



# SURREY'S PAST



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# Note from the Editor

By Anne Sassin

Welcome to the Winter 2024 edition of *Surrey's Past*, which as usual features several excellent research and fieldwork pieces which we hope will be of interest to our members. Contributions for the Summer edition are as always welcome; members who have registered an email with the Society will receive their June issue digitally, unless they have expressed a wish to continue with paper copy. For more on other updates, events and opportunities, do subscribe to our monthly e-newsletters, emailing [info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

# Welcome to new members

By Marie Hounsome

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 form. If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me on 01306 731275 or [info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

Name	Town	Principal Archaeological and Local History Interests
Tim Beckett	Oxted	Local History of Oxted and surrounding area; particularly the mound at Oxted Place
Georgina Durant	Guildford	Classical Studies and Excavations
Sally Gardiner	Woking	Palaeography and Family History
David Hatcher	Epsom	
Alex Lloyd	Guildford	Roman Britain; Iron Age to Bronze Age transitions; Burial and trade within Bronze Age Britain; Medieval England
Peter McKee	Wimbledon	Greek and Roman History
Nicole Rockliff	Guildford	General European (including British) Archaeology, but more specifically Roman and Medieval
Florence Seebold	Wonersh	Archaeology
Andrew Wells	Dorking	Local History
Bob Hughes	Guildford	Roman and Military
Lucy Willis	Farnham	Prehistoric Britain, and Anglo-Saxon
Jane Armitage	Woking	Family History; Archaeological landscape around Pyrford
Tristan Aspray	Godalming	Stone Age, Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon History; UK Industrial and Wartime History; Geology, the interaction of local rocks, soils and topography with human development and civilization
El Tarling	Guildford	Late Roman/Early Medieval Archaeology; Archaeology; Micro Histories
William Angus Tait	Guildford	Classical Archaeology; Roman Britain; Norman and Medieval Periods; English Civil War; Surrey during Georgian period

There will be two further issues of *Surrey's Past* in 2024. Next issue: copy required by **13 May** for the June issue.

Issue no:	Copy date:	Approx. delivery:
<b>497 June</b>	<b>13 May</b>	<b>10 June</b>
<b>498 October</b>	<b>16 September</b>	<b>14 October</b>

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 possible deadline extensions and the proper format of submitted material (please supply digital copy when possible and images in JPEG or similar image file format).

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# Test pitting at Albury Park in 2023

By Anne Sassin

## Summary

*The original medieval settlement and manor of Albury, in Albury Park, is well-known for its displacement by the local lord of the manor in the later 18th and early 19th century and re-location a kilometre away, to the present-day village, formerly the manor of Weston. Little is known of its earlier history, including its precise extent and any evidence of medieval activity beyond its Domesday 'Old Saxon' church and mill along the banks of the Tillingbourne. Equally uncertain is the layout and extent of the former cottages and structures within the park of early modern date, which were almost entirely demolished by the early-mid 19th century.*

*A community archaeology project, run by Surrey Archaeological Society, began in 2023 which would assess historic documents for the area and conduct a geophysical survey of the site which, alongside assessment of features visible from LiDAR, would inform an updated mapped plan of the historic site. The project would also undertake a controlled test pitting project of the site in order to date and potentially characterise its settlement over time.*

*Although few features of note were identified from the magnetometry survey, traces of the cottages were revealed through electrical resistance which coincided with their apparent locations on historic maps. 18 test pits in total were excavated in the first season across the meadow area north of the modern drive. The results were variable, but included the foundations of one of the larger, probable 16th or 17th-century cottages in Brewhouse Meadow and in situ medieval levels at the manor's western end.*

*The full detailed report will shortly be available on the Society's website under 'Recent fieldwork'.*

## Background

Albury Park, situated both within the parishes of Albury and Shere, is approximately 7km east of the centre of Guildford, in between the modern village of Albury (1km to the west) and Shere (Fig 1). The site is a Grade I-registered park and garden of c130

hectares managed by the Albury Estate. The now redundant parish church of St Peter and St Paul (Grade I listed) lies to the north-west of Albury Park Mansion, the latter which has 16th-century origins but is thought to lie on older foundations.



Fig 1 Map of Albury Park, with the star on the location of the 'Old Saxon Church' (OS Open Data)

The east-west flowing Tillingbourne stream, which has an elevation of 63m (metres) above OD, runs through the centre of the park, with the land to both sides rising, including the slope of the North Downs scarp to the north. The geology across the park is variable, lying on Hythe Formation sandstone with superficial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel near to the stream.

Little is known of Albury's pre-Norman origins beyond its Domesday record of 1086, being held by Azor from Edward the Confessor and granted after the Conquest to Richard de Tonbridge, with the church and a mill amongst its values, along with eleven villagers (Morris 1975, 19,36). The site is designated as a former medieval settlement (Surrey HER Monument 380), whose manor house is assumed to have been sited near the current mansion. However, beyond the church's medieval fabric which cannot be assuredly dated before the 12th century, a handful of 13th-century pottery sherds recovered from fieldwalking at nearby Home Farm (HER 6947) are amongst the only medieval finds for the site to date.

Grange Cottage to the north of the Tillingbourne, dendro-dated to 1544 and at one time the Little George Inn (HER 5852), is the only extant standing cottage of the dozen or so which are known to have formed the settlement at the time of the 18th-century historic estate maps. The present house, Albury Park, also has 16th-century origins, but was rebuilt by John and George Evelyn in the 17th century. The wooded pleasure grounds and park are likely to have been planted in the 15th or 16th centuries, and the terraced gardens, designed by Evelyn in 1667, are still largely intact, including the crypta on the upper terrace, although the former canals have since been drained (HER 3700).

In 1784/5, Captain William Clement Finch obtained a magistrates' order to close the road that ran eastwards to Shere through the park and past the manor house, as well as divert the road that ran northwards past the Little George Inn to join the Dorking/Guildford road (now the A25). Captain Finch also enclosed the village green and annexed the corner of the churchyard to extend his grounds. Harassment of the villagers continued under the later owner Charles Wall (1811-19), who demolished the cottages and moved their occupants to new cottages at the hamlet of Weston Street, to the west. The present road from Albury Heath to the A25 was built by Henry Drummond c1842, replacing the original road from the heath, Dog Kennel Lane (Malden 1911).

Known archaeology within the immediate area is not extensive with very few previous interventions or findspots. Historic maps for the site extend back to the early 18th century, including the 1701 estate map of Albury by Abraham Walter and William Clement Finch's later estate map of c1782 (Fig 2). Some of the cottages can still be seen as late as the Tithe map of 1839 (Fig 3). The old road is very prominent in LiDAR (see Fig 6), as well as aerial photos, and foundations of former cottages were disturbed when main services were being laid through the parkland in 1970 (HER 380).

## Geophysical survey

Over the course of 10 days between March and July 2023, a small team of volunteers undertook a geophysical magnetometry and electrical resistance survey across an area which totals c24,689m<sup>2</sup> (2.46 hectares). The survey area was the area of parkland between the Tillingbourne and main drive through



Fig 2 Extract of a survey of Estates belonging to the Hon. William Clement Finch by Thomas Wedge, 1782 (courtesy of the Albury Estate)

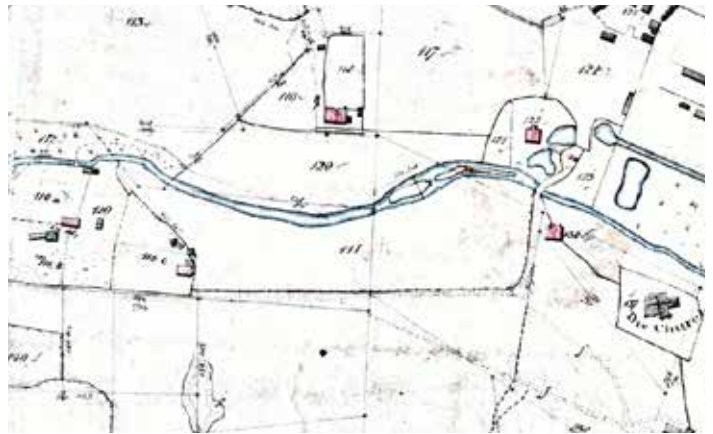


Fig 3 Albury Tithe map of 1839 (courtesy of Surrey History Centre)

the park, largely consisting of open meadow and lawn, though with several veteran trees which limited access in places. The electrical resistance survey took place across select smaller areas, covering c10,917m<sup>2</sup> in total (1.09 ha).

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 expected for the site, there was a large amount of magnetic disturbance and strong bipolar readings which affected the data, in particular the service pipes which frequent the park and run through the meadow. Only a small number of features of potential archaeological interest were apparent in the magnetometry (Fig 4), with the majority either natural in origin or the result of modern disturbance. This included a series of faint

sinuous linears running roughly N-S and downslope towards the river, presumable springs or palaeochannels, and a small number of negative linears which are likely to represent the banks of raised terraces and, in the case of one, a stretch of the former road as it crosses the Tillingbourne.

Areas with signs of magnetic debris, which might reflect spreads of material such as brick, were investigated further with electrical resistance, as likely locations for cottage foundations. Few features of interest were apparent in the resistance survey (Fig 5), some of which, e.g. the banked edges of terraces and line of the former road, are also obvious on the ground. However, rectilinear areas formed from linears of high resistance, which are depicted as white on the survey maps, are likely to indicate buried walls and building foundations, indicating the potential layout and plan of the demolished structures.

## Test pitting

Between June and September, a series of 1m<sup>2</sup> test pits were placed to target potential features and sample the stratigraphy from different areas of the park utilising the CORS (Current Occupied Rural Settlement) methodology. All test pits followed the same excavation and recording procedure of soil being removed in a series of 10cm spits and sieved, with finds from each spit recorded separately. Eighteen pits total (Fig 6) were dug over the course of three weeks which, though only a small number for the total area, have provided an indicative picture of the settlement in this area of the site.

