



Surrey Archaeological Society

No 42

June 2024

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 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.instagram.com/surreyarch)) for group and event updates.

Anne Sassin (*SyAS Outreach Projects Manager*)

Festival of Archaeology

This year's Festival of Archaeology, themed around Archaeology and Community, will run from the **13-28 July**. The Council for British Archaeology (CBA) will be celebrating its 80th anniversary, making it the perfect opportunity to celebrate the incredible grassroots groups, societies and individuals that share a passion for archaeology across the UK.



There will be several exciting events, both nationally and more local, whose listings can be found on the [Festival website](#). More events will be listed over the course of the next month (check listings for full details) but include walks, lectures and children's activities at Bourne Hall, Farnham Museum and Albury Park, as well as the Saxon Fayre in Kingston!

This year will also have a photography competition which focuses on the wonders of community and can feature scenic views, recognisable landmarks, etc, but – most importantly – has images of people. There are two categories (age 8-17 and 18+). The winning photograph will be displayed in a digital photography exhibition and offered as a digital calendar screensaver. Let's try to get Surrey heritage represented!



Albury Park community test pitting

Early June saw the first week of test pitting at Albury Park as part of our investigation of its deserted medieval settlement displaced in the early 19th century. A team of 30 volunteers took part in the excavation and finds processing, with ten test pits completed in total – a massive feat! Approximately 85 school children from Gosden House School, Peaslake School and Clandon C of E Primary School also took part in sessions which were part-coordinated by the Churches Conservation Trust.

The focus of the June week was along the course of the former Dog Kennel Lane, with a few of the pits reaching medieval levels, providing a more thorough picture of the settlement at this time. It is hoped that later digging in the summer can shift focus to the north of the Tillingbourne, where the old road crossed over and passed by the Little George Inn (now Grange Cottage) and where geophysics have indicated further cottages.



The second week of summer test pitting will run from **Monday 29 July** to **Thursday 1 August**, with the final week from **Monday 9** to **Thursday 12 September**. Volunteers are welcome for both finds and digging; no prior experience needed and all tools provided.

As part of the Festival of Archaeology, there will be an open day on **Sunday 28 July** (12:00-15:00) where members of the public (families welcome!) are invited to see some of the finds and have a go at helping to dig some of the pits. A bookable guided walk around the Park will also be available from 14:00-16:00 (please see the [event page](#) for this walk to book, as spaces are limited). From 13:00-14:00, the beautiful private pleasure gardens, laid out in the 1670s by John

Evelyn, will be available for touring, and at 16:30, a public talk on the test pitting project and its historic background will be given in the church by our archaeologist in charge. See the [Festival event page](#) for more info or email outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.

West Horsley Place – June Marvel of the Month

The Surrey Heritage June Marvel of the Month is West Horsley Place, where SCAU carried out a community excavation in 2022. Recent dendro-chronological and archaeological work have revealed that the 17th-century façade conceals a complex history, with evidence of a medieval hall, chamber block and additional structures from the 13th century onwards, along with significant Tudor expansion into a grand residence. You can read more about the project on the [webpage](#).



Runnymede Explored Story Map

As the National Lottery Heritage Funded Runnymede Explored project reaches an end, you can find out more about its work by looking at the new [Story Map website](#), compiled by SCAU. This includes results of the community archaeology project at Ankerwycke and Runnymede, timeline of the project as a whole, interactive map, 3D models, video and photos from the 4-year project.

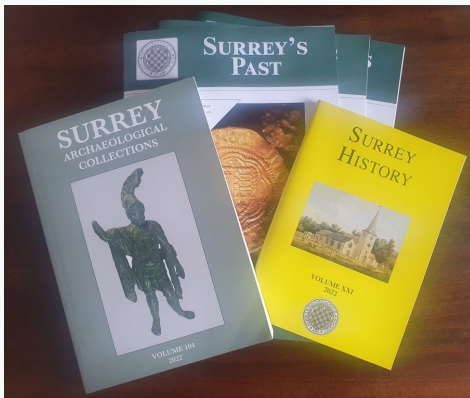
Investigations at Leith Hill by NT Archaeology

After a year of essential conservation work, Leith Hill Place is reopening to the public. Essential works inside allowed trained volunteers to undertake a detailed graffiti and under-the-floorboards survey. Alongside some more salacious finds linked to the building's use as a boys' boarding school from the 1970s and the usual collection of cigarette boxes, match boxes and sweet wrappers, there were some more intriguing finds: several pages from the *Huddersfield Examiner* dated 1 March 1941, two pages from the *Girls Friendly Society, Shere, Abinger, and Holmbury S Mary Branch 1919 New Year Letter* and a tease for a 'Wonderful Desinograph', the closest match for which research by one of the volunteers found to be a French version 'Le Wondergraph' dated around 1910.





Thinking about joining and getting involved?



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 assoc). 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 with their own programmes. To join, please visit our [website](#). Some groups you might wish to join include:

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

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

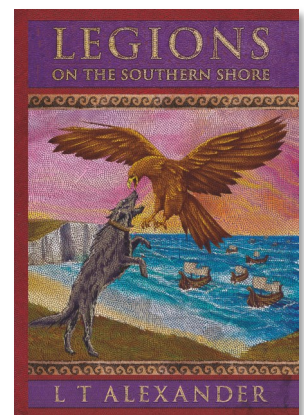
Prehistoric Group – In-person meetings, regular newsletter and study of collections in museums; for more details, visit the [PG](#) webpage.

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

Recent items acquired by the Library

To browse the online Library [catalogue](#), please visit the website. The Margary Room at Abinger is open to everyone (including non-members) on Mondays and Tuesdays (10:00-16:00). Please check before visiting to ensure the Library will be open and that the items required are available.

SyAS member and writer Lawrence Alexander has recently published an historic fiction novel, [Legions on the Southern Shore](#). Lawrence lives in Teddington and drew his inspiration from the rich history of the Thames and the south east, and is donating a copy to the Library, where it will be available for borrowing (and welcome to review).



Heritage Open Days

The Society will hold a Heritage Open Day at their Research Centre in Abinger Hammer on **Sunday 15 September** (10:30-15:00). The Lithics Group will be in attendance studying and cataloguing lithics collections and there will be an opportunity to explore the Library.



Finds from the FLO



For #FindsFriday, this 16th-17th century cast lead alloy token ([SUR-6CC017](#)) from the Thames was found near Trig Stairs, London. One side depicts a stylised ship, with a central mast flanked by stylised figures of passengers or crew. The other side has letters 'TS', which when combined with the ship motif suggests that this is a ferry token specific to a crossing to or from this point on the Thames.

Margary Award 2025

The Research Committee initiated a new approach to the Margary Award in 2024 with the following guidelines, and now invite submissions for 2025.

- i) The award is a recognition of a new contribution to the knowledge of the past of the historic county of Surrey.
- ii) The research or its demonstration should have taken place within the previous year, and not previously made public.
- iii) Any individual or group may enter provided there is no professional input.
- iv) Submissions for the award could take a variety of forms such as illustrations, Powerpoint displays, videos, short reports and traditional displays.
- v) Nominations should be received by the committee by **31 December 2024**, with completed entries submitted at least one month before the date of the Symposium.
- vi) The judging panel will be the choice of the Research Committee, and may still be formed by the Chair of the Research Committee, the President of the Society and an invited third party.
- vii) There will be one award of £300. There will be a runner-up if the number of entries justifies it.

This is an opportunity for community activities, youth groups and individuals to be creative in how they approach publicising their work. Nominations can be made at any time by contacting the Research Committee via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.

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