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SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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Bulletin 488

October 2021



Excavations at the site of the enclosed Roman farmstead at Old Park, Farnham 2020

Anne Sassin

Following two short notes on the geophysical survey and trial trenching in 2018 at the site (see SyAS Bulletins 482 and 483 and Sassin 2020), this note serves as a brief summary of the excavation results from the 2020 fieldwork season. Please refer to the previous pieces for a more comprehensive overview of the site and preliminary results.

In August-September 2020, a small team of SyAS volunteers undertook further excavation at the site of an enclosed early Roman farmstead at Old Park Farnham (NGR SU 8147), which was identified through aerial photographs and later geophysical survey. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, fieldwork was carried out on a reduced scale, with no more than six people on site and social distancing at all times.

A large 20m by 28m trench (Trench 3) was placed to investigate the relationship of the outer N-S enclosure ditch and inner E-W cross-ditch, along with other potential anomalies which appeared on the electrical resistance survey. This area of the site also had a suspected concentration of slag, as uncovered in Trench 2, a trial trench across the enclosure ditch which was excavated in 2018. As indicated from the geophysics, the N-S ditch over which Trenches 2 and 3 were positioned was a later extension to the main circular enclosure (evaluated via Trench 1), and one of the primary objectives of the 2020 season was to obtain more secure dating evidence and possible phasing for the site.

The number of confirmed archaeological features exposed within the area of the trench was relatively small, including two oblong pits (possible tree-throws), the two ditches and a handful of potential post-holes. All excavated finds came from the features, with no evidence remaining of the Roman-period subsoil, indicating later truncation and hillside erosion, as well as the likely periphery of settlement at the site.

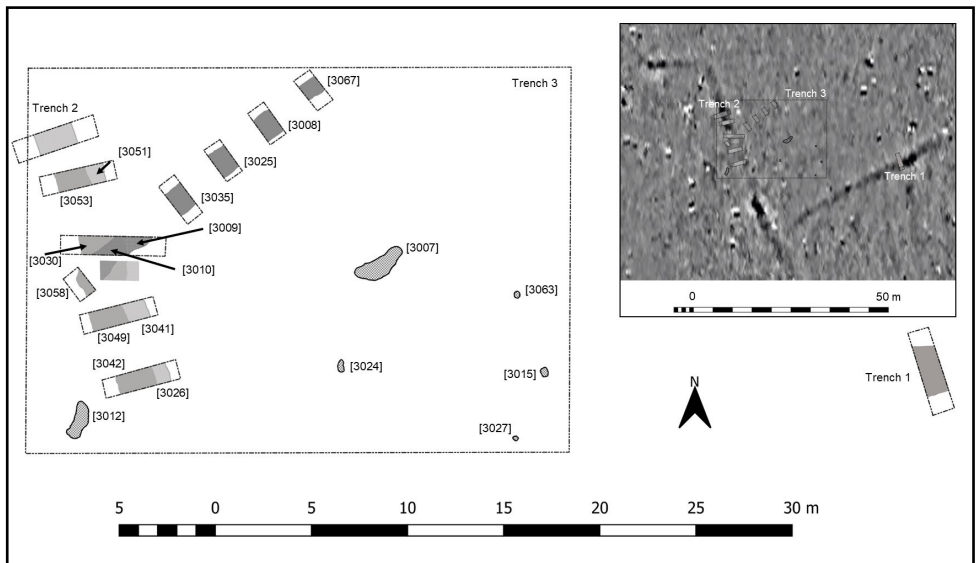


Figure 1: Plan of features excavated at Old Park in 2020, including Trench 3's location in relation to the magnetometry survey

Three 1m wide slots were placed across the outer N-S ditch, as well as one over the junction with the cross-ditch, from which it was evident that the cross-ditch was the latest in the sequence. A prominent re-cut of the N-S ditch was also apparent on its western edge (c.1.8-2m wide and 0.5m deep), with no sign of an inner slump from a bank, as in the main cut (at its largest 3m wide and 1.1m deep).

