

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

Royal Gunpowder Mills, Waltham Abbey; Tuesday 9th September

This visit has been organised by David Simmons.

The Royal Gunpowder Mills are set in a 175 acre site in the Lee Valley, away from towns and villages where the waterways provided power and safe transport to the Thames by barge and alder plantations provided the charcoal. Started in the 1660's and originally a private concern it was taken over by the state in 1784 to ensure supplies for the navy. Towards the end of the 19th Century cordite replaced gunpowder as the principal product and nitro-glycerine, guncotton, and tetryl were manufactured in the northern part of the site which is now a nature reserve. In 1945 all production ceased with research and development the sole activity until the site closed in 1991. Amongst other things research was done on ejector seats and fuel for rocket motors. There is a new purpose built exhibition centre giving details of the manufacture and use of gunpowder and several of the buildings have been restored and may be open to visitors.

Their website is www.royalgunpowdermills.com

Timetable

Up to 11.00 Assemble in car park for entry at 11.00.

11.00 - 11.40 Introductory talk and video.

11.50 - 12.50 Tour of site on "Land Train", the seating is open so bring umbrellas etc.

13.00 - 14.00 Lunch; those not booking lunch can eat sandwiches in the grounds (see attached menu and include code on the booking form).

14.00 - Time to look round the exhibition and restored buildings.

No tea will be available on site, but when finished we could drive to nearby Waltham Abbey where there are several teashops.

Cost is £5 each plus the prepaid lunch; there is no limit on numbers. Cancellations can be accepted up to midday on the 5th September.

Getting there.

By car: it is close to junction 25 where the M25 crosses the A10. Take the A10 northwards (Hertford, & Cambridge) at junction 25 and then turn right at the first roundabout towards Waltham Abbey (A121). After two more roundabouts turn left into Beaulieu Drive; this is opposite a McDonalds and just before the A121 turns right, the road goes through or alongside a housing estate, the car park is at the end. The total distance from junction 25 is no more than 3 miles. If coming from the east the A121 can be joined on the other side of Waltham Abbey from junction 26 on the M25. A map will be provided

By rail: the nearest Station is Waltham Cross, just over a mile away. Please indicate on the reply form if you will be coming by train.

Group price menu:

Light refreshment: £3.25 pp

Tea / coffee with

Sandwich and piece of cake; or Selection of scones and cake or; selection of Danish Pastries

Code LR

Ploughman's £4.70 pp

Cheese or Ham with Baguette; Pickle and Pickled onions; salad –lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber and coleslaw

Code PC or PH

Mainmeals £4.10 pp

Lasagne and chips or jacket potato with side salad

Code LC or LJ

Fish and Chips and a buttered roll

Code FC

Vegetarian lasagne chips or jacket potato and salad

Code VC or VJ

Deserts

Chunky apple pie and cream or ice cream £2.35

Code AC or AI

Cheesecake and cream or icecream £2.35

Code CC or CI

Tea / Coffee per cup 80p

Code T / C

Lunch of LC, AI & C will get you a lasagne with chips, apple pie and ice-cream and a cup of coffee. Since an outside caterer brings the food on to the site, you need to be specific and note your choice.