

Institute of Physics – London & South East Branch – Retired Members Section

Visit to Northolt Airport and Chenies House on Wednesday 11 November 2015

This visit has been organised by Stewart Coulter. **NB As an MOD establishment Northolt Airport requires registration details well in advance and photo ID on the day. Once booked through the IOP website, you must forward the details described below to the organiser at stewartcoulter.rems@gmail.com**

THE VISIT

A contrasting pair of visits: RAF Northolt, a few miles N of Heathrow in W London played an important role in WWII and today is home to the Queen's Flight and is the airfield of choice for private jets wishing to visit the capital. We will take a 2h conducted tour of the facilities before lunch at a Harefield pub with a remarkable view. The pub is half way to our second destination, the delightful C17 Chenies House in Herts.

NORTHOLT AIRPORT

The airport was established during WWI and celebrated its centenary earlier this summer. It played an important combat role in both WWI and WWII but today is principally a passenger airport for military and political personnel and Heads of State though it is private jets that make up the majority of movements. Military aircraft (helicopters apart) are very rare which is fortunate for those like myself living under the flight path. An exception was during the Olympics when 4 Typhoons were based here. It is also home to the London Air Ambulance. BoB memorial flights - a real treat - fly most years. It has been suggested as a satellite LHR runway in the past but not currently.



The entrance to the Base

We will be taken on a 2h guided tour of the airport facilities starting at 10:00. It was not possible to make a preliminary visit and what we will see will be decided closer to the time, so please revisit this flyer one week before the visit when it *may* be updated with the latest information. We will meet our guide at 09:45 at the car park (details below) and after entering and parking inside the base we will then transfer to the bus provided for our tour. Candidate visits include 32 Squadron, formally the Queen's Flight, hangars housing helicopters and planes, the VIP lounge where Heads of State and the like pass through and a restoration project involving the Dowding System. An operations room was also mentioned. Our guide, Ian Rushford, was keen to include the Polish Museum and lounge. Northolt was the base of 303 Squadron, the most successful of the 16 Polish squadrons during the BoB and you will at some point pass the Polish War Memorial at the A40 junction.

REGISTRATION

Booking and payment are through the IOP on-line booking system. The maximum group size is 25. The MOD details required are *all* names as per your passports and car registrations four weeks in advance. **THIS INFORMATION MUST BE EMAILED DIRECTLY BY 23:59 SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER** to the organiser: stewartcoulter.rems@gmail.com

If travelling by public transport Ruislip Gardens is only a few minutes walk from our meeting point. Please contact the organiser if travelling this way to request onward and return travel.

LUNCH

We will leave Northolt shortly after midday for lunch at The Old Orchard in Harefield village en route for Chenies. I would be surprised if any pub inside the M25 sports a view to equal this one, it extends for miles yet not a single building is to be seen. Inside, the large pub still preserves a cosy atmosphere and provides very good food and ales. See <http://www.brunningandprice.co.uk/oldorchard> Pre-ordering is required, I will send you the pre-order menu in late October.



CHENIES MANOR HOUSE AND GARDEN

We step back to Tudor times when we enter this wonderful treasure of a house. What you see today is largely of that period though the stone undercroft is C13 and a scheduled Ancient Monument. The rich furnishings are from a range of periods from its history. It was visited by Henry VIII and the baby Princess Elizabeth in 1534. During Henry's next visit 7 years later his 5th Queen Katherine Howard had an affair with an attendant - and we all know the result. It has enjoyed an illustrious history since punctuated by periods of neglect and more recently and mundanely has featured in The Antiques Roadshow and Timewatch. If the church adjacent is not open, I will request that it is.



After our visit we will take light refreshments before dispersing. J18 of the M25 is just 4 km away.

TRAVEL AND PARKING

Please see maps below. Entering HA4 6NG into Google maps or on my phone places a pin on the Main Guard Room at the entrance to the site which is where we will meet. Park, enter the guard room, present yourself as a member of the REMS visit and **present your photo ID**. When everyone is gathered we will drive into the base where we will park before being taken on the bus provided. Given these security demands please *do not be late* – phone me on 07 747 800 837 if there is any problem. Note, if you do have time for refreshments continue N away from the A40, there is a parade of shops with cafes just past the bridge. A warning: the last 3 miles from the M40 can easily add 15+ min to your journey time. Build this into your timings, check traffic.

The Old Orchard is at UB9 6HJ, a 20 min drive. It is down a signposted lane as you leave Harefield centre.