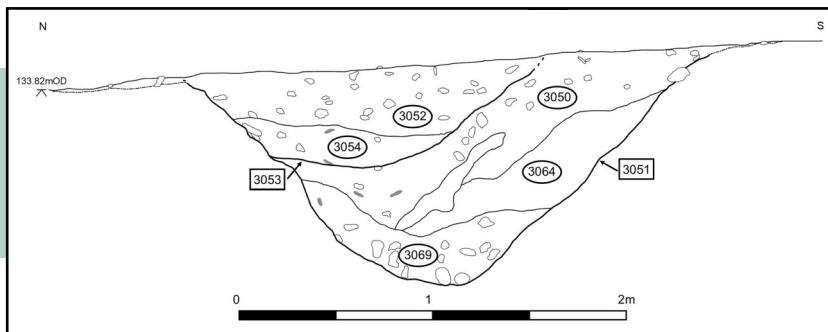
A total of 1419 sherds (15,023g) of pottery was recovered from the fills of the 2020 features, and in particular the N-S ditch, with other finds including CBM, slag, worked stone and a fragment of blue vessel glass. Although over half of the pottery had a broad date range, both the re-cut and cross-ditch were able to be dated to AD 250-400. Finds recovered via metal detecting, though minimal, included a military-style enamelled equestrian stud of late 2nd- or early 3rd-century date and three 4th-century minims, confirming that activity at the site extended into the Late Roman period.

While full analysis of the material from environmental samples is still on-going, the concentration of both hammerscale and slag from the ditch fill of [3051], the slot across the main ditch which is adjacent to Trench 2 and north of the junction with the cross-ditch (see Figure 1), suggests at least small-scale metal-working and industrial activity in this area of the farmstead. It is hoped that the fieldwork results from 2021 will be able to further characterise the site, including establishing the presence of specialized activity zoning.

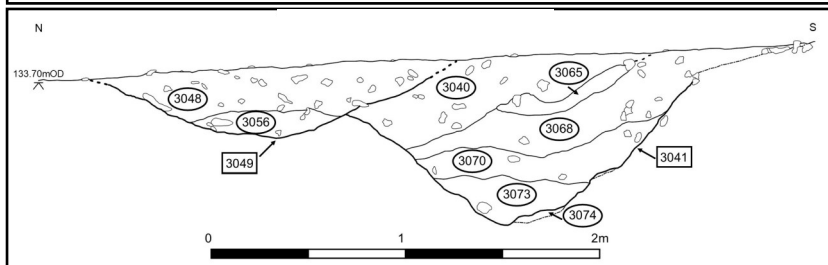
Many thanks must be given to the team who helped in the fieldwork, in particular Martin O'Connell, Amanda Morwood, Lyn Spencer, Mairi Sargent, John Peters, David Brown, Tim Clay, John Felton, Dave Williams, Tim Wilcock and David and Audrey Graham. Thanks are also made to Lyn Spencer, Isabel Ellis, Angela Mason, Sylvia Solarski, Kathy French, Ann Morrison, Andy Jones and Janet Wilson for assessment of the pottery and other finds (made all the more challenging during lockdown restrictions), and Timothy Murray and Mr and Mrs Lane for access to the site. A final note is to give thanks to Farnham & District Museum Society for their generous funding of the excavation costs.

Sassin 2020, Archaeological Evaluation and Geophysical Survey Report of Old Park, Farnham 2018-19, Unpublished Report

Figure 2:
S-facing sections of
N-S enclosure
ditch [3051]
(top) and
[3041]
(bottom)



(Cover
image):
Trench 3
looking W



On Brixton Hill: searching for the site of ‘Beorhtsiges Stone’

Rob Briggs

Dr Mateusz Fafinski’s new book *Roman Infrastructure in Early Medieval Britain* has much to say that is of relevance, both directly and indirectly, to Surrey in terms what went on in the period between the 3rd and 8th centuries CE, that frequent topic of *Bulletin* contributions. It eschews the usual concepts of continuity and discontinuity to view the historical and archaeological evidence in terms of strategies of adaptation and distinction. What caught my eye in particular was its citation of two possible instances of Roman milestones surviving within the historic county area in the Early Middle Ages. This note delves a bit deeper into the evidence for one example and advances a possible location for where it stood; I hope to do the same for the other (the boundary feature *mil gemete* ‘mile measure’ in the description of the boundary of Pyrford in charter S 621 of the year 956) at greater length in a future publication.

