



Surrey Archaeological Society

No 30

June 2023

E-newsletter

Welcome to the Society's June e-newsletter, which highlights a few of the various events – conferences, lectures, training sessions, news items, etc – which we hope to be of interest to our members. Although general queries should continue to be directed to Hannah (info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk), those interested in volunteer opportunities or general outreach can contact me at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. Please also keep up-to-date via the website and social media ([@surreyarch](https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk)) for group and event updates.

Anne Sassin (*SyAS Outreach Projects Manager*)

Ankerwycke 2023 excavations



Following the successful 2022 excavations (link to the interim report [here](#)), Surrey County Archaeological Unit and the National Trust are returning this July for the second year of digging with Runnymede Explored, which will run between the dates of **Tuesday 18 to Friday 28 July**. Although spaces are limited and already oversubscribed, the NT will be offering free bookable tours throughout the day (keep an eye on the [website](#) and Festival of Archaeology listing to come for times).

A special evening tour for SyAS members has been arranged on **Thursday 27 July** (18:00-20:00). The gates will be open for arrival from 18:00-18:30 (and shut outside these times), with the walk beginning at 18:30. For further directions or queries, please email james.brown@nationaltrust.org.uk.

On **Saturday 22 July** SCAU will also be holding a special Family Dig Day at Ankerwycke for children aged 7+. To book a spot, fill out the following [form](#).

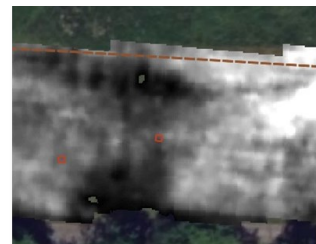


For more on project work and opportunities as part of the National Lottery Heritage funded [Runnymede Explored project](#), including updates and progress on the current conservation work of the chalk ruins, follow the [National Trust Archaeology](#) and [Digging Surrey's Past](#) news and social media channels. More information on the various historic monuments at the site, including downloadable pdfs of all field reports, can be found on the [National Trust heritage record database](#) (use the map to move around and explore other monuments in the area).

Albury Park test pitting

Earlier in June, the Society undertook a very successful first week of test pitting in Albury Park, along the course of the former road which connected the now abandoned medieval settlement of Albury with Shere to its east. The old road is very prominent in both LiDAR and aerial photos, and traces of the foundations of former cottages still remain, though were heavily disturbed when main services were laid through the parkland in the 1970s. Despite being designated as a deserted late medieval village, which was displaced in the early 19th century, little is known about its extent prior to the 18th-century estate map, with very little dating evidence existing for the former houses, beyond the current Grange Cottage, which is dendro-dated to c. 1547. It is hoped that through geophysical survey and a large-scale test pitting programme, more might be uncovered of the original settlement.

Six test pits in total were excavated over the four days. Although four pits came down onto the natural greensand and were comparatively scarce in finds, two pits, which were placed to locate one of the cottages immediately south of the road which was last apparent on the Anthony Browne map of 1813, came down onto a potential floor surface and flint wall foundation. Finds included a large amount of peg roof tile and bricks of likely Tudor date (many of them glazed), as well as pottery of both medieval and post-medieval date; a full report will be forthcoming, once assessment is completed.



Possible stone floor surface (and associated wall sill?) in TP4 (left) and unmortared flint wall overlain by building demolition (TP3, centre). Both pits can be seen in relation to building foundations seen on the geophysics and line of the former road (above).



Many thanks must go out to the amazing volunteer team who braved the heat, with particular mention to Sylvia for running the finds team, and of course the Albury Estate for being so accommodating.

