

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION
Chatley Heath and Cobham Bus Museum, Wednesday 3 May 2006

This visit has been organised by Kate and Mike Quinton

The Count of Monte Cristo intercepted the semaphore communication link to the Bourse in Paris to put false information into the money market. English spies saw the Chappe signalling system in action in Napoleonic Europe and proposed something similar to the Admiralty. The one remaining semaphore tower in the line from London to Portsmouth is at Chatley Heath, where curator, Paul Taylor will explain the workings and history.

There is a very pleasant 20 minute walk across heath land to reach the tower, 88 steps to the roof to see the semaphore arms closely and the view and then 20 minutes walk back. The ground is uneven in places (tree roots in the sandy soil) and so a good pair of shoes is advisable.

The initial meeting place is in the Blue Car Park (map ref: TQ079587) at Ockham Common, which is immediately left off slip road from junction 10 on M25 to SW direction of A3. There are toilets and a snack bar open from 7.00am.

After lunch, we drive to the Cobham Bus Museum, which at present is housed in an aircraft hangar used by Barnes Wallis. There, John Rawlins and his helpers will show their collection of buses and coaches, the widest selection under one roof of London motor buses in the world. We should be able to have a ride in one of them.

10.00 to 10.25am meet and coffee/loos at Ockham Common Blue Car Park.

10.25 to 10.45 walk to Chatley Heath Semaphore Tower (TQ089585).

12.15 to 12.35 return to cars.

12.35 to 12.45 turn L from Blue Car Park into Old Lane. After 1 mile, turn L at Black Swan into Ockham Lane. Drive further 2 miles. Over M25 road becomes Plough Lane. "The Plough" (TQ107592) is on R before T junction.

12.45 to 13.45 lunch.

13.45 to 13.55 drive to Cobham Bus Museum (TQ080610). R out of pub car park. Immediately L at T junction into Downside Road. After 1 mile turn L into A245 direction Woking. Drive further 2 miles over A3. Just past Silvermere golf course on L turn L into Redhill Road. Museum is immediately on L. Park in road.

14.00 to 16.00 visit and ride.

Rail Travel

If requested, Kate will be at Effingham Junction for 9.45 to meet the 9.03am from Waterloo. Please note that the next train (+30 mins) will be too late. Any passengers would need to return from Weybridge Station. Kate's mobile no is 07950016565.

Numbers in the party will be restricted to 30.

The charge is £5.50 and includes entry to the Semaphore Tower and the Bus Museum and a ride on a bus.