Test pits (TPs) 1 and 2 were plotted near to the church, with TP 2 in particular comparatively barren and reaching natural sand after only two spits, implying little former occupation in this area of the site. TPs 7 and 14 were sited closer to the church

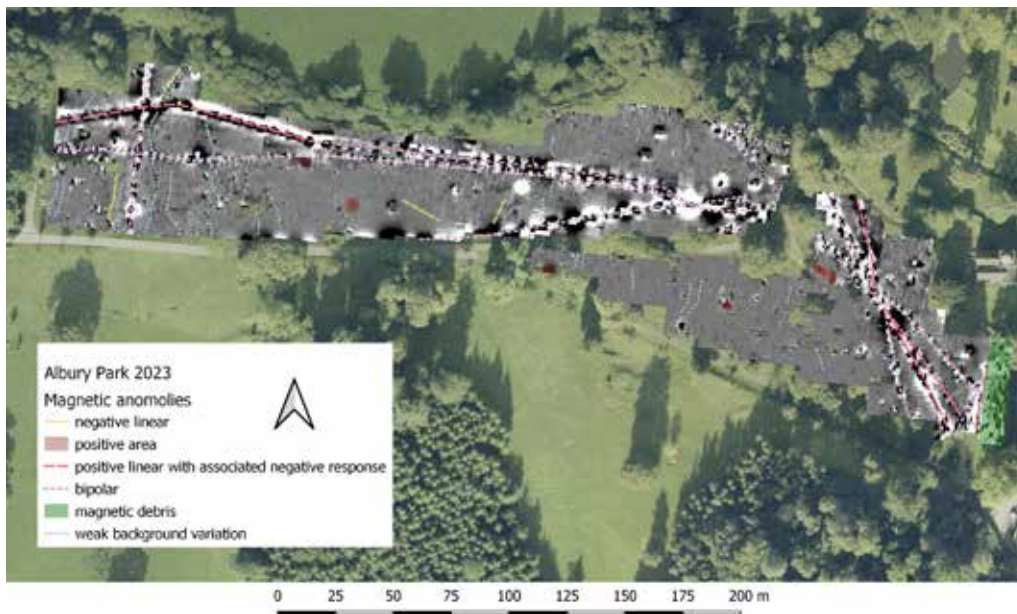


Fig 4 Map of the 2023 magnetometry survey of Albury Park and associated anomalies, including likely springs/palaeochannels (light blue dashed lines) and stretches of bank (yellow lines)

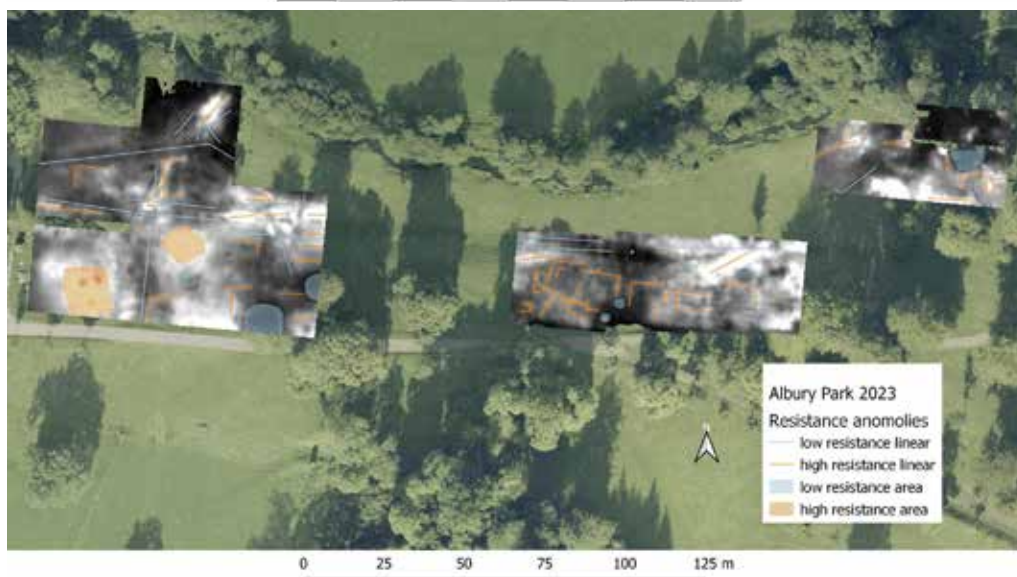


Fig 5 Map of the 2023 resistivity survey of Albury, with high resistance linears (shown in orange) likely to represent the outline of former structures

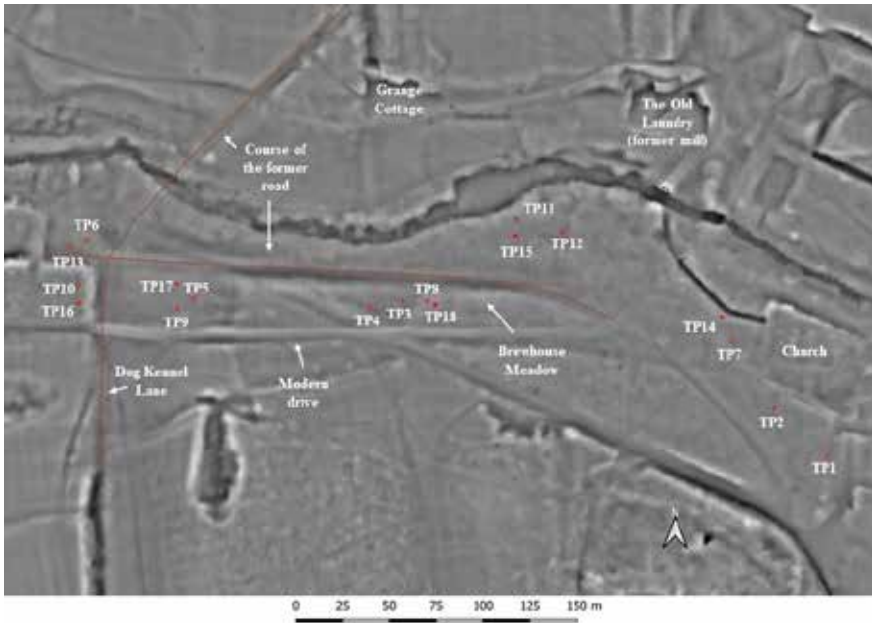


Fig 6 Location map of 2023 test pits, overlying the Local Relief Model LiDAR 1m visualisation (© Environment Agency, visualised by PTS Consultancy)

Fig 7 (below top) View of TP3 and its east-west flint-built wall

Fig 8 (below bottom) View of TP4 and its flagstone foundations

entrance and may have uncovered former chalk surfaces or pathways leading from the road and what is noted as a carpenter's shop and forge on the early 19th-century maps.

Tps 11, 12 and 15 were plotted around former cottages at the eastern end of Brewhouse Meadow and near to the bridge which would have crossed over to the Little George Inn: 'two tenement cottages' and 'a cottage' to its west, which were last apparent on the Anthony Browne map of 1813. Not surprisingly for an area heavily affected by services, a substantial amount of building debris (both brick and tile) was uncovered, though with no *in situ* foundations. TP11, closest to the river, came down onto a thick layer of dark clayey sand which is a likely medieval context, with 12th/14th-century pottery in its fill, but had to be stopped at 0.8m due to conditions and time constraints.

Tps 3, 4, 8 and 18 were plotted to locate the large cottage immediately south of the old road in Brewhouse Meadow, possibly denoted as the cottage of 'T Egerton' on the 1813 map. By the time of the Tithe map, it has been demolished and is likely one heavily disturbed by later services, although Tps 3 and 4 were the only two pits which were to come down onto certain building foundations. In TP3 (Fig 7), an unmortared flint wall c0.5m wide and overlain by building demolition (including glazed Tudor-era bricks) appeared at c0.7m depth, possibly an east-west wall of the cottage itself, although the lack of mortar makes this questionable. TP4 to its west uncovered the edge of a flagstone surface at



0.9m, presumably associated with the floor (and possible wall cill?) of the cottage. Finds in the lower spits of the latter included large quantities of peg tile of likely 17th-century date. Although a much larger area would need to be opened in order to investigate this area, the implied scale and details from the survey and test pits suggest a structure of note.

TPs 5, 9 and 15 were plotted to locate buildings at the western end of the field, including the 'Keepers Cottage', kennel and carpenter's shop southeast of the junction of Dog Kennel Lane, which were likely outbuildings by the time of the Tithe map for the cottage of Edward Gates. Despite more recent 19th-century household items, little building material was uncovered. TPs 6 and 13 were sited northwest of the junction, another likely outbuilding belonging to Edward Bolton at the time of the Tithe award. TP13 reached the natural sand at 0.7m, with mixed material in the upper levels, including a jetton (Moor's Head type, 1350-1425; SUR-4A74F6).

TPs 10 and 16 were placed to the southwest of the junction, an area which was originally part of Weston manor, rather than Albury, and still arable field at the time of John Rocque's map of 1768. The ground at this part of the field suggests terracing at its edges which coincide with 19th-century parcel boundaries, and a building is apparent on the 1813 map ('Peryer cottage fronting West Godshall') though has disappeared subsequently; it is not depicted on earlier estate maps as it is presumably just outside its bounds. The test pits finds indicate *in situ* medieval levels from the fourth spit, with 92 sherds (973g) of pottery spanning the 11th to 14th century, some of which were sizable jug and bowl pieces. Another jetton (Edward II, 1310-27; SUR-4A3570; Fig 9) and copper alloy heraldic mount of similar date (Fig 10) were also recovered, the latter which is likely associated with the Beauchamps, the earls of Warwick who had familial associations with nearby Shere (SUR-542253). The concentration of medieval artefacts and pottery is notable at this western end of the site, not coincidentally along the line of Dog Kennel Lane, although further work would be needed to determine its extent.

