, **492**, 3-8
- Durham, E, 2010 *Metal Figurines in Roman Britain*, Reading: University of Reading
- Green, M J, 1978 *Small Cult-Objects from the Military Areas of Roman Britain*, BAR British Series, **52**, Oxford: BAR Publishing
- Henig, M, 2024 Rediscovering *Romanitas*: Bronze statues, statuettes and figurines from Britannia, c. 1660-1900, in Henig, M and Ramsay, N (eds.), '*a hole worlde of things very memorable*': *Essays in Architecture, Archaeology, Topography and the History of Oxford Presented to Julian Munby for His 70th Birthday*, Bicester: Archaeopress, 177-202

Trustees / Directors

By **Martin Rose**

At the November AGM there was a significant turnover of the Trustees of the charity and Directors of the company. The new list of Trustees is provided below:

President – Emma Corke (previously Deputy Chair)

Secretary – Martin Rose – elected 2024

Treasurer – Peter McKee – elected 2024

Librarian and Archivist – Christine Pitman – elected 2019

Audrey Graham – elected 2024

Judie English – elected 2024

Christopher Coombe – elected 2021

Emma Coburn – elected 2022

Jon Cotton – elected 2024

The Trustees normally meet four times a year a few weeks after the Council meetings, although we can hold extra meeting to discuss specific urgent issues. Under the constitution of the Society the Trustees are responsible for managing the business of the Society and ensuring that business is conducted in accordance with the Society's objectives. We are also responsible for ensuring the Society is compliant with the Companies Act and Charity law.

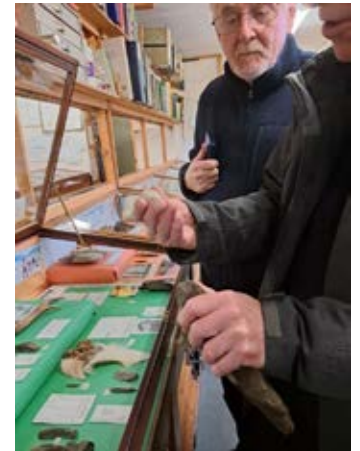
On a personal level it is both an honour to have been elected Secretary and rather daunting as I am following David Calow who has done such an excellent job in the role for many years. Short profiles on the Trustees have been appearing in the e-newsletter, with more over the coming months.

Lithics group visit

By **Sylvia Solarski**

The Society's new Lithics group recently visited a private museum in Croydon where members were able to view and handle worked flints from all prehistoric periods, as well as learn more about how various flint tools were made. A repeat visit is planned later in the year. The group meets monthly on a Sunday at the Abinger Research Centre where,

as well as learning about lithic production, we record lithic assemblages from local sites. We warmly welcome new members whatever their experience. For more information, please contact sylviasolarski@aol.co.uk.



SIHG

By **Stuart Dennison**

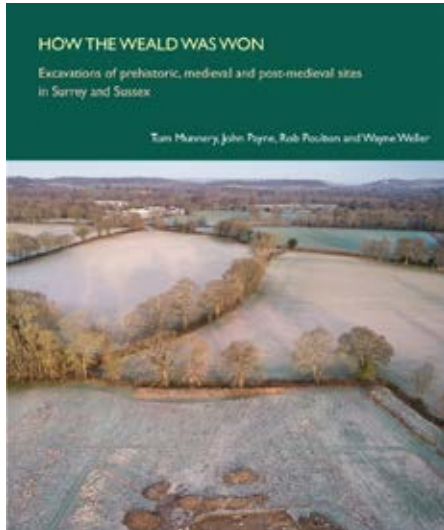
The Surrey Industrial History Group (SIHG, a sub-group of SyAS) holds talks on a wide range of industrial history-related subjects, and has recently expanded its activities. The group now runs well attended meetings in Leatherhead, as well as regular Zoom meetings. Visits to various places of interest are also in hand. More details are available at www.sihg.org.uk. Our new committee, chaired by Garry Brooks, is looking to:

- Reinststate the SIHG conservation awards (last awarded in 2021);
- Award grants for industrial history conservation/preservation projects;
- Publish some research;
- Issue an Annual Journal to all SIHG members;
- Add some talks / events relating to Industrial Archaeology to our programme.

SyAS members are very welcome to join us – membership is currently free (at least until April 2026) – by applying to membership@sihg.org.uk. The zero-cost subscription gives you access to live and Zoom talks, a bi-monthly newsletter and a copy of the Annual Journal (to be published in autumn 2025).

Publications

How the Weald was won. Excavations of pre-historic, medieval and post-medieval sites in Surrey and Sussex is a new SpoilHeap Publications Occasional 17 by Tom Munnery, John Payne, Rob Poulton and Wayne Weller.



