

Surrey Archaeological Society

E-newsletter

No 56

August 2025

Welcome to the Society's August 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, those interested in volunteer opportunities or general outreach can contact me at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. Please also keep up-to-date via the website and social media ([@surreyarch](https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk)) for group and event updates.

Anne Sassin (*SyAS Community Archaeologist*)



Conservation of Archives

The Surrey Local History Committee autumn conference will take place on **Saturday 11 October** (10:30-15:30) at Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking.

10:30 Registration and coffee

11:00 Welcome Gerry Moss Chairman of Surrey Local History Committee

11:05 Rachel Marsh (Surrey History Centre Conservator), 'Preserving the Past and Present for the Future: An Overview of Archive Conservation'

12:00 Julian Pooley (Heritage Public Services and Engagement Manager), 'Collecting Policies and the Challenges of the Digital Age'

12:30 Lunch

13:30 Group A: Tour behind the scenes and visit to Conservation / Group B: Visit to Search room for Conservation Exhibition

14:30 Group B: Tour behind the scenes and visit to Conservation / Group A: Visit to Search room for Conservation Exhibition

15:30 Discussion and Closing remarks

Tickets £15; please book a place online via the [Surrey Heritage events page](https://www.surreyheritage.org.uk/events).

Coffee or tea are included. Please make your own arrangements for lunch. It is recommended to bring a packed lunch as there are few cafes near Surrey History Centre.

As places are limited, early booking is advised.



Heritage Open Days

The Society's Research Centre at Abinger Hammer will be open to visitors for a Heritage Open Day on **Sunday 14 September** (10:00-15:00). Visitors are welcome to explore the library and ask about any journals and pamphlets of interest to them, and view the work of our medieval pottery group and displays from other groups.

The Society will also be set up at the Old Saxon Church in Albury Park on **Saturday 13** and **Sunday 14 September** (10:00-17:00) with a finds display from their current investigations of the deserted settlement.

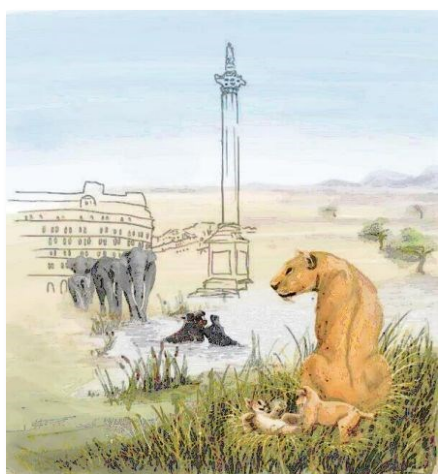
For other events in your area during the course of the celebration (**12-21 September**), see the [website](#) (for Mole Valley events, including the Society's Abinger day, see their [page](#)).



Rooted in History lecture

This online Zoom talk by Dr Lawrence Shaw, Lead Historic Environment Advisor, Forestry England will take place on **Thursday 9 October** (19:00). The nation's forests are home to some of the best archaeological sites, historic buildings and designed landscapes found in England. The very nature of how the Forestry Commission developed and how they have managed

land over the last one hundred years means they now oversee a palimpsest of landscape histories, ranging from the Palaeolithic through to the Second World War. This lecture will touch on just some of the incredible archaeological and historical narratives that can be found within the nation's forests. To express an interest and receive the Zoom link please contact info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



SyAS AGM and Annual Symposium

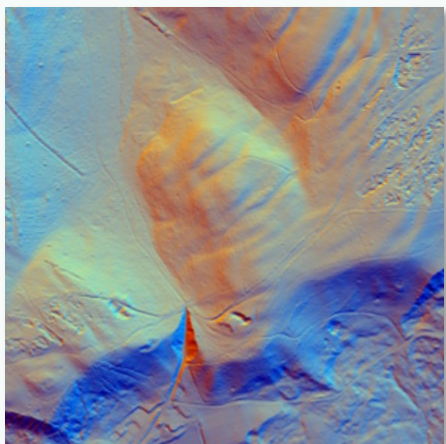
This year's Society Annual General Meeting will take place on Zoom on **Saturday 15 November** (14:00-16:00). We are delighted that the meeting will be followed by a talk by Matt Pope, Associate Professor at University College London, about Ice Age Greater London. This will include areas of Surrey and should of wide interest to members.

The 2026 Annual Symposium will be held on **Saturday 14 March** at East Horsley Village Hall. More details on both of these events will be available soon, but please save the date in the meantime.



