

Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

Visit to Michelham Priory, house and grounds - Thursday 29th June 2006

This visit has been initiated by Leonie & Peter Mercer

Michelham Priory is 8 miles northwest of Eastbourne, near Upper Dicker and close to the A22. The original Priory was founded in 1229 and occupied by Augustinian canons until its dissolution in 1537. The present house is a mixture of periods with a sizeable Tudor wing, having been in turn part of the Priory, a working farm and then a country residence. The site is surrounded by England's longest, water-filled medieval moat. It has formal and informal gardens including a re-created medieval physic, (as opposed to physics), garden and an interesting kitchen garden. There is a working watermill, which was restored 8 years ago, and which it is hoped will be open during the afternoon – there has been milling at the Priory for centuries, the earliest records date back to 1434. The site also has an Elizabethan barn, a forge, a rope-museum and an Iron Age centre, plus a shop and a restaurant. The Sussex Archaeological Society has a website at www.sussexpast.co.uk which contains information on the site.

Timetable:

- 10:15 a.m. Meet in car park.
- 10:30 a.m. Group entry to the Priory. Entry charge is £5-50/person for groups of 15 or more which includes admission and the talk/tour.
Time for a coffee and loo-stop.
- 11:00 a.m. Meet with tour guide and have a 1-hour tour of the site. It is hoped that this will be outside and will focus on the archaeology and grounds, although this could be changed if the weather is sufficiently dire.
- 12:00 p.m. Guided tour ends
- 12:15 p.m. Group lunch in the restaurant. It is requested that we book the meals in advance. The choices available are given on the next page. (It is possible to eat sandwiches in the grounds, but on our last visit the quality of the food in the restaurant was very good!)

After lunch, people are free to tour the house and the gardens, the barn, the mill etc. And leave when they wish. There will be no formal guided tour of the house, but there are guides in the rooms to talk about what is on display and the history of the house.

The priory closes at 5:00 p.m. Dogs are not allowed in the house and grounds (other than guide dogs). The visit cost (excluding lunch) is £6.00. The number of participants will be limited to 25 maximum.

Michelham Priory is situated in Upper Dicker approximately two miles west of Hailsham and eight miles north west of Eastbourne. Brown heritage signs from the A22 and A27 will help direct you. From Brighton, use the A27 to the Alfriston roundabout and take the Upper Dicker exit. From Tunbridge Wells use the A267 or from Hastings and Bexhill use the A271 and turn on to the A22 at Hailsham in the London direction. Shortly after the Boship roundabout, take the left turn signposted to Upper Dicker. Berwick and Polegate railway stations are both around three miles from the site.

Local Map



Please indicate your choice on the usual reply slip (p2 of the mailout pack).

Picnics There is a designated picnic area with tables next to the children's' play area on the moat walk, five minutes walk from the car parks. Within reason, rug picnics are permitted in the gardens but not near the house or on the tables provided for customers in the restaurant. Please take care not to drop litter. There is a fully licensed bar in the restaurant where drinks can be purchased.

(1) Curate's Snack £4.05

A bowl of home-made soup with Priory Soda bread, Accompanied by a glass of fruit juice;

(2) Prior's Special £6.75

Summer Salad with a choice of Ham, Tuna, Cheddar, Coffee or Tea. Please circle choice.

(3) Michelham Lunch £6.80

Home-made Quiche (served warm), Michelham Salad Garnish with new potatoes, Coffee or Tea

(4) Canon's Choice; (a) Two Course £10.95 or (b) Three Course £12.95

Home-made Soup (vegetarian),

Lasagne with Salad & Priory Soda Bread

or Steak & Kidney Pie served with vegetables & potatoes

or Vegetarian Quiche

Fruit Crumble with cream

Tea or Coffee