We are hoping to return for another week of test pitting in early August (**Monday 31 July** to **Thursday 3 August**, although these dates are not yet confirmed). Volunteers are welcome for both finds and digging; no prior experience needed. If interested in taking part and wanting to be added to the project mailing list, please contact Anne at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



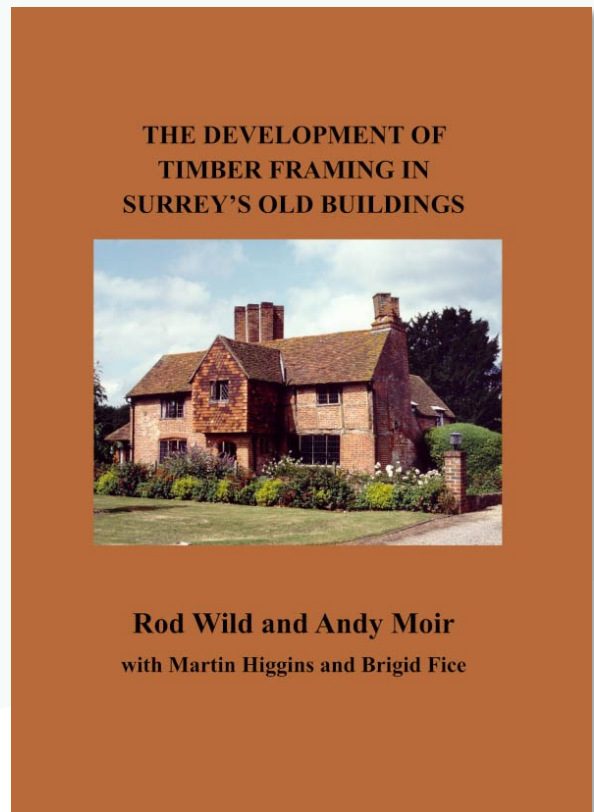
The Development of Timber Framing in Surrey's Old Buildings

This publication is the result of a joint project between SyAS and the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey), supported by Surrey County Council and a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The objective was to map the development of timber-framed buildings, century by century, area by area, across the county, using tree-ring dating.

The Project has confirmed the sequence and development of many architectural features, often attributing earlier dates than had been previously understood.

The report of the findings has now been published in a 200 page, fully illustrated book, providing a clear, accurate picture of how the vernacular architecture of Surrey has evolved.

Visitors to the Society's headquarters at Abinger can purchase a copy at £20 or copies can be obtained by post. See the [website](#) for more details.



West Horsley Place geophysics and group visit

As a follow-up to May's successful resistivity survey at West Horsley Place, two days of magnetometry survey is planned for **Monday 24** and **Tuesday 25 July**, to take place over both the front and side lawns of the house and field in front. Volunteers to help with the survey are welcome (no prior experience needed, as training will be provided, though spaces are limited due to the scale of the survey). If interested in assisting, please contact outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



A special bespoke guided tour of the house and grounds is also being arranged for Society and Medieval Studies Forum members on **Sunday 24 September**. Please save the date, as details, including costs and the full day's programme, will be available shortly. Find out more about West Horsley Place and its local history (including various research articles) on their [website](#).

Priory Orchard publication

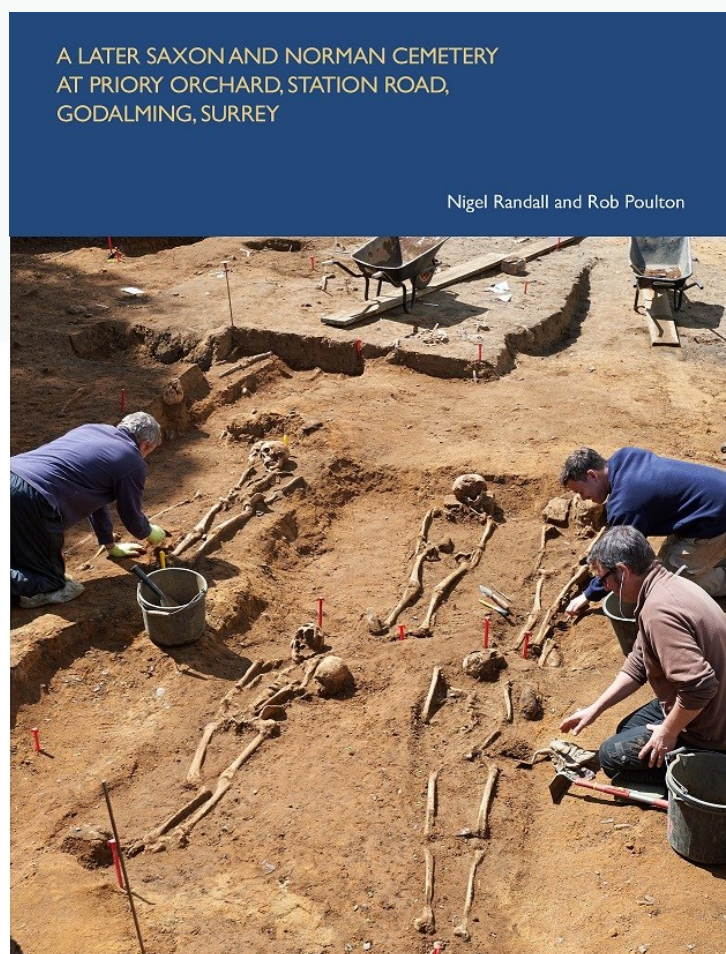
A new publication, *A later Saxon and Norman cemetery at Priory Orchard, Station Road, Godalming, Surrey* by Nigel Randall and Rob Poulton (SpoilHeap Publications Occasional 15), is now available.