From there, Chenies Manor at WD3 6ER is much the same distance and most easily accessed via the M25.

Returning to junction 18 on the M25 from Chenies is a matter of minutes.

If travelling by public transport, Ruislip Gardens on the Central line is 300m away, turn left on exit. For your return, there are 2 Metropolitan Line stations within 2 miles of Chenies though a more convenient drop-off might be possible on the day. **Please email me if you need a lift once you have registered with the IOP.**

PROGRAMME

- 09:45 Arrive at Northolt, meet at Main Guard Room next to car park (see below)
- 10:00 Enter base for tour
- 12:00 End of tour, depart for lunch
- 12:30 Lunch at The Old Orchard, Harefield
- 14:00 Depart for Chenies
- 15:00 Conducted tour of Chenies Manor House (no later than... can be brought forward)
- 16:00 Light refreshments before dispersing

COST £7. You pay for your own travel, food and final refreshments.

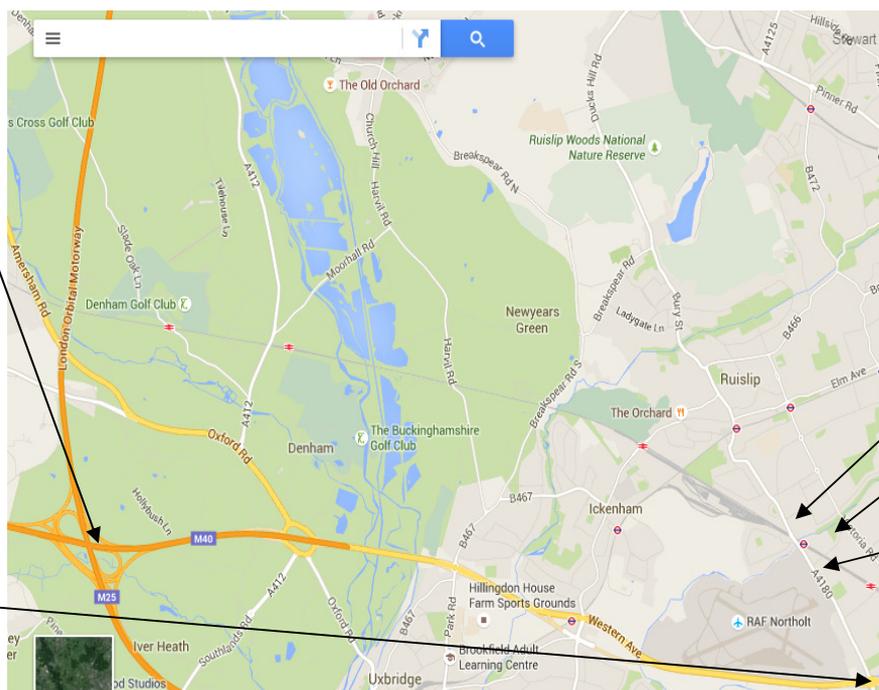
CONTACTS

Before the meeting: Tony Colclough 020 8398 0766 or 07930 171307 tonycolclough@tiscali.co.uk
On morning of visit: Stewart Coulter on 07747 800 837

DIRECTIONS TO NORTHOLT (Sat Nav: HA4 6NG)