As an initial season, the 2023 test pitting was rewarding both as an outreach and research project. We look forward to further work this coming year which will no doubt enhance our understanding of medieval Albury and its development over time.

## Acknowledgements

The fieldwork at Albury Park relied on the dedication of an incredible volunteer team, all of whom were invaluable to the work undertaken. In addition to all those helping with the excavation, this included the finds team, in particular Sylvia Solarski, Anne Vallis, Ann Morrison and Janet Wilson; Sylvia, David Wilkinson, Rosemary Carter, James Little and Andrew Broadbent for their help with the survey; Lyn Spencer and the Medieval and Roman Pottery team for assessment of the pottery; Lyn, Christine Pittman and Mary Knight for their help with the open day; Simon Maslin, Mairi Sargent, Andrew Barr, Anne McLaughlin and Ann Russell for work on the small finds, metalwork and clay pipe; and Andrew Norris and Chris Gummer for their support and local expertise.

A special thanks must also be made to Michael Baxter and the Albury Estate, for their kind permission and support throughout the project, as well as to Trevor Brook and the Albury History Society for access to historic maps.

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Figs 9 & 10 English sterling head jetton of Edward II 1310-27 (SUR-4A3570) (left) and copper alloy heraldic mount (SUR-542253; right) of the Beauchamps, c1250-1400, possibly for a harness or carriage (Photos courtesy of Surrey County Council – note images not to scale)

# Notes on a watching brief at St Mary's Guildford by Archaeology South-East 2019-20

By **Mary Alexander**

Between March 2019 and January 2020, a programme of works was undertaken at St Mary's church, Quarry Street, Guildford (Fig 1), to put in underfloor heating and enlarge the path from the gate and install a new porch. The work was monitored by Archaeology South-East (hereafter ASE), who have allowed me to write a note for *Surrey's Past*. The facts are from the ASE client report (Russel 2023); the commentary is my own.

The site is obviously an important one as the church has a Late Anglo-Saxon-period tower, and may have evolved from a royal chapel in about the 8th century. It later became a church within a 10th-century planned town. My ideas on this have evolved over the years and have not been explicitly published, but are mentioned in various places (Alexander 2004; 2006; 2009; 2021).

## Results

ASE's watching brief could only observe what was revealed by the builders and, although there are interesting questions to be asked about the development of the church, the limited excavations could not provide many answers. The work on the path went down to 0.5m (metres) and produced medieval and post-medieval items within church-yard soil, mostly pottery, though there was a medieval window mullion. This was perhaps from when the windows were restored in 1863. The foundation trench for the new porch went down to 1m. The ground level of the area of the porch was reduced slightly and only produced disarticulated bone. However, in the wall trench, five inhumations were found, all oriented east-west. Three incomplete skeletons in the north trench were almost in a line and close together, suggesting that burials were made carefully to save space. Nearby in the east trench were two burials which were only half-uncovered. One was directly over the other (Fig 2),



Fig 1 St Mary's, Guildford (Photo by author)



Fig 2 Skeletons 108 overlying 111 from east trench (Archaeology South-East UCL 2023)

the latter of which was 18th century in date. There were no signs of coffins.

In the north aisle, at the east end in front of the transept which is at a higher level, were four burials. The earliest one (skeleton 128; Fig 3) was in an unusual position with the torso and head turned to the right but the legs outstretched. The skeleton was of a mature adult of uncertain sex, but around 5'3" (5 feet 3 inches) to 5'4" (or 160-3cm). There



was Saxo-Norman pottery (Surrey type series QFL) in the grave fill. The grave had been partly cut by another grave, for skeleton 129 which was in a normal position, supine, with arms by the sides. This is thought to be male, 30-44 years of age. To the north were two badly disturbed skeletons, and east of these was skeleton 134 (Fig 4) which had been truncated by the building of the north transept. This was probably female, also of 30-44 years. The construction cut and the wall footings for the transept were also seen. The transepts can be dated by the two arches which were cut through the Late Anglo-Saxon-period tower walls. The arches are round-headed and plain, with no “Anglo-Saxon” features, so are likely to be early Norman (Alexander 2009; O’Brien *et al* 2022, 394-5).

In the south aisle, near the pulpit, was another skeleton (207) supine, with arms folded at the waist. Sex could not be determined but the body was also of an adult of around 30-44 years old.

Some of the skeletons were radiocarbon dated. Skeleton 134, truncated by the transept, had a date of cal AD 1030-1220 at 95% confidence. This is the only burial which can be related to the development of the church building, which means that this burial will be from the earlier part of the date range. The only skeleton in the south aisle (207) was dated to cal AD 1050-1265 at 95% confidence. It is now just outside the first nave, which was probably built in the later 11th century, but there was no stratification to show whether it was buried before the nave, after the first aisle was built in c1180 or after the aisles were enlarged c1240 (O’Brien *et al* 2022, 394-5). It is possible that it was buried before the aisles were

built and so, again, at the earlier range of the dates. Skeleton 128 (partly on its side in the north aisle) was radiocarbon dated to cal AD 1035-1220 at 95% confidence.

As well as the skeletons, the tops of four brick vaults were exposed, but not investigated. The report notes that one had been broken into recently, perhaps in the 1960s. The writer was once told by a visitor to the church that one of the vaults had to be lowered slightly when a new floor was laid in 1967.

Finds from the excavations were few. Pottery ranged from Saxo-Norman to post-medieval. There is more detail about all aspects of the investigation in the report.

## Thoughts arising

This article will end with some thoughts about what was not found. I was surprised that the natural chalk was so close to ground level in the church, or rather that the burials were not deeper. If the burials discovered had been made in the churchyard, why were there not more of them? If they were in the church surely there would be some more and one might have expected signs of coffins. We know that in 1493 William Somer asked to be buried in the north aisle beside his wife (PROB 11/10/17). Why were they not found? He cannot be 134 who was cut by the transept, 128 is too early, and although cut by 129 cannot be Somer’s wife. Skeletons 135 (Fig 5) and 136 were very fragmentary and could perhaps be the Somers. If so, why were they so disturbed, along with the many other burials that must have been there? Two other people, Edithe Cooper and



Fig 3 Skeletons 128 and 129 (Archaeology South-East UCL 2023)



Fig 4 Skeleton 134, truncated by the north transept (Archaeology South-East UCL 2023)

William Parkins, asked in their wills of 1521 and 1530 to be buried in front of the rood screen (PROB 11/20/145), but no sign of them was excavated. The excavators thought that when the nave was built, the natural hillside was levelled down, which would have removed existing burials west of the church. It is also possible that graves of this period were more shallow than later. Medieval graves were about 40-70 cm deep, almost a third of the 6 feet we expect today (Orme 2021, 342). Some burials were seen in 1966 at the north-east corner of the north aisle, where ASE found bones.



Fig 5 Skeleton 135 (Archaeology South-East UCL 2023)

Another problem is the lack of evidence for the original nave walls and the early aisle walls. Evidence was found in 1966 at the west end of the nave before the new floor was laid, but the flooring work must have destroyed it in the east (Holling 1967; the results are also documented in a report in a file in the parish office of Holy Trinity & St Mary's, anonymous but clearly by Holling). On a positive note, the footings of the north transept and the north wall were found. The latter was of raw flint nodules, the former of chalk blocks. Since wall plaster was still *in situ* above floor level, the higher courses of the walls were not seen. It may be that the floor levels were seriously damaged by the work done in 1863.

One of the pillars, at least, had inserted bricks under the chalk base, which are likely to be Victorian. If graves had been visible in 1966 they would have been noted by the archaeologist who investigated the work, Felix Holling of Guildford Museum.

This was a very interesting project which has revealed some early Guildfordians, but has left us with questions, as so often happens in archaeology.

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# Further work on the medieval site in Cliftons Lane, Reigate

By Judie English

The site (Fig 1 no. 1; TQ 239 514) was discovered by the late Dennis Turner in about 1972 and recorded as Surrey HER Monument 4931). It was partially excavated by Holmesdale Museum History Club under the direction of the late Frank Harvey, and subjected to a fieldwalking exercises by the late David Williams and Jenny Newell in 2001 and 2002 (Williams 2002). The written record from the excavation do not appear to have survived but the finds from both interventions have been deposited at the Holmesdale Museum, Reigate. Labels in the finds bags suggest that at least one building, probably partially masonry constructed and with a hearth and a tiled roof, and an area of cobbling were found. The aim of this note is to further describe the pottery and a small assemblage of metal finds from the site.

## The pottery

A total of 807 sherds (weight 7574g) survive of which 640 (79%) derive from insecure contexts, either fieldwalking, or ‘surface finds’ and unstratified finds from the excavation period. The sources of the remainder have brief descriptions but in the absence of any details of the stratification these do not allow a full interpretation.

The best overall impression of the range of pottery recovered is derived from the summed figures of that from insecure contexts (Table 1) which shows

that the overwhelming proportion comprises Surrey medieval type series fabrics (Medieval Pottery Study Group 2020) Q2 (grey brown sandy ware) dated c1150-1250 (but see below) and OQ (orange sandy ware, the fine version is probably from the Earlswood kiln [Turner 1974]) dated c1250-1500. Pottery found at excavation and the context descriptions are listed in Table 2.