Greater prominence is given in Fafinski’s book to ‘Beorhtsiges Stone’, the stone that lent its name to Brixton and at which the eponymous hundred met (Fafinski 2021, 45, 53; *PNS*, 11, 23). Arguably its earliest documentation (and certainly the first direct reference to it) is in the charter purportedly of 1062 by which King Edward the Confessor granted privileges to and confirmed the lands of Waltham Abbey; the latter included an estate at Lambeth, considered to be coterminous with either the later manor of Stockwell (Gower 2010, 6) or Stockwell and South Lambeth (Bailey 2009, 1). In the received charter text, this landholding is delimited by an Old English (OE) boundary clause in which the stone acts as the start and end point of the perambulation:

ærest æt brixges stane [...] and swa andlang strete est to brixes stan

‘First at Beorhtsiges stone [...] and so along the street back to Beorhtsiges stone’ (S 1036; *PNS*, 22).

In these name spellings, *brixges/brixes* is understood as the genitive singular inflection of *Brixi*, a Latin rendering of a short-form of the OE dithematic personal name Beorhtsiges. This name does not appear in any textual source earlier than the 9th century – in fact, one of the earliest attestations is in the will of Ealdorman Ælfred of Surrey, of whom the named Beorhtsiges was a kinsman and consequently the intended recipient of a hide of land at Linkfield near Reigate (S 1508; *PASE*, Beorhtsiges 3) – so it is unlikely that its use in the place-name Brixton denotes an especially early post-Roman association between man and (mile)stone.

It is highly noteworthy that a man styled *Brixinus princeps* crops up as a witness of the charter in which the Lambeth boundary description occurs. He has been linked to the thegn usually referred to in recent scholarship as Beorhtsiges Cild, who appears as *Bricsi cild* in the Domesday Book entry for Stoke D’Abernon and has been identified as someone who acted as a charter witness across an extraordinarily, perhaps improbably, long period from 1024 to 1068 (*PASE*, Beorhtsiges 23 Beorhtsiges Cild, fl. 1066; Morris and Wood 1975, 19,32). The name Beorhtsiges is considered to have declined in popularity in the 11th century, meaning many Domesday instances of Brixi as the holder of a property are linked to the same man, including in Surrey the estate at Hatcham not so very far from Brixton (Morris and Wood 1975, 5,10). Beorhtsiges Cild was a noble-born man of considerable importance, but had no documented connection with Lambeth (the estate delineated in S 1036 must be the one held by the Canons of Waltham from Harold Godwinson prior to the Conquest; Morris and Wood 17,1) and his status cannot serve to overcome this fact. The coincidence of *brixges stane*, *brixes stan* and *Brixinus princeps* in the same charter

text may be just that, a coincidence, and as such it is not possible to identify which – if any – of the two dozen or more men of the name Beorhtsige noted in PASE was the one associated with the stone.

Turning from its name to its origins, Graham Gower and Keith Bailey have both posited 'Beorhtsige's Stone' may have begun life as a Roman milestone, among other possibilities (Gower 2010, 8; Bailey 2009, 5–6). The use of OE *stræt* in the S 1036 boundary description is redolent of a Roman road, and there is no complication in identifying it as the London—Hassocks/Portslade road, that only a little further south passes through Streatham, surely OE *Stræthām* "homestead by/on a Roman road" (cf. *CDEPN*, 585; nb. Briggs 2019, 6 cites the wrong charter and misidentify the street as a 'branch road' linking to the Thames at Lambeth). Thus, the relationship between "the street" and the stone attested in the penultimate two points of the bounds would make a lot of sense if the latter was a Roman milestone, though the identification cannot be considered proven.