LiDAR Portal

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



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

Medieval pottery group



The Medieval pottery group meets on alternate Sundays at Abinger Research Centre. We would love more people to join our friendly group. Why not come for a taster session? We start at 9:30 and finish by 15:00. Currently, we are examining pottery found on antiquarian excavations, which is briefly mentioned in the short reports that were produced, but with no full assessment of the finds. No experience is necessary, only a fascination with the past. Please contact Emma via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if interested.

Collections Review Group

The aim of the group is to reassess all the collections held by the Society, using up-to-date methods and codes, to produce a digital record that will ultimately be placed on the website. The group is co-operating with the Medieval and Roman Pottery groups to achieve this end.

They meets on **Thursdays** at Abinger (**10:00-15:00**) (sometimes at other times or places by arrangement) and looks at every kind of find: some people will be identifying building material, others pottery, bone, glass, metal – some days it is tiny sherds, others complete vessels! The Group welcomes new members and students on work experience. Previous experience is an advantage but training is given, so do give it a try. Contact info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk with any queries and to get involved.



SyAS hard copy publications for collection at Abinger

If there are any members who still receive a paper copy of *Surrey's Past* and who would like to pick them up at our Abinger Research Centre, rather than waiting for them to be delivered in the post, please email info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk and request that your copy is set aside for you (deadline for the October issue is **1 October**). The same offer applies to all our members who automatically receive a printed copy of the *Collections*. Members who regularly attend meetings or groups at Abinger can take advantage of this offer too, even taking copies on behalf of other members, as long as their details are included in the email.

In this way, we are hoping to speed up the delivery of hard copies and save money on postage. The library is open on Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:00-16:00, phone 01306 731275.

Margary Award

The Research Committee initiated a new approach to the Margary Award in 2024 with the following guidelines, and now invite submissions for 2026.

- i) The award is a recognition of a new contribution to the knowledge of the past of the historic county of Surrey.
- ii) The research or its demonstration should have taken place within the previous year, and not previously made public.
- iii) Any individual or group may enter provided there is no professional input.
- iv) Submissions for the award could take a variety of forms such as illustrations, Power-point displays, videos, short reports and traditional displays.
- v) Nominations should be received by the committee by **7 January 2026**, with completed entries submitted at least one month before the date of the Symposium.
- vi) The judging panel will be the choice of the Research Committee, and may still be formed by the Chair of the Research Committee, the President of the Society and an invited third party.
- vii) There will be one award of £300. There will be a runner-up if the number of entries justifies it.



2025 Margary Award recipients

The committee would like to invite all members to consider nominations and submissions by **7 January 2026**. This is an opportunity for community activities, youth groups and individuals to be creative in how they approach publicising their work. Nominations can be made at any time by contacting the Secretary of the Research Committee via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



CBA South East grants



The CBA-SE distribute a limited number of small grants to go towards research, outreach or publication, as well as a Young Archaeologists Grant which allows YAC groups, museum clubs and other youth organisations to apply for funding towards sessions, materials or other costs. For more on this scheme, visit the [CBA SE grants page](#).

SyAS Research Committee Grants

The Research Committee would like to remind all members that grants are available for Surrey projects and are available to Society groups with no budget and to external groups with limited resources. Society excavations such as Abinger and post-excavation for Ashted, Abinger and Flexford have been funded. Surveys, documentary research, training and scientific analyses are all suitable for consideration and have been supported by Society grants in recent years, such as work on the historic excavation at Lightwater and to enable a report on the more recent Hatch Furlong dig to commence. Scientific analyses are also specifically covered by funds from the Bierton and Slade bequests which have recently funded C14 dating for the Abinger excavation. Applications are considered throughout the year and the Committee's decision is final. Details and an application form are available on the [website](#) or from the office.



Change in Victorian and Edwardian Sussex 1840-1914 Study Day

On **Saturday 11 October** (10:00-17:00), this Sussex Archaeology and History hybrid study day exploring how much Sussex changed between 1840 and 1914 will take place in-person at Kings Church, Lewes and online. Aided by the railway, Sussex was transformed from a rural county into an urbanised one, dominated by the development of the seaside resorts to which many rural workers moved. The Weald of Sussex became an important centre for small leisure estates, some famous for their plants. The resorts undermined the role of the county towns, which grew very slowly.

Speakers include John Minnis, Geoffrey Mead, Kathryn Ferry, Chris Hare, Alan H J Green, Brian Short and Sue Berry. Early Bird offer (ends 7 September): £24 full price, £20 concessions (subscribers and students), £14 online; £28 full price, £25 concessions, £18 online. Book via [Eventbrite](#).

Fetcham Spring Heritage Fund project

‘Communities at the River: Fetcham Springs Archaeology Project’ has been awarded a £250,000 grant by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to explore, preserve and share the rich archaeological heritage of Fetcham Springs. Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) will be running this five-year initiative at one of Surrey’s most important archaeological sites through hands-on community participation.