Fabric	Sherd count	Sherd weight	% assemblage by sherd count	Earliest date	Latest date
BA	2	17	0.3	c.1150BCE	c.800BCE
S4A	1	8	0.2	c.1000	c.1150
Q2	181	1891	28.3	c.1150	c.1250
GQ2	2	29	0.3	c.1150	c.1250
Q2SOS	1	23	0.2	c.1150	c.1250
LIMP	36	331	5.6	c.1150	c.1400
FLIMP	3	31	0.5	c.1150	c.1400
HRW	5	36	0.8	c.1170	c.1400
WW1B	16	375	2.5	c.1240	c.1400
WW1	1	8	0.2		
WW1A	18	200	2.8	c.1240	c.1550
OQ	325	2642	50.8	c.1250	c.1500
FOQ	38	213	5.9	c.1250	c.1500
RWW	2	21	0.3	c.1400	c.1550
PMR	8	99	1.3	c.1580	c.1900
MOD	1	36	0.2	c.1830+	

Table 1 Pottery from fieldwalking and unstratified contexts from excavation

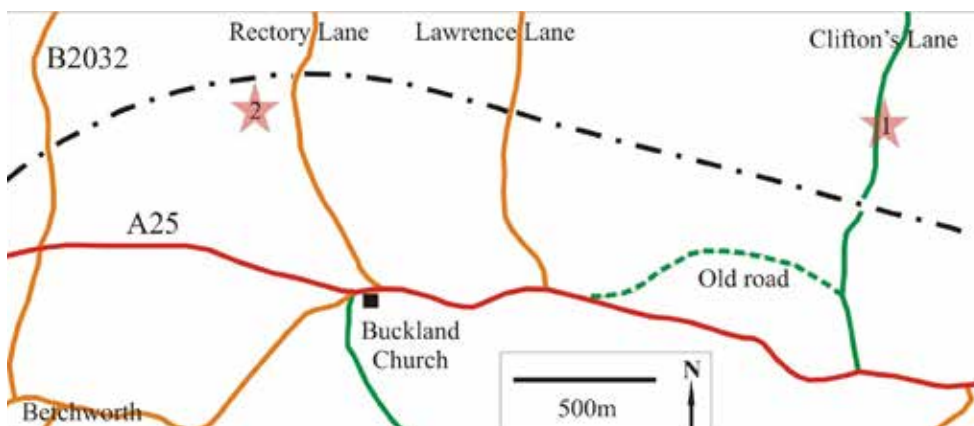


Fig 1 Location of sites at Cliftons Lane (1) and Rectory Lane (2)

Site	Context	Fabric	Sherd count	Sherd weight
CL72 Site 2	Yellow clay above drainage trench east	OQ	14	82
CL72 Site 2	South-east corner of site 2 in yellow clay between small stones	OQ	1	3
CL72 Site 2	South-east corner of site 2 in yellow clay between small stones	WW1B	3	18
CL72 Site 2	South-east corner of site 2 in yellow clay between small stones	WW2	16	107
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	Q2	25	124
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	WW1B	9	49
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	WW1A	2	25
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	OQ	22	199
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	WW2	1	10
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	LIMP	5	103
CL72 Site 2	Southern floor surface	RWW	1	4
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	Q2	6	129
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	GQ2	3	9
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	WW1B	10	78
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	WW1A	3	63
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	OQ	1	30
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	WW2	1	1
CL72 Site 2	From surface of stoney layer	PMRE	1	64
CL72 Site 2	Bottom layer	Q2	1	1
CL72 Site 2	Bottom layer	WW1B	4	18
CL72 Site 2	Bottom layer	RWW	3	7
CL72 site 3	Yellow clay, brown speckled	WW1B	2	9
CL72 site 3	Yellow clay, brown speckled	LIMP	1	1
CL72 site 3	East	Q2	5	271
CL72 site 3	East	FOQ	1	4
CL72 site 3	East	WW1B	1	4
CL72 site 3	East	WW1A	2	31
CL72 site 3	East	LIMP	1	56
CL72 site 3	South in flint layer	Q2	12	60
CL72 site 3	South in flint layer	WW1B	1	7
CL72 site 3	South in flint layer	OQ	2	22
CL72 site 3	Stones mottled clay	Q2	2	6
CL72 site 3	Stones mottled clay	WW1B	2	5
CL72 site 3	Stones mottled clay	FOQ	1	1

Table 2 Pottery from excavated contexts

## The metalwork

The metalwork comprised an annular buckle and two seals; it is not clear whether these objects were recovered by excavation or during fieldwalking. The copper alloy buckle is complete and in good condition (Fig 2). The frame has an oval cross-section and the pin has a small transverse ridged grip, which would have aided the use of the buckle. The only decoration is on the pin and this can be compared with examples found during a watching brief at Billingsgate Lorry Park, London in 1983 (Egan & Pritchard 1991, 115, nos. 541 and 547). It can only be dated to sometime between c1250 and c1450 (Simon Maslin pers comm). It has been recorded on the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) database as SUR-3011B7.

The two seals are of lead and each bears a set of letters, presumably those of the owner, which can only be partially deciphered. These seals probably date to the 19th century and would have been attached to sacks of either seed wheat or guano (Simon Maslin pers comm). Huge amounts of guano, mainly from Peru, were used as fertiliser during the 19th century, particularly after its efficacy was extolled by the Cornish chemist, Humphrey Davy (Miles 1961).

## Settlement expansion in the local area

The site was discovered when woodland and a bank to the east of Clifton's Lane were cleared. Another medieval site existed approximately 2km to the west on Rectory Lane at approximately TQ 217 524, similarly located on Gault Clay and producing pottery of about the same date (David Williams pers comm). This latter site has been excavated by Archaeology South-East (*ibid*). Buckland originated as a polyfocal settlement with the area around the church on sandstone of the Folkestone Formation, and Parsonage and East Greens on Gault Clay. There are only limited areas of light sandy soil within the parish and manor of Buckland and the western portion of Reigate, and to the east these become part of the infertile land of Reigate Heath. Population increase therefore forced expansion onto the less favourable clay soils along north / south tracks, probably originally used to take stock to grazing

land on the North Downs. The pottery assemblage suggests the sites on Clifton's and Rectory Lanes originated in the 12th century, possibly a little later than the period that saw expansion of permanent settlement of the Surrey Low Weald (Ellaby 2010; Tanner & English forthcoming). Pottery fabric Q2 (grey-brown sandy ware) is presently thought to go out of production c1250 but, certainly in the Reigate area, a date in the 14th century, or for some vessel forms, into the early 15th century would seem more likely (Williams & Poulton 2021, 52). Fabrics OQ and its variant FOQ (Earlswood ware) and the small amount of LIMP (Limpsfield ware) suggest failure of these settlements around the end of the 15th century.

## Acknowledgements

The finds, kept at the Holmesdale Museum, Reigate, were kindly made available for study by Roger Ellaby. Identification of the pottery was undertaken by members of the Medieval Pottery Study Group including Emma Corke, Andrew Francis, David Hartley, Angela Mason, Christine Pittman and Lyn Spencer using the Surrey Type Series (Medieval Pottery Study Group 2020). Simon Maslin identified the metal finds and recorded them on the PAS database.

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Fig 2 Medieval copper alloy buckle (SUR-3011B7) found at Clifton's Lane (reproduced by kind permission of the PAS)

# A local history detective story from Ewell

By Nikki Cowlard

## R.Bliss disc

In August 2023 SyAS received an email from Roger Mintey, Chairman of Landscape Explorer's Group in South-East (LEGISE), highlighting the finding of an unusual object. A month previously, Roger had also contacted Epsom and Ewell History and Archaeology Society (EEHAS), attaching two photos of a copper disc which he had found on a farm at Parkgate, about 2 miles south of Leigh, between Charlwood and Newdigate, Surrey, back in 1997. Neither David Williams (Finds Liaison Officer for Surrey at the time) nor the British Museum were able to identify it at the time. Unable to progress further, Roger put the disc aside.

The slightly elliptical disc appears to be made of copper alloy with a vertical diameter of 30mm and a horizontal diameter of 33mm, weighing 5.64 grams (87 grains). The stamped decoration on the front shows a crown above the legend 'R.BLISS EWELL', and the reverse is blank (Fig 1).

When Roger eventually revisited the disc, research on the internet brought up an article about Richard Bliss of Ewell by Peter Reed on the Epsom & Ewell History Explorer (Reed n.d.). When Peter was contacted, he believed that the disc referred to, and was possibly made by, Richard Bliss, a Ewell blacksmith (1762-1845). Peter then incorporated a picture of the disc and some related text into his article. Peter describes the disc as a token, but Gary Oddie of the British Token Society is not so certain. Jeremy Harte, Curator at Bourne Hall Museum, is of the opinion that the resemblance to trade tokens is only superficial. In the late 18th century tokens were cast not struck, and only seem to have been issued by large firms with a community of workers; also, like earlier tokens, they were two-sided. It seems more likely that such discs would have been attached to some of Richard Bliss' products as some sort of advertisement.

Fig 1 R.Bliss disc (courtesy of Roger Mintey)

## Who was Richard Bliss?

Richard Bliss is mentioned in Cloudesley S. Willis' 1948 article, 'Ironwork in Epsom and Ewell'. He was originally a Reigate man who moved to Ewell in 1786 and started up a successful and ultimately well-known business as a whitesmith/metal worker etc. Peggy Bedwell, in her occasional paper on 'Ewell Village Shops' (1997), suggests that Richard Bliss first used a forge in West Street, Ewell, near to what became the Hop Pole Inn. Willis records that in 1838 Richard Bliss and Henry Willis, Whitesmiths, Millwrights and Ironmongers, moved into the premises at 9 High Street, and adapted the outbuildings as their workshop; in that year their names appear in the Rate Book as occupiers. It is interesting that Cloudesley Willis (1865-1955), a notable Ewell historian, was a great grandson of Richard Bliss; his grandfather Henry Willis had been apprenticed to Bliss in about 1815 and had (very conveniently) married Bliss's daughter. Bliss had married Miss Jane Cloudesley in 1789 and their daughter Elizabeth was born the following year.