Figure 1: Excerpt from Ordnance Survey First Edition 25 Inch map surveyed in 1870, showing Lambeth—Streatham parish boundary running along Mill Lane (now Morrish Road) and across Brixton Hill before deflecting north-northeastwards, possibly emulating the former line of the Roman road.

Gower uses later medieval documentary evidence to locate the stone around the top of Brixton Hill (Gower 2010, 6). Is it possible to narrow down its former location even further? One thing that catches the eye is how the parish boundary between Lambeth and Streatham marked on 19th-century maps tapers to a noticeable point in the vicinity of the junction of Brixton Hill and Morrish Road (earlier Mill Lane). Close examination of the 1841 parochial assessment of Lambeth and 1852 survey of the parish of Streatham, both made available via the Layers of London website, throws up some complications. The 1841 map shows the Lambeth—Streatham parish boundary extending across to the east side of Brixton Hill to form a very acute angle, whereas the 1852 map has the same boundary deflecting from a south-easterly to northward direction at a boundary post standing at (possibly even in the middle of) Mill Lane/Morrish Road on the west side of Brixton Hill.

The Ordnance Survey (OS) First Edition 25 Inch survey of 1870 (London sheet LXXXV, published 1874; Figure 1) provides some clarity, showing a situation closer to the one depicted in 1841, with the parish boundary making a sharp turn at a post on the east side of Brixton Hill; it also shows two boundary stones flanking the entrance to Mill Lane/Morrish Road on the opposite side of the road. Save for the loss of one of the aforementioned boundary stones, this situation still prevailed at the time of the OS Second Edition revised survey of 1893–94 (London sheet CXXVI, published 1897). None of these boundary markers were in evidence during a visit to the area in mid-August 2021. The site of the 1870 boundary post nowadays coincides with a stout pillar marking one corner of the Brixton Hill United Reformed Church site (Figure 2; to judge from the earliest map, the boundary reached to a point a little further south in 1841).



Figure 2: Photograph of the east side of Brixton Hill opposite Morrish Road, August 2021. Brixton Hill United Reformed Church (left) stands on the site of the Union Chapel shown on the OS First Edition map. The low stone pillar in the corner of the present carpark (close to the Brixton Hill street sign) stands on the site of the late 19th-century boundary post marking the change in course of the parish boundary. The 1841 parochial assessment map indicates the boundary previously ran a little further to the south nearer to the former tram shed, now a bus garage (right).

By 1913, the time of the OS Third Edition re-survey, the parish boundary had been altered to run down the centre of Brixton Hill from the Mill Lane/Morrish Road junction (London sheet IX.14, published 1916). The cartographic evidence is clear; this section of the Lambeth—Streatham parish boundary was subject to intermittent revision (or dispute?) in the 19th century and this may stand for a much longer lineage of alterations. It should be added that the ‘street’ in the 11th century may very well not have followed the same line as it did in the 19th, so the fact the mapped parish boundary did pass not ‘along the street’ need not discredit this location from once being the site of a Roman milestone (Bailey 2009, 6 states the estate boundary followed the Roman road for some two miles southwards from Kennington Park up to Brixton Hill). Consequently, we can go no further than localise ‘Beorhtsige’s Stone’, and hence the meeting place of Brixton Hundred, in the vicinity of the junction between Brixton Hill and Morrish Road. From here it is approximately 6.5 statute miles by road to the centre of the City of London (figure calculated using Google Maps), a distance which is very close to being equivalent to 7 Roman miles. Was ‘Beorhtsige’s Stone’ the erstwhile Roman marker for this distance to/from Londinium?