Archaeological investigation in the Weald has been very limited compared to the areas that surround it and this has allowed a simple picture of its Holocene history to be widely accepted. The four excavations reported here are part of an increasing intensity of exploration that is revealing a far more nuanced pattern of development.

Excavations on the site of a new school in North-West Horley revealed the episodic appearance of short-lived settled farming communities, the earliest, uniquely for the Weald, of the Middle Bronze Age, followed by one of the Late Iron Age- Early Roman period and then another of the late 12th and earlier 13th century. The next evidence was of a dramatic change in land use in the post-medieval period (probably c.1550-1700) when a huge number of 'minepits', used to extract iron ore, covered the area.

At Brooklands Farm, Cranleigh, a farmstead was identified with later Iron Age features that included roundhouses and enclosure ditches. This developed in the Early Roman period into a more comprehensive system of enclosures or fields with a possible rectangular building. A few other sites in the wealden area show a similar sequence, suggesting the emergence in the later Iron Age of pockets of colonising settlement that were abandoned quite early in the Roman period.

This work at Glebelands, Pulborough, is an example of this. Prehistoric evidence included a Middle Bronze Age bucket urn but more substantial was the remains of a Late Iron Age to Early Roman field system, with indications of nearby domestic activity. The field system had related trackways or droveways, suggesting a pastoral use of the land.

The discovery at Lindon Farm, Alfold of the ditches of a ringwork and bailey castle was a major surprise. Dendrochronological dating of oak timbers has shown that it was in existence by the earlier part of the 12th century and it was out of use, at latest, by 1250. The castle was probably the caput of a group of Surrey manors held from 1086 by Robert de Watteville and his heirs, and it seems likely that its establishment relates to an intensification of agricultural exploitation of the Weald.

Available through the [Surrey Heritage Shop](#).



The recently published volume on the **Guildford Fire Station** is now available open access.

Excavations carried out in 2013 by Oxford Archaeology prior to the construction of a new fire station in Guildford revealed a well preserved, in situ Late Upper Palaeolithic flint scatter. The scatter itself dates from the first half of the Late Glacial interstadial (c.14,15,000 years BP), with functional analysis of the tools suggesting relatively short occupation during which hunting, small-scale craft activities linked with the retooling of hunting weapons and manufacture of hide items, and limited processing of animal/plant materials took place.

The volume was published over the summer, and Oxford Archaeology have recently made it available open access (knowledge.oxfordarchaeology.com/library/12603), or hard copies are available for £20 from Pen and Sword Books.

Lecture meetings

Please note that lecture details, in particular venues and format, are subject to change. It is recommended that up-to-date information be obtained from the individual organisations before attending. If you would like your programme included in future editions, please contact the editors.

20 February

‘Victorian Dynamo: the life and work of Sir Henry Cole’ by Nick Pollard to Surrey Industrial History Group on Zoom at 19:15. For more info, see www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/content/sihg_upcoming_events

21 February

‘George Wither’ by Barrie Lees to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

26 February

‘The Princess Mary Village Homes in the 20th Century’ by Jessamy Carlson to Surrey Heritage on Zoom at 17:30. Bookings welcome (www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/history-centre/events): £6

27 February

‘Trouble and Strife, Thorpe c.1910’ by Jill Williams to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

3 March

‘Women at War: Those wonderful women in their flying machines’ by Jim Barnes to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

4 March

‘Clandon House – A Great House reimagined for the future’ by Martin Ellis to Addlestone Historical Society at Addlestone Community Centre, Garfield Road, Addlestone at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

6 March

‘The Stations of the London Brighton and South Coast Railway’ by Benny O’Looney to Surrey Industrial History

Group on Zoom at 19:15. For more info, see www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/content/sihg_upcoming_events

8 March

‘London’s Lesser-known Lost Rivers’ by Tom Bolton to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

10 March

‘The building history of Ham into the 21st century’ by Richard Woolf to Richmond Local History Society, Duke Street Church, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £5

11 March

‘The original medieval settlement and manor of Albury, in Albury Park’ by Anne Sassin to Westcott Local History Group at St John’s Chapel, Furlong Rd, Westcott at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £2

14 March

‘Recent investigations at St Johns Jerusalem, Sutton-at-Hone’ by Anne Sassin and Nathalie Cohen to Richmond Archaeological Society at Richmond Library Annex, Quadrant Rd, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome.