## The appearance of the stamp

Shortly after Peter had uploaded the information about the disc, he was contacted by Gary Barnes, who had read Peter's article. Gary was in possession of an iron/steel stamp apparently used to stamp out



the disc, and presumably other similar ones. This had been found while clearing out a hoarder's garage in Northern Ireland. Peter incorporated pictures of the stamp into his article (Fig 2).



Fig 2 Bliss stamp (courtesy of Gary Barnes of Wetown\_8 © 2023)

## Why did the disc end up in Parkgate?

An advertisement recorded in C.J. Swete's 1860 *Handbook of Epsom* shows that Henry Willis, Bliss' apprentice and son in law, was advertising Bliss' Economical Cooking Apparatus (Fig 3); perhaps one of these could have ended up in Parkgate with a maker's disc, which later became detached.

## The end of the story?

There may still be more to uncover about this unusual find originating in Ewell. Meanwhile, Jeremy Harte is keen to acquire the disc and the stamp for Bourne Hall Museum.

This article was previously published in the November 2023 issue of the EEHAS newsletter. With thanks to Roger Mintey, Gary Barnes, Peter Reed and Jeremy Harte for much of the information in this article. For more information on Richard Bliss visit the Epsom and Ewell History Explorer.

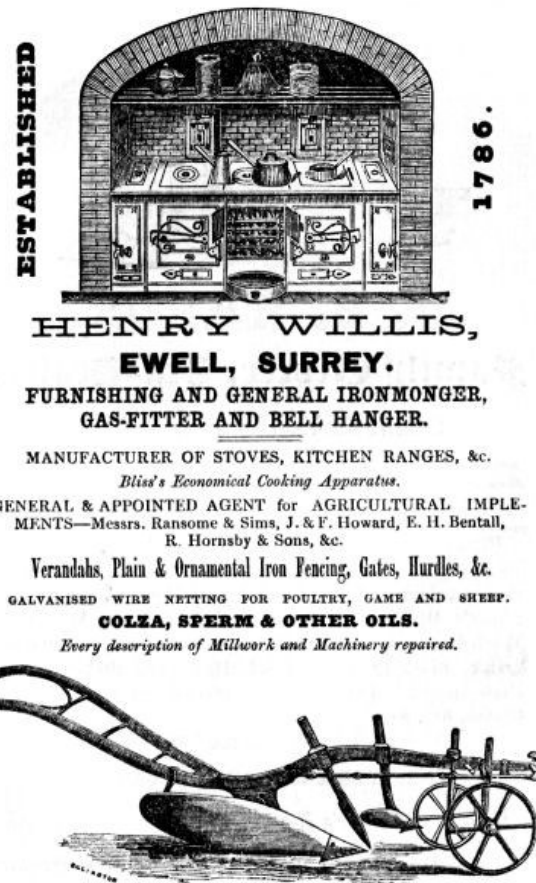


Fig 3 Bliss Advertisement from C.J. Swete's 1860 *Handbook of Epsom*, Page 44

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# Livery buttons and famous names

By Simon Maslin

Livery buttons were made from polished, gilded or tinned brass and once adorned the jackets and uniforms of staff and retainers working for large households in the later 18th and 19th centuries. A common type of detecting find, they were designed to demonstrate status and wealth and bore distinctive crests derived from the heraldry of the families employing them. It is easy enough to envision objects like this being lost in the landscape during the course of outdoor activities such as hunting or riding and they are particularly common in areas (like Surrey) containing a lot of aristocratic estates.

Although of relatively recent date, these objects can potentially offer social historical connections to famous individuals and families of the past. The challenge as a finds recorder is then to try to demonstrate such associations; typically family crests, being simplified components from much more complex family schemes of arms, are not quite unique to individual families and may connect with quite a wide range of names. Narrowing these down requires a bit of local knowledge as we would generally expect the represented family to have local properties or social connections. The reverse of these buttons often bears a maker's mark which can also help date it.

This particular example, recorded with the Portable Antiquities Scheme as [SUR-7404E8](#) is 25.7mm in diameter, with a convex face depicting a crest of a Griffon walking left with front paw upraised

(passant) and gorged with a coronet. The reverse is concave with a stump of a broken loop shank around which is the maker's inscription REYNOLDS & CO / 50 St MARTINS LANE / LONDON. This mark dates the button to 1871-3. This crest is listed in the pre-eminent reference work *Fairbairn's Crests* (plate 61/14) as related to the names Cleve, Cliffe, Clive, Evelyn, Finch, Finche and Watson.

Given these options and the location of the find, a likely potential association is to the family of diarist and writer John Evelyn (1620-1706) whose estates and birthplace were at Wotton, very near to where this button was found. The family member contemporary to the manufacture date for this button is William John Evelyn (1822-1908), who inherited these estates and lived at Wotton House. He was, among other things, MP for Surrey West in 1849-57 and High Sheriff of Surrey in 1860. The house at Wotton was extensively rebuilt during this period after a fire and his monogram can still be seen decorating the building's exterior.

It is relatively unusual to be able to link a button to a famous local name like this, with such diverse connections bridging the local historical, literary and archaeological worlds. Finds like this add a social historical element to the archaeological information recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme and although they may not be routinely recorded given their recent age, when we can establish such connections, it is important to document them.



A livery button from Surrey, SUR-7404E8 © Surrey County Council





# A mysterious map of Roman Surrey

By Rob Briggs

In 2020, the Surrey HER produced a map of its data coverage for the Roman period within the present administrative county for one of a series of Surrey Archaeological Society information leaflets that remain available to download from the Society's website via <https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/content/roman>. That same year, for the HER's annual contribution to Surrey County Council's marking of World GIS Day, I wrote a blog post on the Surrey County Council intranet about a beautiful 19th-century paper geological map with ink and pencil annotations that in some ways represented an earlier attempt at the same thing (Fig 1).

The HER team recently had cause to take a fresh look at the map, leading to us spot new details but still be none the wiser as to the date(s) of the annotations made to it. Even more fundamentally,

we still have no clue as to how this map came to be among those held by the HER/Historic Environment Planning Team – almost all of the ones we hold are directly related to planning matters and are much later in date. Dr David Bird has been kind enough to make a couple of enlightening suggestions but, despite serving as County Archaeologist for many years as well as being the leading expert on Surrey in the Roman period, admits to not knowing why the HER came to hold a map of this nature.

This note presents what is known (or what we think we know) about the map, with the aim of inviting readers to contact the HER with further information about who was responsible for the map annotations, why or when they were made, or how it came to be in the HER's possession.



Fig 1 General view of map

## The known knowns

In many ways, we already know all there is to know about the base map and the subject of the annotations. The title and stamps on the front of the map identify it as Sheet 75 of the Geological Survey of England and Wales, sold at a revised price of 18s 0d net. It was evidently published in or after December 1887, the stated date of publication of the survey of ‘The Drift’, i.e. drift deposits. The map also includes information derived from surveys of the ‘Secondary rocks’ and ‘Tertiary beds’, first published in December 1862 and the subject of a new edition of August 1868 (Fig 2). The map is also stated to contain elements from the Ordnance Survey Old Series one-inch mapping published on 1 May 1816 by ‘Col. I Mudge. Tower.’; Mudge was Director of the Trigonometrical Survey, then based at the Tower of London (Ravenhill 1975, General Introduction). The depiction of many railway lines, however, shows the non-geological base mapping was not solely of that date.



Fig 2 Details showing geological map info

A pencil note written in the top margin erroneously characterises the map as the ‘1816 O. S. Geological’ (Fig 3). Below this is another pencil note, no doubt written at the same time; ‘Red Circles have 5 mile diameters round Roman Villas etc.’ (interestingly, the number 5 is written over 4, suggesting the correction of an error). There are 17 such red circles, all rather crudely scribed in red ink presumably with the use of a pair of compasses. Most of the areas encompassed by the circles overlap, but they were drawn in a way that means only twice do the lines bisect and thus show the same land within two areas; in all other instances, the line delimiting one circle stops when it meets another. Broken lines defining margins either side of the lines of Roman roads passing through the historic county area have also been drawn on the map, although unfortunately these are not explained by an equivalent marginal annotation; purely by eye they may mark limits of two miles either side of Roman roads.



Fig 3 Pencil note

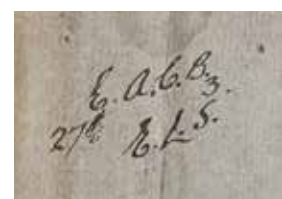
## Whose map and whose annotations?

Dr Bird suggests the handwriting is a reasonable match for that of A W G Lowther, well-known in Surrey as an archaeologist active from the 1920s through to the 1950s. He also suggests the hypothesis of villas and other rural centres being distributed at regular intervals across swathes of Surrey is something that accords with Lowther’s thinking regarding the county’s Roman archaeology. Furthermore, Lowther being the person responsible for the annotations would tally with the centre of the circle around the villa and bath house site on Ashtead Common, at which he conducted his first excavations in the county (Surrey HER Monument 270; Bird 2004, 102), being denoted uniquely by an additional small circle with an X through it (Fig 4). On the other hand, what could be read as two sets of initials written in ink appear on the back of the map sheet, and neither of these is “A.W.G.L.” (Fig 5).