‘Beorhtsige’s Stone’ is one of several stones that occur in early charter boundary clauses delimiting Surrey estates, but to see all of them as “standing stones” – and some perhaps as former Roman milestones – may well be too simplistic. Rumble took “Eadric’s stone” referred to in the Merstham charter boundary description of 947 as potentially denoting a quarry, not a stone (S 528; Rumble 1970–71, 13). No such uncertainties attend the ‘Cricklestone’ recorded in 1767 as a marker of the Peper Harow manorial boundary (one

with probable early medieval roots), which has been shown to be a natural sandstone outcrop on the edge of Thursley Common (Graham 2001). It is to be hoped that future research into historic Surrey's other early medieval boundary stones nevertheless may identify further examples of repurposed Roman roadside infrastructure.

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An Iron Age Anthropomorphic Mount from Surrey

Simon Maslin

This little object ([SUR-D01AF2](#)), with its evocative human face with staring eyes and slicked-back hair, is a copper alloy handle attachment mount, probably from a stave-built bucket. It dates to the later Iron Age (1st century BC to the 1st century AD) and is one of a relatively small number of representations of the human form from the period – and one of only a handful of anthropomorphic examples of this particular type of object that are known. Found by a metal detectorist near the present day course of the river Wey in Wisley, Surrey, and recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, it is a rare and important discovery.

The mount is hollow and cast in the form of a male head, 17.2mm in width, with a triangular nose, simple slash-line mouth and large teardrop shaped eyes delineated with deeply incised lines which taper towards the back of the head. The pupils are two holes which probably originally held inlays of coral or other material. The top of the head has a hairdo indicated by swept-back lines and a moulded line around the brow. The rear of the head is pierced to take the axis lug from a handle, with the lower edge at the neck ending in a curved edge to fit over the rim of a vessel. The chest comprises an oval plate, with a rivet at the centre of a slightly raised circular decoration and indications of a neck decoration of some kind. This rivet likely fixed a now lost decorative element to the front of the mount.



SUR-D01AF2: An Iron Age bucket mount from Surrey

The majority of Late Iron Age figurative bucket mounts depict bovines, and where they do appear in human form, they depict the figure wearing a horned helmet or with horns protruding from the head. This example from Surrey differs markedly as there are no bovine features present. It is however, very similar in form to another example from north east Hampshire ([BERK-1CEE21](#)) as well as being comparable to a few other finds recorded by the PAS such as [ESS-BD8454](#) from Essex, [PUBLIC-72DACF](#) from Cambridgeshire and [BERK-783763](#) from Oxfordshire. Other published parallels are known from Welwyn in Hertfordshire, Aylesford and Alkham in Kent, Thealby in Lincolnshire and Ribchester in Lancashire (Powell 1966, 225; James & Rigby 1997, fig.19; Jope 2000, pl. 182i; MacGregor 1976, ref. 316).

The proximity of the find to a watercourse raises the possibility of it representing some sort of “votive” waterside deposition, perhaps being deposited inside a paleochannel which was a free-flowing watercourse in the Iron Age. This type of watery deposition is a well attested social phenomenon of the period in the wider Thames Valley area, which has led to weapons, shields and a range of other high status objects being consigned to watercourses in the Iron Age, only to be recovered by activities such as dredging in modern times. As no comparable finds were reported from the vicinity in this case, it is possible that the original bucket has become broken up with its components dispersed by fluvial action along the watercourse. It is also possible that the mount was intentionally detached and deposited in isolation, perhaps with the intense face being intended as a depiction of a deity. Whatever the reason, its recovery is a glimpse into a vibrant and astonishing culture which had a very different world view to our own.

James, S. & Rigby, V. 1997. *Britain and the Celtic Iron Age*, London: British Museum Press

Jope, E. M. 2000. *Early Celtic Art in the British Isles*, Oxford University Press

MacGregor, M. 1976. *Early Celtic Art in North Britain*, Leicester University Press

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Romano-British pottery from Whirl Hill, Shackleford (SU 926 457) collected by the late George Inwood

Judie English

Whirl Hill lies on greensand of the Folkestone Formation near Shackleford and close to a stream afferent to the Wey. The area was informally field walked by George Inwood, who found worked flint (English 2018) and post-Deverel Rimbury tradition pottery together with a large assemblage of medieval pottery (English 2021). The exact location was described as 'Field at Whirl Hill next to and west of a plantation which separates it from the field in which a mass of RB pottery note 327 found. North east corner of field close to west side of plantation. Northern edge of field' but at the time of writing up the medieval finds, this 'mass' of Romano-British pottery could not be located. A single bag has now come to light and its contents are listed below.