In 2009, excavations at Fetcham Springs revealed tantalising glimpses of a prehistoric hunting camp from the end of the last Ice Age and a high-status Roman building, offering an exceptional opportunity to understand human activity at the site across thousands of years. The new project, made possible by National Lottery players, will build on this work with a programme of fieldwork, training and events led by professional archaeologists from SCAU and supported by volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

Volunteers will participate in archaeological excavations each summer, starting in 2025, alongside geophysical and metal-detecting surveys. These hands-on opportunities will be open to local residents, schools and community groups, offering training in archaeological techniques, finds processing and site interpretation. A dynamic programme of family-friendly activities (including flintknapping workshops, Roman and Stone Age reenactors, gladiator training sessions and open days) will bring the past to life for all generations. Schools will also benefit from free visits and themed loan boxes.

For further information please contact Hannah Potter, Community Archaeologist at SCAU (education.scau@surreycc.gov.uk).

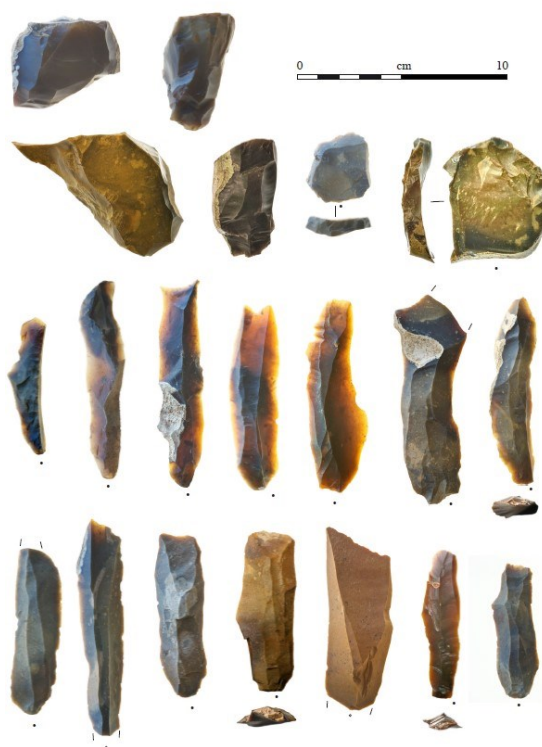


Archaeologists cleaning the walls of a Roman structure at Fetcham Springs during 2009



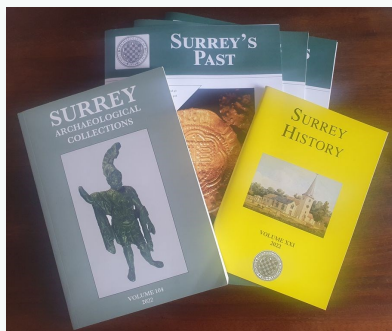
A previous community excavation by SCAU

Flint tools from around 15,000 years ago, uncovered during the 2009 excavations at Fetcham





Thinking about joining and getting involved?



If you aren't yet a member of SyAS, now is the perfect time to join! In addition to three issues of *Surrey's Past* a year, the annual journal(s) *Surrey Archaeological Collections* and *Surrey History*, members have access to a wide range of fieldwork opportunities, research projects and special interest groups, many with their own programmes. To join (and see the full range of what is offered), please visit our [website](#). Some of the groups you might wish to join include:

Artefacts and Archives Research Group (AARG) – On-site processing of artefacts, with further work carried out at weekly meetings, including lithics and pottery; for more details on sessions and work available, visit the [AARG webpages](#).

Medieval Studies Forum – In-person and online talks with workshops and visits focused on the period from c.400-1600; for more details, visit the [MSF](#) webpage.

Prehistoric Group – In-person meetings, regular newsletter and study of collections in museums; for more details, visit the [PG](#) webpage.

Roman Studies Group – A varied programme which includes fieldwork, monthly lecture meetings, full-day seminars and day trips; for more details, visit the [RSG](#) webpage.

Surrey Industrial History Group – In-person visits, regular meeting programme, bi-monthly newsletter and annual journal; for more details, visit the [SIHG webpage](#).



Surrey Industrial History Group lecture series

SIHG hold regular short talks at Leatherhead and via Zoom throughout the year which are free to SIHG members (annual membership is currently free until the end of 2026; contact membership@sihg.org.uk).

Talks can be found [online](#), including the first of the new season on 'Thomas Sopwith – Aviation Pioneer' in Leatherhead on **Thursday 11 September**. See the website for the full programme.

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