Fig 4 Ashtead plus other circles

Fig 5 Possible initials on back of sheet



Even if the handwriting is Lowther's, it does not necessarily follow that the additions to the map were made by him. Dr Bird notes the curious absence of the villa at Limnerslease in Compton, discovered in 1914 and excavated in 1915 (Surrey HER Monument 1630; Bird 2004, 98), as the centre of the circle encompassing its site. Instead, this circle is centred further south on the Hurtmore area (Fig 6), conceivably influenced by Roman material found thereabouts which was donated to Charterhouse Museum circa 1895 (HER Find Spot 1492). Then again, the circle to the north is even less explicably placed, being centred a little south of Worplesdon village – a location without any known Romano-British archaeological evidence – rather than on the villa site at the eastern edge of Broadstreet Common that was excavated as long ago as 1829 (HER Monument 1843). It is hard to believe that a map featuring annotations specified to be based partly on Roman villa sites should be so repeatedly ill-informed, and it seems much more credible that there was a substantial amount of fitting/fudging to make the five-mile diameters work satisfactorily by shifting their centres to reduce overlap and/or take in (or exclude) areas of particular geology.



## Over to you...

More contemplation of what the map shows, particularly regarding the identities of the sites on which the circles are based, could have been attempted before this note was produced. The motive behind writing it, however, was to seek information from others, not to present the outcome of an extended piece of research. Therefore, if you have any thoughts or questions regarding the map, whether it be about who added the annotations or how it came to be among the HER's map collection, please contact the Surrey HER team via email: [her@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:her@surreycc.gov.uk). Our long-term aspiration is for the map to be transferred to the Surrey History Centre for conservation and accession, so that more people may be able to consult and enjoy it in the future.

*With thanks to Mel Gillies of the SCC GIS Team for asking me to write the blog post from which some of this note is derived, and to Dr David Bird for sharing his thoughts about the map.*

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Fig 6 Circles based on Compton, Worplesdon and Wonersh

# Not the Nine Stone News

By Rob Briggs

The Surrey HER was asked twice in 2023 about the “Negen Stones” or “Nine Stones” (and occasionally “Ningen Stones”) of Staines or Egham, a supposed lost prehistoric stone circle or megalithic monument recorded in an early medieval documentary source. It doesn’t take much searching of the internet to find references to the stones and their supposed location (in one case, with the positions of the stones “rediscovered” by dowsing, handily all within the centre of a modern roundabout!). For better or worse the truth is, however, that the stones never existed and are an illusion based on a misreading of a solitary historical source. This note hopes to serve as a means of debunking the legend by presenting a full published analysis of the evidence for the first time.

## The source of the legend

The text in which the unique reference to the “Negen/Nine Stones” is the set of vernacular bounds for Egham that forms part of the text of the famous late 7th-century endowment charter for the minster at Chertsey (Sawyer or S 1165 to give it its current scholarly classification). The bounds in question, like those of Chertsey and Thorpe and Chobham found in the same text, are later additions to a 7th-century core. The various bounds are now fancied to be later 11th-/early 12th-century compositions, although the Egham one was fiddled with in the mid-13th century (Kelly 2015, 91, 105, 109, 112). It should be added that the surviving text of S 1165 was entered into the earliest surviving cartulary of Chertsey Abbey c1260 (London, British Library, Cotton Vitellius A. xiii; dating as per Kelly 2015, 37).

The relevant passage in the Egham bounds is ‘*to thare Huthe afornegene stone*’. The first three words are clear enough as referring to The Hythe by the west end of Staines Bridge (Fig 1). The other two words have most often been taken to mean “before the nine stones”, that were duly interpreted to be connected to the place-name Staines, which is spelled in other early historical records in ways that demonstrate it does mean something like ‘The stone’ (Watts 2010, 566). Quite what this stone was

is as intriguing as it is impossible to determine, but whatever it was we can be fairly certain it lay on the east bank of the Thames, not in the area of The Hythe.



Fig 1 The Hythe, seen looking southwards from Staines Bridge, in 2015. Note the moored boats, showing it still serves as a landing-place for vessels moving along the River Thames (photograph © Rob Briggs)

The person responsible for the notion of the existence of the “Nine Stones” appears to have been G R Corner, who contributed a lengthy paper to the first ever volume of *Surrey Archaeological Collections*, published in 1858. Corner appears to have had a reasonably good knowledge of Old English and Latin but was susceptible to alighting on an accepting an etymology perhaps without having first given the alternatives full consideration. So it is that we find the following in his article:

‘The hythe before Negen Stone must, I think, be Egham Hythe, opposite to Staines. Nigen means *nine*; and it is very probable that there was a circle of nine stones there before the town of Staines was built, or the corporation of London had any jurisdiction in this part of the river. The name of Staines, in the plural, rather favours this conjecture.’ (Corner 1858, 89 footnote 67)

That’s as far as Corner went, within his 1858 article at least – the notion has been elaborated by later writers into a lost prehistoric megalithic monument. It’s also been missed by many – presumably because the boundary clause in question pertained to Egham – that Corner argued for the stones to have been on the Staines rather than the Egham side of the river.

## A proper look at the evidence

Corner derailed his argument by mistaking ‘*negene*’ in the charter text for Old English *nigon*, ‘nine’ and then attempting to find a translation that accommodated the preceding *afor-*. Correct interpretation of the phrase has been aided considerably by Dr Susan Kelly’s *Charters of Chertsey Abbey*, published in 2015, now the benchmark work on the pre-Norman Conquest charters associated with the monastery. Dr Kelly identifies *afornegene* as being related to the Old English *foran-ongean*, which means ‘opposite’, and the word after it as a version of the place-name Staines. Hence, she translates the whole passage as ‘to the landing-place ... opposite ... “stone” (i.e. Staines)’ (Kelly 2015, 111).

The lexical basis for Kelly’s suggestion can be identified (e.g. Sweet 2006, 61) but there is no clear, comparable supporting example that has *foran-ongean* written like *afornegene*. This is because Kelly did not recognise, or else did not acknowledge in print, that the form of the word used in the Egham boundary clause is not Old English (i.e. from before c1100) but Middle English (from sometime in the period c1100–1500). The online Middle English Dictionary, under the headword *aförn-yēn* ‘In front so as to be opposite to (sth.); over against, against; opposite’, reproduces later medieval spellings like *afornezen* (from a copy of *The Brut* by Layamon of c1300) that go a long way to confirming we are not dealing with a 7th- or even 11th-century reference. The appearance elsewhere in the Egham bounds of the name of Sir Geoffrey de la Croix (‘*sire Giffreus ... de la Croix*’), who died in July 1260, is powerful evidence for a mid-13th-century reworking of the text (as argued for by Kelly 2015, 109).

It is every bit as interesting to learn from Dr Kelly’s examination of the source manuscript that ‘*afornegene stone*’ is written above a line of words including *to thare Huthe* ‘in a thinner pen and probably by a different scribe’ (Kelly 2015, 109). These comments strongly imply that it was a Middle English-period addition made later than the compilation of the cartulary c1260. For this reason, the emended passage could be read as meaning “to The Hythe/the landing-place (opposite Staines)”, perhaps to differentiate it further from others with

names using Old English *hȳþ* “landing-place” on the same riverbank, such as The Glanty and Egham Hythe (*Glenthube* and *wheles huþe* respectively in the S1165 Egham bounds: Kelly 2015, 108-9, 111). For Corner not to have noted that ‘*afornegene stone*’ is written very differently from the words either side of it seems to be a product of his reliance on printed editions of the text, most probably that published around a decade before by one-time Surrey resident J M Kemble, rather than first-hand acquaintance with the medieval manuscript (Corner 1858, 79; Kemble 1847, 18).

But there is another way of reading the phrase. The use of the spelling ‘*stone*’ to render the place-name Staines is most unusual in a later 13th-century context, as by the 11th/12th century it had come to develop the final -s it retains to this day (Watts 2010, 566). Equally, the choice of an initial lower-case *s-* – in contrast to the *H-* of ‘*Huthe*’ – is curious to say the least. Possibly they are no more than scribal errors, or deliberate choices dictated by limited space on the page. Another interpretation is that it could be a reference to what became known as the London Stone, supposedly first erected on the riverbank at Staines below Staines Bridge by the Corporation of London in 1285 (e.g. Surrey HER Listed Building 10710). Since 2012, the modern replica of the post-medieval iteration of the stone (Fig 2) has stood on the supposed original spot, in what are now the Memorial Gardens. An origin in the year 1285 would certainly tally with a date after c1260 for the addition of ‘*afornegene stone*’ to the charter text, giving the words a meaning of “opposite (the) stone”.

## Conclusion

The legend of the “Nine Stones” is entirely without basis in historical or archaeological fact. There were never nine monoliths (or even a single monolith) somewhere beyond what would become the west end of Staines Bridge. Instead, the sole piece of historical testimony describes an early medieval riverside landing place (now The Hythe) that lay directly across the Thames from the town of Staines, although the secondary locational reference may well be to the original London Stone of 1285. Surrey is a county devoid of proven, extant prehistoric standing stones and, whether or not this has served to encourage some to accept the like of the “Negen/

Nine Stones” as lost examples, the utmost caution should always be exercised when dealing with supposed early textual references – more often than not, they really are not all they might appear to be at first.



Fig 2 The post-medieval London Stone, on display in Spelthorne Museum in 2019 (photograph © Rob Briggs)

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## Correction to previous article

In *Surrey’s Past* **495**, a short point under “Place-names” on page 14 in Matt Sparkes’ article ‘A response to “Possible Romano-British temple site south of Caterham”’ was omitted. It has been included below for clarity.

The other place-name elements mentioned in the article also raise questions about the extent to which they suggest the previous existence of a religious site. In relation to ‘Willey’, PNS (p175) does indeed suggest a derivation from OE *weoh leah* (i.e. ‘idol or temple’ and ‘clearing’) for the ‘Willey’-related place-names on the other side of the county at Farnham (based on the earliest examples in that location being spelled with one ‘l’). All of the evidence for the Chaldon ‘Willey’ place-names, however, indicates that they have always been spelled with a double ‘l’ and thus have a different derivation (either from ‘Willa’s clearing’ or ‘willow clearing’, PNS, p43).