Fabric code	Fabric	No sherds	Weight (g)	Date range
SAND	Sand-tempered	80	774	50-400
PORD	Porchester D	10	112	350-400
OXID	Oxidized	1	20	50-400
AHFA	Alice Holt Farnham	4	52	250-400
SAM	Samian	1	20	50-400
Wiggonholt?		4	20	
Mort	Mortarium	1	13	140-200
NWWW	Nene Valley whiteware	1	19	150-400
Colour-coated		2	18	50-400

The 'mass' of pottery recorded in George Inwood's note is probably that mentioned in the Historic Environment Record (SHHER 2649) as located in 1985 at SU 9265 4559 as 2nd to 4th century greyware, and although the present analysis does not necessarily alter this date range, it does expand the types of pottery represented. The assigning of white ware to the Wiggonholt kiln in West Sussex must be treated with caution in view of the recent excavation by the Horsham and District Archaeology Group of a pottery kiln at Alfoldean producing similar wares.

There is no reason to doubt the earlier assumption that this site represents one of the growing number of small, but often long-lived, farmsteads on the greensand north of Godalming (Clark 1960; English 2021). Here aspiration to the finer things of life is evidenced by the presence of two bases for pedestal bowls and two sherds of colour-coated ware whose fabric could not be identified.

Thanks are due to Sue, and the late John Janaway who curated George Inwood's archive and to Lyn Spencer of the Roman Studies Group for identifying the pottery.

Clark, A J, & Nichols, J F, 1960 Romano-British farms south of the Hog's Back, *SyAC* 57, 42-71

English, J, 2018 Lithic finds by the late George Inwood, *SyAS Bull* 471, 5-10

English, J 2021 Sites in the Godalming area investigated by the late George Inwood, *SyAC* 103, 323-329

New members

Hannah Jeffery

I would like to welcome the following new members who have joined the Society. I have included principal interests, where they have been given on the membership application form.

If you have any questions, queries or comments, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me on 01306 731275 or info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.

Name	Town	Principal Archaeological and Local History Interests
Vivienne Blandford	Uckfield	Landscape Archaeology, especially woodland; Lidar transcription and ground truthing; Community Archaeology; Local History
Ben Byfield	Guildford	Local History, Roman Numismatics, Victorian Architecture
Tracy Clarke	Oxshott	Archaeology
Christina Crouch	Banstead	Archaeology and History of the Banstead area
Chris Dallison	New Malden	General Archaeology
David Dearlove	Isleworth	Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval and Industrial Archaeology. Pottery and Metalworking
Logan Hawley	Guildford	Bronze Age
Alexander O'Hara	Reigate	Archaeological excavations and artefacts
Alan Pemberton	Surbiton	Archaeology; Pre-History and History of Surbiton
Andy Woodward	Bagshot	Pre-History, Saxon era, Industrial Archaeology and Experimental Archaeology
Pamela Woolford	Farnham	Archaeology and History, particularly Roman

Revised Library Hours

The Library is now open for research on Tuesdays and Wednesday each week, from 10:00 until 16:00. Please check in advance of arrival as groups may be meeting at the same time.

The answering of enquiries by email and phone will continue, if you are not able to come to Abinger. For more information, please contact librarian@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.

Digital mailings

From 2022, the *Bulletin* newsletter will be offered as electronic copy, in keeping with the Society's initiative to reduce its carbon footprint and make a positive impact on the environment. If you would like to register for this option, rather than continue to receive a hard copy, please contact Hannah (info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk). More details will be available in December of the changing format and schedule.