17 March

‘Box Hill’s School for Secret Agents’ by Paul McCue to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

20 March

‘The Panama Canal’ by John How to Surrey Industrial History Group in Oddfellows Hall, Bridge St, Leatherhead at 14:00. Visitors welcome: £3

21 March

‘John Nichols, Gentleman’s Magazine’ by Julian Pooley to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

25 March

‘Spies in Surrey’ by Lorraine Spindler to Newdigate Local History Society at Newdigate Village Hall, Kingsland, Newdigate at 19:00. Visitors welcome: £5

2 April

‘Prague: City of Spires’ by Paul Lang to Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society in St Mary’s Church Hall, London Road, Ewell at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

3 April

‘The Ashted Pottery: Post-War Rehabilitation through an Alliance of Art and Industry’ by Anne Anderson to Surrey Industrial History Group in Oddfellows Hall, Bridge St, Leatherhead at 14:00. Visitors welcome

7 April

‘George Abbot: the Archbishop of Canterbury from Surrey’ by Mary Alexander to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

‘The Theatre in Shakespeare’s London’ by Ian Porter to Woking History Society in Woking High School, Morton Road, Horsell, Woking at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

10 April

‘It’s All a Bit Heath Robinson – Re-inventing the First World War’ by Lucinda Gosling to Surrey Industrial History Group on Zoom at 19:15. For more info, see www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/content/sihg_upcoming_events

11 April

‘An Eclectic Extravaganza; Victorians at Leisure’ by Richard Marks to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

‘Health and disease: some examples of pathological conditions from the past of London’ by Don Walker to Richmond Archaeological Society at Richmond Library Annex, Quadrant Rd, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome.

14 April

‘Poets and Princess, Naked Ladies and Rock Gods’ by Celia Holman to Richmond Local History Society, Duke Street Church, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £5

15 April

‘The Development of Surrey’s Railways’ by Richard Marks to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

‘Wings over Dunsfold’ by Paul McCue to Albury History Society at Albury Village Hall, Albury at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

16 April

‘Plate Tectonics’ by Martin Eales to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 19:45. Visitors welcome: £3

23 April

‘Arsenic and Old Lace’ by Rachel Marsh to Surrey Heritage on Zoom at 17:30. Bookings welcome (www.surreycc.gov.uk/culture-and-leisure/history-centre/events): £6

24 April

‘Mind The Gap!’ by Charles Harris to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

‘A bit of metallurgy’ by Jim Lugsden to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 19:45. Visitors welcome: £3

6 May

‘Addlestone Alumni: Studies of six local worthies’ by David & Jocelyn Barker to Addlestone Historical Society at Addlestone Community Centre, Garfield Road, Addlestone at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

7 May

‘The Harpole Treasure’ by Gillian King to Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society in St Mary’s Church Hall, London Road, Ewell at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

8 May

‘Why Roman Britain?’ by Harvey Sheldon to Richmond Archaeological Society at Richmond Library Annex, Quadrant Rd, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome.

12 May

‘Cast-iron Firebacks: More Interesting than you’d think’ by Jeremy Hodgkinson to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

‘Woking in Pictures Old and New’ by Steve Welch to Woking History Society in Woking High School, Morton Road, Horsell, Woking at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

13 May

‘350 years of South East Weather’ by Ian Currie- Weatherman to Westcott Local History Group at St John’s Chapel, Furlong Rd, Westcott at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £2

19 May

‘Why is Dorking called Dorking?’ by Robert Briggs to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

20 May

‘Arts and Crafts Architecture in Surrey’ by Carolyn Smith to Albury History Society at Albury Village Hall, Albury at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

29 May

‘The Lonnie Donegan Story – his life with music’ by Warren James to Barber to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

2 June

‘The Changing Face of Local Media’ by David Rose to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

‘Kenwood Kitchen Appliances’ by Alice Naylor to Woking History Society in Woking High School, Morton Road, Horsell, Woking at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

4 June

‘Archaeological sites of Turkey’ by Richard Baker to Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society in St Mary’s Church Hall, London Road, Ewell at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

Annual Symposium

The Annual Symposium of the Society, featuring a full day of exciting new research and fieldwork throughout the county, will be held on **Saturday 8 March 2025** (10:00-16:30) in East Horsley Village Hall. Online booking is now available (tickets £12) via the [website](http://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

The full programme is available online and includes the following talks:

‘Community Archaeology in Surrey – 2024 round-up’, Anne Sassin (SyAS)

‘Portable Antiquities Scheme – 2024 update’, Simon Maslin (PAS)

‘Bronze Age Settlement at Painshill’, John Boothroyd (OA)

‘Late Iron Age & Roman settlement at Dunsfold Park Access Road’, Gerry Thacker (OA)

‘Outwood to Buckland Strategic Water Main’, Giles Dawkes (ASE)

‘Industrial History of the Wandle’, Mick Taylor (Wandle Industrial Museum)

‘Lithics at Farnham Museum’, Martin Rose (SyAS)