1: M25
Junction 14
with M40:
take
direction
London

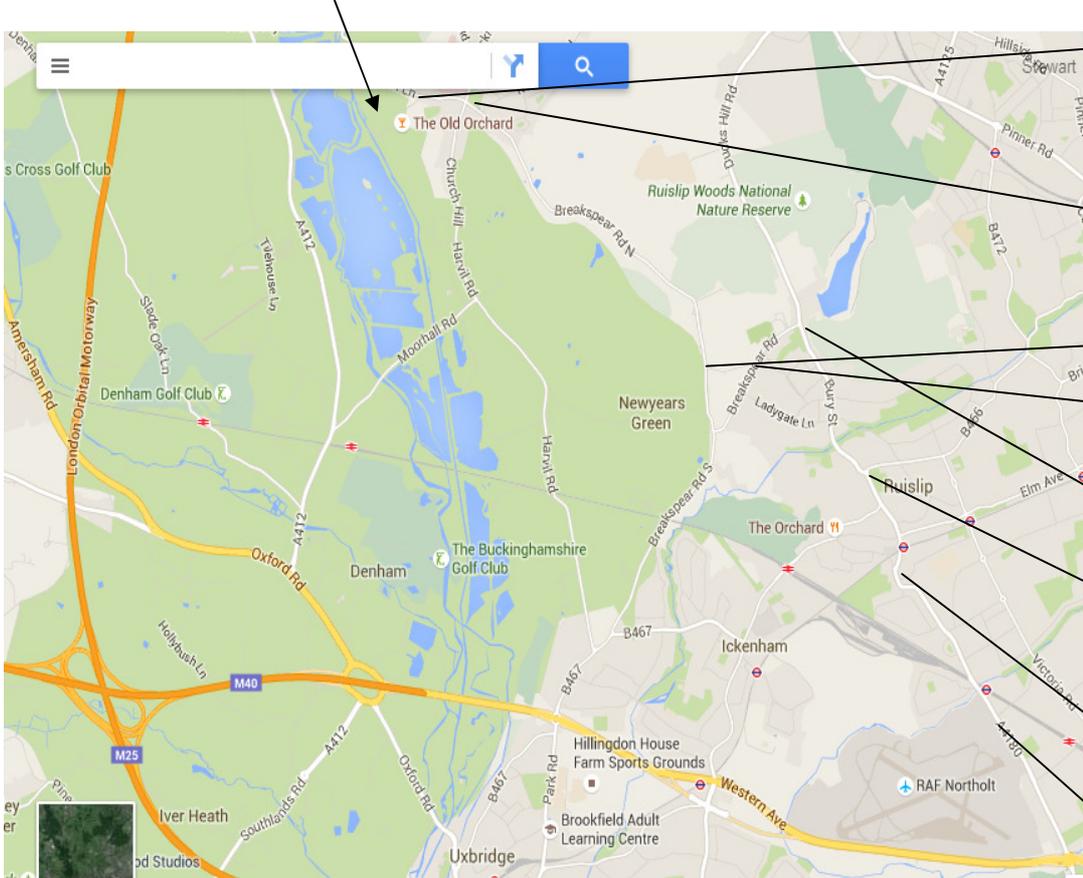
2: Turn left
at Polish
War
Memorial
after you
pass the
airport:
direction
Northolt



3b:
Shops
and
station

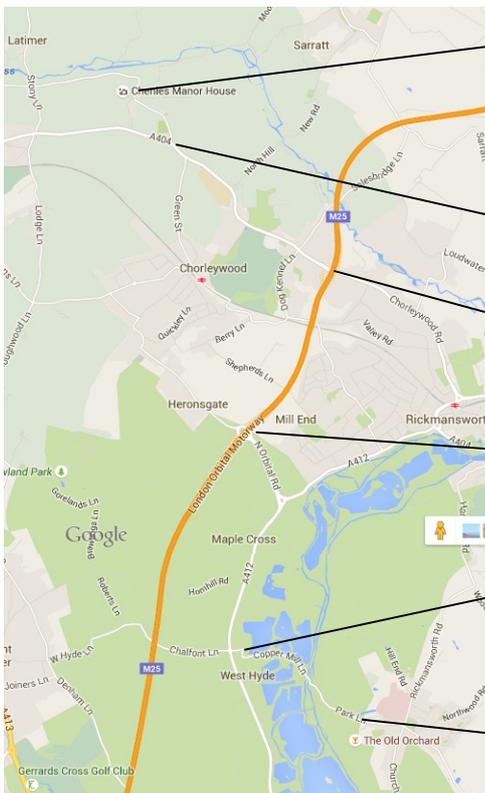
3a:
Entrance
to base
after
passing
end of
runway

DIRECTIONS TO THE OLD ORCHARD (Sat Nav: UB9 6HJ)



- 8:** After 450m on a right hand bend, turn left, signposted The Old Orchard
- 7:** At centre of Harefield cross rndbt
- 6:** Right at T jcnct
- 5:** Right after Woodman pub
- 4:** Left at mini rndbt to Harefield
- 3:** Through Ruislip High St, left at mini rndbt at end
- 2:** Right at mini rndbt before bridge
- 1:** Turn left out of base

DIRECTIONS TO CHENIES (Sat Nav: WD3 6ER)



- 6:** When you suddenly come upon the village green the road bends right. Take the second left, a narrow road, metres after the 1st left. Continue on to the gravel drive as far as you can to park.
- 5:** Shortly after 70mph sign turn right to Chenies
- 4:** Exit next jcnctn (17) A404 direction Amersham
- 3:** Take M25 direction Watford
- 2:** Down a hill, across canal, then a narrow lane. At T jcnct turn right then left then right to join A412 direction Watford
- 1:** Turn left on exit to main road