AGM and SHERF 2021

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held by Zoom video conference at 10:30 on **Saturday 20 November**. Members will be emailed with a reminder of the joining info closer to the time. Please also see <https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/events/all/list> for more details.

This year's annual Surrey Historic Environment Research Framework (SHERF) will be held a week later on **Saturday 27 November**. The conference will be run jointly with the Council for British Archaeology South-East as a virtual one-day event, also via Zoom, and themed around church archaeology: '**Archaeology of the Church – perspectives from recent work in the South-East**'.

Conference Programme

9:30 Meeting link will open

10:00 Chair: Anne Sassin

10:05 Gabor Thomas (University of Reading): In the Shadow of Saints: a reconsideration of the church archaeology of Lyminge as a formative centre of English Christianity

10:40 Alistair Douglas (Pre-Construct Archaeology): The Story of Bermondsey Abbey from Saxon Minster to the Dissolution

11:15 Coffee/Tea

11:30 Natalie Cohen (National Trust): Archaeology at Canterbury Cathedral

12:05 Michael Shapland (Archaeology South-East): Chichester Cathedral: a deep-time perspective

12:40 Lunch

13:40 Chair: Natalie Cohen

13:40 Andrew Richardson (Isle Heritage CIC), Ellie Williams and Lesley Hardy (Canterbury Christ Church University): Eanswythe Found

14:20 Jo Seaman (Heritage Eastbourne): Carved Revelations: how a graffiti survey changed the story at Eastbourne

14:55 Coffee/Tea

15:10 Rob Briggs (Surrey County Council): The tomb monument of Sir Thomas Cawarden in St Mary the Virgin's church, Bletchingley

15:45 Closing comments and Q&A

16:00 Close

Tickets are priced at £5 each household for CBA-SE and SyAS members (£7 others) and are bookable online via the SyAS website with card payment using PayPal. Please note only online bookings are possible for this event.

Once paid, attendees will receive an email containing a link to the Zoom registration page. Any queries, please contact info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



Ann Watson (1927-2021)*Gillian Lachelin*

Ann had a long standing interest in history and archaeology. She moved to Ockham with her family in the 1960s and lived there until 2018. She was very involved in Ockham life and was a Parish Councillor and Sacristan at All Saints' Church Ockham for many years. She was very knowledgeable about the history of All Saints and she was always keen to help with anything that was going on.

Ann obtained a diploma in Archaeology and was Honorary Local Secretary for the Surrey Archaeological Society for Ockham, Ripley and Wisley for many years. She worked closely with Joan Harding recording local timber framed buildings as part of the work of the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey). She was active in local field walking and excavations and kept watch on the construction of the M25. She found, among other things, two Iron Age metal working furnaces and, from a waterlogged deposit, late Saxon worked timbers at Wisley. She also unearthed 30 substantial sherds of a wheel-thrown shell-tempered S2 ware storage jar from the late 12th or 13th centuries at Ockham Court.

As the Society's Tools Officer, she helped with the well-known Wanborough temple excavations (1985-86), as well as arranging much needed baths for the excavation team, generously provided by local people. She was greatly involved in catering at many events and excavations, particularly at Guildford Castle where she organised the end of dig barbecue. She was also closely involved in the distribution of the Society's publications for many years. In 1997 Ann was elected as an Honorary Vice President in recognition of her services to and support for the Society's activities.

Her husband John died in 2005 and her son James died in 2010. She is survived by her daughter Sally and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

DATES FOR *BULLETIN* CONTRIBUTIONS

There will be one further issue of the *Bulletin* in 2021:

	Copy date:	Approx. delivery:
489	8th November	12th December

Articles and notes on all aspects of fieldwork and research on the history and archaeology of Surrey are very welcome. Contributors are encouraged to discuss their ideas with the editor beforehand, including on the proper format of submitted material (please do supply digital copy when possible) and possible deadline extensions.

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The Trustees of Surrey Archaeological Society desire it to be known that they are not responsible for the statements or opinions expressed in the *Bulletin*.

Next issue: Copy required by 8th November for the December issue

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