Medieval Houses study day

This spring’s Medieval Studies Forum meeting is themed around Medieval Houses and will take place on **Saturday 22 March** at East Horsley Village Hall (10:00-16:00). The full programme is online but includes the following talks:

‘West Horsley Place’, Martin Higgins (Surrey Domestic Buildings Research Group)

‘High Bank, West Horsley, dating from 1375’, Brigid Fice (Surrey Domestic Buildings Research Group)

'Buildings researched and documentary records', Jeremy Clarke (Felbridge and District History Group)

'How to make a brick on Effingham Common', Dr Mark Eller (Mole Valley Geological Society)

'Scadbury Medieval Moated Manor House, Chislehurst, Kent', Dr Janet Clayton (Orpington and District Archaeological Society)

Payment is available online through the [website](#) or cash on the day. Space is limited however so please do book in advance; a waiting list may be implemented. Please email any queries to medforum@hotmail.co.uk.



Neolithic pottery in the SE lecture

The Prehistoric Group have arranged a free Zoom talk by Paul Garwood of Birmingham University (Senior Lecturer in Prehistory) on **Tuesday 29 April** (19:30). Entitled 'One thousand years of solitude? Social lives and transformation in the Middle and Late Neolithic of south-east England, 3500-2500 BC', the talk discusses the role of Neolithic pottery in south-east England. Please visit the [website](#) to book online.

Roman Roadside Settlement in South-East England

Save the date (**Sunday 7 June**) for the latest in the series of bi-annual Roman Studies Group conferences, 'Shining a Light on Roman Roadside Settlement in

South-East England'. This will take place as a hybrid meeting at King's Church Hall, Lewes (and online), and is run in conjunction with the Sussex School of Archaeology. Booking info will be available shortly.

Speakers confirmed to date include: Rob Wallace (Bridge Farm, East Sussex), Chris Butler (Hassocks, West Sussex), Patrick Allen (Chelmsford, Essex), Matt Sparkes (Croydon), David Calow (Coin rich Roman roadside settlements in Surrey) and David Staveley.

CBA-SE annual lecture on Stiances project

On **Tuesday 25 March** (19:00) CBA South-East will hold their annual AGM and lecture, this year by Simon Stevens (Archaeology South East) who will present on his ongoing Stiances Archaeological Project which provides pupils at Newick Primary School (Sussex) with an all-too-rare opportunity to become involved with a dig. Since 2009, the project on a field called 'Little Stiances' has seen geophysical and topographic surveys and the targeting of hand-dug test-pits, revealing an assortment of post-medieval finds alongside a thin scatter of Mesolithic flintwork. Register in advance at us02web.zoom.us/j/62C7x9KQ4qLvUcS15XdXg.

Archaeology South-East 50th conference

Archaeology South-East is in its 50th anniversary year and are planning a conference day event on **Saturday 5 April** in Portslade, near Brighton, to celebrate. The provisional programme includes the following speakers:

Louise Rayner, David Rudling, Matt Pope, Paul Garwood, Hayley Nicholls, Angus Forshaw / Rob Cullum, Melanie Giles, Michael Shapland, Elke Raemen / Sarah Wolferstan, Martin Bell.

Programme and booking online via onlinestore.ucl.ac.uk/conferences-and-events/faculty-of-social-historical-sciences-c03/institute-of-archaeology-f31/f31-archaeology-south-east-50th-anniversary-conference/

LAMAS conference

This year's London & Middlesex Archaeological Society's annual conference will be held on **Saturday 15 March** at London Museum Docklands (and on Zoom), themed on 'Mudlarking the Thames Foreshore'. Speakers include Harvey Sheldon, Harry Platts, Martin Dearne, Eben Cooper, Stuart Cakebread, Jess Bryan and Ben Coleman, Han Li, Jon Cotton, Pamela Greenwood, Tom Chivers, Claire Harris and John Clark. For the full programme and to book please visit www.lamas.org.uk/conferences/21-archaeology-conference.html.

Summer fieldwork

Dates for the third season of test pitting at Albury Park are currently **9-12 June**, with another week in early September. Geophysics is also planned for the spring. Volunteers are welcome for both finds and digging; no prior experience needed. To be put on the project email list, please contact Anne at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.

Two days of groundtruthing are also planned at Netley Park for **Tuesday 25 February** and **Monday 3 March**. Although dates are not yet confirmed, further fieldwork opportunities will be posted on the website when finalised.

For interest in our outreach projects, training and fieldwork, including the Society's LiDAR project (<https://surreylidar.org.uk/>), please email the above address.

For further events taking place around the region, please follow the Society's monthly e-newsletters. To be placed on the mailing list, email info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.