# Shining a Light on the disposal of the dead in Roman South-East England conference

By Emma Corke

The Roman Studies Group's biennial conference took place on Sunday 21 May 2023, the date having been changed due to the coronation. The excellent speakers were enthusiastically received by a well-informed audience, about half of which we welcomed as non-Society members.

Dr John Pearce used evidence from mainly recently excavated tombs in Rome and the Campania, and Pompeii to explore the funerary practices of central Italy in the decades contemporary with Rome's contact with and conquest of Britain in AD 43. He examined tombs from all walks of life to investigate how a dynamic funerary tradition was adapted to the diverse circumstances of the dead, from emperors to the enslaved via urban elites. He considered the religious as well as practical reasons behind the very varied rituals, and looked at what remains today and what we can deduce from it.



Mausoleum of Augustus (CC BY-SA 2.0)

After coffee Prof Tim Champion looked at recent research which has shed important new light on the treatment of the dead in the Iron Age of the South-East and wider areas of southern Britain. Formal burial practices include a tradition of unurned cremation burials, unaccompanied inhumations, and a regional tradition of extended inhumations in Kent and Sussex. More complex practices leave partial human remains in various states. Other practices may leave no archaeologically visible evidence at

all. Radiocarbon dating has also shown that many of the visible practices are very short-lived. Disposal practice was highly varied both between regions and within a region, and selection of an appropriate rite was volatile. We should perhaps not be asking why we find so few of the dead, but why do we find any at all?

Dr David Rudling then took us on a whistle-stop tour through burials in the South-East, using as his starting point an article by Ernest Black published in *The Archaeological Journal* (1986, 201-39) on 'Romano-British Burial Customs and Religious Beliefs in South-East England'. He looked at both old and new discoveries, especially from Sussex. However, the apparent paucity of burials from the countryside in the South-East, and elsewhere in Roman Britain, remains a major gap in our knowledge and so far explanations (such as loss from ploughing of lynchets) inadequate to explain the 'missing millions'

Dr Sadie Watson looked at the cemeteries of Roman London where a far higher proportion of the dead has been found. They have been extensively excavated and published over decades although no recent synthesis exists as yet. She used several recently published (and unpublished) examples to illustrate how the complex picture of burial in an urban context is ever-changing with every new discovery. A huge variety of differing practices has been found, many of which are poorly understood but which appear to demonstrate a care for the dead throughout society.



Roman eagle funerary sculpture (© MoLA)



Crossrail decapitation (© MoLA)

During morning question time Dr Pearce said that during the Roman-period there were in Italy professional undertakers working under official rules. Whether such a profession existed in Britain is not certain. Prof Champion said that there was no evidence for or against professional undertakers during the Iron Age.

The speakers said Roman burials used both previously used and new vessels as urns, while Iron Age urns pre-20BC were specifically selected (wheel-made being preferred to hand made which was not the case for domestic vessels). As lamps were often important in Roman funeral rites, many may have been made for one-off use and deposition.

The origins of rituals was not clear. There was a considerable change in beliefs between the Iron Age and Roman Britain. Importantly, during the Iron Age the remains of the dead were often handled. In Roman times, sometimes only witches handled body parts; doing so made a person unclean, and time and rites were needed after a death before mourners could return to their normal lives.

After lunch Ellen Green talked about what can be learned from the study of disarticulated bones, which are at present an under-researched resource, often seen either as evidence of disturbance or dismissed as ‘finds’ (or ‘the remains’) of earlier Iron Age excarnation practices without any further analysis. However, they offer an excellent opportunity for research, both because of their ubiquity throughout the Roman period in Britain and because of the potential of taphonomic and histological analysis in identifying the exact processes the bodies were subject to. She used a



Ewell shaft human remains

large disarticulated assemblage from the Nescot site at Ewell to show how formerly unrecognised mortuary practices can be recognised from in-depth analysis of disarticulated material, and how such an approach may help expand our understanding of minority mortuary rituals.

Questions from the audience highlighted that ‘polished’ finger and toe bones were returned to the earth. Dr Pearce noted that dogs were not generally used as Roman sacrificial animals, despite the many found in Nescot pits and in many other ‘ritual’ contexts in Roman Britain.

Dr Claire Hodson tackled the controversial question of infant burials and infanticide. Many infants have been excavated from settlement sites, particularly those of rural estates and villas. However, many archaeological reports have characteristically focussed on the funerary context of such burials, leading to sensationalised interpretations of infanticide: concepts of deliberate disposal and careless burial have circulated in both popular and archaeological media. The multi-disciplinary study of infancy and childhood has progressed far from its origins in the margins of discussion and research, becoming central to our understanding of past populations. Yet archaeological discoveries of infants still cannot evade the lingering association of gendered infanticide. Detailed studies of general health now point to greater malnutrition and ill-health in rural as opposed to urban populations, especially in the 1st century AD. Analyses of infant bones, in particular peptides in teeth, suggest that the imbalance in male to female deaths may be a consequence of preferential feeding of males in times of shortage rather than intentional deaths.



Prof Tony King also considered human sacrifice, in his case the interpretation of human remains at Romano-Celtic temple sites in the light of the historical references to human sacrifice and its banning by the emperors. There are methodological issues in the simple interpretation of human bones as sacrificial debris, and several other lines of thought are discussed, including foundation burials, redeposit of earlier burials, reuse of parts of the body, especially skulls, etc. Sites from Roman Britain, such as Hayling Island, Springhead, Folly Lane and Dorchester, plus selected sites in Gaul, such as Fesques and Halatte, are used to exemplify the diverse usage of human remains in Romano-Celtic orthopraxy. Treatment of bones may reflect either an honouring or dishonouring of the individual; bones may be placed so as to honour the gods or as a sign of disgrace. Professor King noted that dogs may have been placed as guardians of the dead. Interpretation may be complicated by alterations within a site. However, there is considerable evidence for changes between Iron Age and Roman practices: while spatial practices remained much the same, the offerings differed.

David Calow faced the problem of the missing millions head on. We probably have human remains from less than 1% of the Romano-British population. What happened to the missing millions? Most archaeological finds are a very small proportion of what there was. Do we need to worry more about missing people? Carefully buried human remains can survive, but what we find seems sparse and diverse and it is hard to understand if it is representative. Life for some may have been brutal, but lack of finds leads to speculation about archaeologically invisible ways of disposing of the dead. Can we look for more evidence? Could we identify even another 1% of the missing dead especially in the countryside where most people lived? Pyre sites are enigmatic and cremations easily missed. Burials might be more secure but some soils are aggressive. Can relatively complete rural cemeteries in South-East England and Northern Gaul help us look for more evidence?



1st century cremation from Flexford, with cremated bones in the remains of a wooden casket

Should we look for more evidence? Current ethical guidance is that human remains should not be disturbed without good reason. Development can provide the reason and limited research projects might gain approval, but excavating unthreatened cemeteries is not an option. Other potential avenues for research might include less intrusive methods such as LiDAR, geophysics and metal detecting. However, perhaps the best place to look is in the archives using existing surveys such as the Roman Rural Settlement Project to build a funerary list at a county level to get a better sample size.

A lively discussion followed this lecture. It was noted that we also have only about 0.5% of the buildings necessary to house the missing millions of Roman Britain. In addition, it was noted that burials were made in carefully chosen places and that the majority of the country will never have contained burials. A lot of the soils of the South-East are destructive to organic material including bodies. The Roman practice of burial away from residential buildings means that excavation (except around major towns) is not likely to come across graves except by chance.

David Rudling closed the day with thanks to speakers, organisers, and helpers. He was then thanked for his planning of a most enjoyable and thought-provoking day.

## 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.

### 15 February

‘People and Families of the Wandle Valley’ by Mick Tailor to Surrey Industrial History Group via Zoom at 10:00. For joining info, contact [meetings@sihg.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sihg.org.uk).

### 19 February

‘Dunsfold Airfield in WW2’ by Paul McCue to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30.

### 21 February

‘A Lost Elysium? The impact of motoring on English landscapes in the inter-war years’ by John Minnis to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society via Zoom at 19:45. For joining info, contact [cnhss.info@gmail.com](mailto:cnhss.info@gmail.com).

### 23 February

‘WAAC’s in the 1st World War’ by Bianca Taubert-Bailey to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

‘The future of family history’ by Nick Barratt to Puttenham and Wanborough History Society at Marwick Hall, School Lane, Puttenham at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £2

### 29 February

‘Keep Calm & Wear it Well – fashions of the 1940s’ by Grace Evans to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

‘Water, from mountain stream to sewage farm’ by Doug Irvine to Surrey Industrial History Group via Zoom at 10:00. For joining info, contact [meetings@sihg.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sihg.org.uk).

### 4 March

‘The History of East Surrey Museum’ by Peter Connelly to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

### 5 March

‘Mayor of Runnymede: my year in office’ by Margaret Harnden to Addlestone Historical Society at Addlestone Community Centre, Garfield Road, Addlestone at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

### 6 March

‘The Path of Peace: walking the Western Front’ by Sir Anthony Seldon (followed by AGM) to Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society in Ewell Hall, London Road, Ewell at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

### 7 March

‘Excavations at Moor Lane Staines’ by Andy Taylor to Spelthorne Local History and Archaeology Group at Staines Methodist Church at 20:00. See website for details: [www.spelthornemuseum.org](http://www.spelthornemuseum.org).