Excavations at the Priory Orchard site in Godalming revealed over 300 inhumations and large quantities of charnel within part of a densely packed graveyard (see also *Bulletins* 468-70). It probably acted as the minster cemetery for the large territory of Godalming hundred between the early 9th century and the early 12th century, as demonstrated by 103 radiocarbon dates. It lies around 30m distant from Godalming church with its known later Saxon origins.

All the skeletons were supine and aligned east to west, the majority with arms by their side and the remainder with one or both crossed low over the pelvis. It seems unlikely that coffined burial was practiced and probable that normally the naked body was wrapped in a shroud. Distinctive features included two female burials with loom-weights, and another with a linen smoother. More common was the presence of pillow stones, found in around 10% of the graves, while a phenomenon unique to this cemetery was the presence of 'ash halos' observed around the head in eleven burials. It is suggested that these, like the pillow stones, reflect a focus on ensuring that the head was properly arranged in preparation for the Resurrection.

Twelve burials included nails (mostly only one) that were placed deliberately, though serving no identifiable practical function. The volume includes a review by John Blair which argues that this phenomenon relates to the use of 'sharp iron' to restrain the dead at a period when documents suggest an endemic fear that occasional sinister, malevolent or alien individuals might not lie quiet, and should be neutralized to forestall trouble.

The publication is available to purchase from the Surrey History Centre foyer and will shortly be added to the Surrey Heritage online shop.

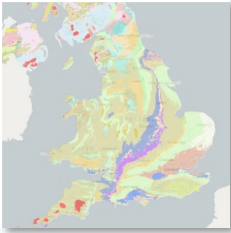




Building Stones Database for England map explorer

Historic England's recently launched Building Stones Database for England brings together information on local building stones, their uses and sources as an online interactive GIS (Geographical Information System) resource.

The [Building Stones Database for England Map Explorer](#), a joint initiative between the British Geological Society and Historic England, lets you explore building stones and their sources, as well as the bedrock and superficial geology. You can browse the geological map, as well as search for a building stone, stone source or structure, or search by postcode, address or place name. The database, which identifies important building stones, where they came from and potential alternative sources, has been designed as a resource for mineral planners, building conservation advisers, architects and surveyors, and those assessing townscapes and landscape character.



SyAS Library's withdrawn journals, available to members

The Library has undertaken a second rationalisation of our journal stock. Regional journals that are now freely available online have been withdrawn from stock. These journals are now in need of a new home. If anyone is interested in taking a run of journals for their own use, please contact Hannah Jeffery on librarian@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. All our journals, both regional and national, are now available on open access in the meeting room at Abinger.



Click [here](#) to see the list of journals that have been withdrawn.

SyAS librarian advert

Surrey Archaeological Society is looking for an enthusiastic part-time librarian at its Abinger Research Centre, due to the retirement of the current librarian. The successful candidate will be the face of the Society, meeting members and visitors in person, and dealing with remote enquiries.

A full job description is available by email from info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. Further enquiries should also be directed to this address.

Recent items acquired by the Library

In May, the following [new items](#) were acquired by the Library. To view other of our [recent acquisitions](#) or browse the online Library [catalogue](#), please visit the website.



Finds from the FLO

A modern one for @FindsOrgUK, but important bit of social history! This copper alloy livery button ([SUR-7404E8](#)), found near Tandridge, may have belonged to the household of William John Evelyn, MP and High Sheriff of Surrey, descendent of John Evelyn the 17th century diarist. It depicts a crest of a Griffon gorged with a coronet on its face, with the maker's inscription on the reverse, REYNOLDS & CO / 50 St MARTINS LANE / LONDON, which dates the button to 1871-1873.

23 June is the anniversary of the death of the emperor Vespasian in AD 79, who was in charge of much of the Roman conquest of southern England (and probably marched through Surrey too). This worn silver denarius ([SUR-CFA172](#)), also from Tandridge, depicts Mars on its reverse, holding a spear in the right hand and trophy on his left shoulder.



Surrey Historic Environment Record staffing update

The current Historic Environment Record (HER) Officer, Rob Briggs, is on sabbatical from Surrey County Council until 28 September 2023. During this time, Shân Mughal will be covering the HER Officer role. With a background in archaeology and conservation, Shân joined the Surrey HER team in 2021. Alongside Emily Brants and Jazmin Sexton (HER Assistants), the HER will be operating business-as-usual during this period, and is contactable at her@surreycc.gov.uk.

Festival of Archaeology

From **Saturday 15 to Sunday 30 July**, the Council for British Archaeology will once again be hosting the annual Festival of Archaeology, this year with the theme of Archaeology and Creativity. Events will be taking place all across the county. To register an event or to see what to attend in your area, visit the [website](#).





Dance and Archaeology at Holmbury Hill

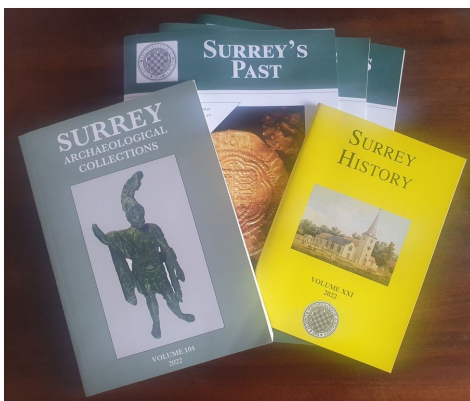
Building on ten years of work with dance in museums and her 'Dancing in Caves' project, Surrey-based choreographer Katie Green is researching a new dance and archaeology project with support from Surrey Hills Arts and the National Lottery through Arts Council England to coincide with this year's Festival of Archaeology. Over the summer, she will be working with archaeologists, a film-maker, writer, composer and group of dancers in two sites in Dorset and Surrey, particularly exploring the ways that archaeological artefacts and sites can yield new information about humans' relationship with the land through time, and to consider ways of bringing this to life through dance, story-telling and music.



On **Tuesday 18 July** (13:30-16:00), the public is warmly invited to Holmbury Hill for a sharing of work-in-progress and new ideas, including a guided walk up to the Iron Age hillfort at Holmbury Hill for a talk at the summit from Judie English and then back to Holmbury St Mary Village Hall. Short performances of new movement ideas will take place along the walk, with an opportunity for refreshments and discussion back at the hall, as well as a chance to feed back and inform future research.

This is a free event, open to everyone who enjoys dance, archaeology and walking in the local landscape! Capacity is limited, so please book your place in advance from [Eventbrite](#).

Thinking about joining?



If you aren't yet a member of SyAS, now is the perfect time to join! Rates start at £6 per year for junior members (aged 16-20), with £12.50 for students and £30 for ordinary members (£5 associates). In addition to three issues of *Surrey's Past* a year, annual journal *Surrey Archaeological Collections* and *Surrey History*, members have access to a wide range of fieldwork opportunities, research projects and special interest groups, many of which have their own lecture programmes and study days. To join, please visit our [website](#).

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