### 8 March

‘Obsession, Enterprise and Death; The Industrial Revolution and 3 Men’s Lives’ by Frances Hurd to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

### 9 March

‘Wilks, his Wilderness and its journey through to today’ by Lucy James to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 19:45. Visitors welcome: £3

‘Sports along the Wandle’ by Mick Taylor to Merton Historical Society at St James’ Church Hall, Merton at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £2

### 11 March

‘Richmond heroes commemorated on the Watts Memorial to Heroic Self-Sacrifice in Postman’s Park’ by John Price to Richmond Local History Society, Duke Street Church, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

### 14 March

‘The efficiency of stationary steam engines’ by Bob Bryson to Surrey Industrial History Group via Zoom at 10:00. For joining info, contact [meetings@sihg.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sihg.org.uk).

### 22 March

‘Droughts, deluges and dust-devils’ by Ian Currie to Puttenham and Wanborough History Society at Marwick Hall, School Lane, Puttenham at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £2

### 25 March

‘Cricket origins: Surrey vs the North – Different Class?’ by Duncan Stone to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30.

‘Merton Priory – the Latest Chapter’ by John Hawks to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 19:45. Visitors welcome: £3

### 28 March

‘Chocks away, the Royal Flying Corps in WW1’ by Richard Marks to Surrey Industrial History Group via Zoom at 10:00. For joining info, contact [meetings@sihg.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sihg.org.uk).

### 2 April

‘Plants & Foods that Changed History’ by Peter Batty to Addlestone Historical Society at Addlestone Community Centre, Garfield Road, Addlestone at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

### 3 April

‘Brewing along the Wandle Valley’ by Alison Cousins to Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society in Ewell Hall, London Road, Ewell at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

### 8 April

‘Germany’s WW1 Bomber Offensive against London’ by Ian Castle to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

'From Plantagenet Sheen to Tudor Richmond: royal passions, piety and power' by Elizabeth Hallam-Smith to Richmond Local History Society, Duke Street Church, Richmond at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £4

### 10 April

'Mapping Urban Geology: building stones in London and beyond on London Pavement Geology' by Ruth Siddal to Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society in the East Croydon United Reformed Church, Addiscombe Grove, Croydon at 19:45. Visitors welcome: £3

### 11 April

'Sir Barnes Wallis' by Bill McNaught to Surrey Industrial History Group via Zoom at 10:00. For joining info, contact [meetings@sihg.org.uk](mailto:meetings@sihg.org.uk).

### 13 April

'The Richest of the Rich: Richard Thornton of Cannon Hill' by Sarah Gould to Merton Historical Society at St James' Church Hall, Merton at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £2

### 19 April

'John Luard (1790-1875)' by Gill Picken to Farnham & District Museum Society at The Garden Gallery, Museum of Farnham, West Street, Farnham at 14:30. Visitors welcome: £3

### 22 April

'Woking 1919-39: Photographs by Sidney Francis' by Jane Lewis/Jill Hyams to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30.

### 25 April

'Bell ringing & bell founders' by Malcom Loveday to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

### 26 April

'Jane Austen and the military' by Alan Turton to Puttenham and Wanborough History Society at Marwick Hall, School Lane, Puttenham at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £2

### 7 May

'The Partnership of Edwin Lutyens & Gertrude Jekyll: the story of a remarkable lady "Bumps" and her great friend and colleague "Ned"' by Judy Hill to Addlestone Historical Society at Addlestone Community Centre, Garfield Road, Addlestone at 20:00. Visitors welcome: £3

### 13 May

'Barnes Wallis's Civilian Inventions' by Peter Hoar to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

### 20 May

'LiDAR in Surrey: its uses in archaeology' by Anne Sassin to Dorking Local History Group via Zoom at 19:30.

### 30 May

'Staines and the 1950s and 1960s' by Barry Dix to Egham by Runnymede Historical Society in United Church, Egham at 19:30. Visitors welcome: £2

### 3 June

'William Morris: artist, textile designer & more' by John Hawks to Dorking Local History Group in the Crossways Community Baptist Church, Dorking at 19:30. Visitors welcome.

## Annual symposium

This year's Research Committee Annual Symposium will take place on **Saturday 9 March** at East Horsley Village Hall. The programme is now online and booking via PayPal is now available with tickets at £12 per person via <https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/content/symposium-2024>.

Due to difficulty in paying them in, cheques cannot now be accepted. Online payment enables us to assess catering numbers and streamlines the administration process. Payment by cash on the day is discouraged but will be possible and the exact change (£12) would be appreciated.

Parking at the venue is limited and we would like to encourage travel by public transport or car sharing if possible.

Although the Margary Award deadline has passed, displays from groups are still welcome (to book a space contact [rosemary.hooker@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:rosemary.hooker@blueyonder.co.uk)). Volunteers to assist with the tea breaks and some other actions are also always welcome. Please contact Rose Hooker at the above e-mail address.

Programme:

- 10:00 Chair: Emma Corke (SyAS)
- 10:10 Rob Poulton (SCAU) 'Before the Stuart façade – the hidden history of West Horsley Place'
- 10:45 Anne Sassin (SyAS) 'Community archaeology in Surrey – a year in review'
- 11:20 Tea
- 11:40 Katherine Mills (NT) 'Opening the door to Munstead Wood'
- 12:15 Simon Maslin (PAS) 'Finds from Surrey recorded with the PAS in 2023'
- 12:50 Lunch
- 14:00 Chair: Rob Briggs (SyAS)
- 14:05 Margary Award
- 14:10 Roy Stephenson (MoL, retired) 'Hoo would have guessed? The temporary ship burials at Shackleford'
- 14:40 Richard Savage (SyAS) 'Old Woking: the settlement over time'
- 15:15 Tea
- 15:40 Catherine Langham (AOC) 'Roman to Medieval Activity in Effingham: recent excavations at Church Street'
- 16:15 Tim Wilcock & Catherine Ferguson (SyAS) "'Rumbellments and other lumber" – what wills and inventories can tell us about early 17th century Surrey'
- 16:50 Close



# Disposal of the Dead in Iron Age, Roman and Early Saxon SE England

This conference, run by the Sussex School of Archaeology & History in association with the SyAS Roman Studies Group, is taking place (both in person and online) on **Saturday 23 March** at Kings Church, Brooks Road, Lewes, BN7 2BY.

Tickets are in-person (which includes teas and coffees): £25 full price, £20 student, SyAS members and USAS/SSAH subscribers; online: £12. There will also be poster displays by local archaeology groups and bookstalls. For more details and to book, see <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/disposal-of-the-dead-in-iron-age-roman-and-early-saxon-south-east-england-tickets-781428502687>.

In addition to reviewing the evidence for burial practices during the Iron Age, Romano-British and early Saxon periods in South-East England (and beyond), the day will also consider the fate of the 'missing millions'. How were these people 'disposed of'? Why were there apparently so few formal burials (cremations and inhumations) in both the Iron Age generally, and in the Romano-British countryside?

Programme:

10:00 Prof Tim Champion, 'Rethinking burial and disposal practices in the Iron Age South-East'

11:20 Dr John Pearce, 'Pale death, emperors and the enslaved: insights into burial from early imperial Rome'

12:10 Dr Jake Weekes, 'A further review of Canterbury's Romano-British cemeteries'

12:40 Dr David Rudling, 'Roman-period burials in Sussex and Surrey'

14:00 Ellen Green, 'Fragmented stories: The potential of disarticulated human remains for investigating Roman mortuary practices'

14:30 Prof Tony King, 'Human remains found at temple sites in Britain and Gaul'

15:00 David Calow, 'Looking for the dead in Roman South-East England – with help from Northern Gaul'



## LAMAS 60th Annual Conference of London Archaeologists

This year's LAMAS (London and Middlesex Archaeological Society) annual conference will focus on 'The DUA and DGL, 50 and 40 years on' and be held on **Saturday 23 March** at the Museum of London Docklands. It will be a hybrid event, with in-person and online tickets available via Eventbrite (£20 per person; see <https://www.lamas.org.uk/conferences/21-archaeology-conference.html>).

Programme (subject to change):

11:00 Welcome and introduction from Harvey Sheldon

11:10 Antonietta Lerz (MoLA) 'Further Excavations at Landmark Court, Southwark'

11:35 Kathy Davidson (PCA) 'Newgate Street revisited: recent excavations at the former GPO site'

12:00 Becky Haslam/Les Capon (AOC Archaeology) 'Affluence and Industry in Post-Medieval Southwark: Excavations at 67–71 Tanner Street'

12:20 Sandy Kidd/Stuart Cakebread (GLAAS) 'The Greater London Historical Environment Record'

12:40 Ian Hogg (ASE) 'Built on Words and Fire: Excavations at Stationers' Hall, London'

14:00 John Schofield 'Some major DUA sites 1974-84, and innovations along the way'

14:30 Dominic Perring 'On Mudbricks and Marxism: the revolutionary intent of single-context-recording and "the Early Development of Roman London West of the Walbrook"'

15:00 Robert Cowie 'Solving the enigma of "the lost centuries": the discovery of Lundenwic'

16:00 Gustav Milne 'The DUA's Trig Lane excavations 1974-6: the medieval waterfront project takes off'

16:30 Jacqui Pearce 'Top ceramics from 50 years of excavation in London'

17:00 Harvey Sheldon 'The Rose Theatre and the DGLA'

## Summer fieldwork

Dates for the Society's summer 2024 excavation at Cocks Farm Abinger are now available: **14-15, 17, 20-24, 27-30 June, 1, 4-6, 11-15, 18-22 July** (please note the site will be closed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays). To express interest in volunteering, please email [romanstudiesgroup@btinternet.com](mailto:romanstudiesgroup@btinternet.com).

Tentative dates for this year's test pitting at Albury are as follows: **10-13 June, 29 July-1 August, 9-12 September**. To be put on the project email list, which will include potential further geophysics opportunities, please contact [outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk](mailto:outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).

Please also contact the above email for interest in the Society's LiDAR project, including upcoming groundtruthing work at Holmwood Common, Leith Hill and Frensham.

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](mailto:info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk).