

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

Severndroog Castle & Eltham Palace on Thursday 31 August 2017

This visit has been organised by Tony Colclough.

We visit two striking destinations in south east London: Severndroog Castle and Eltham Palace. The eighteenth century Severndroog Castle is a neo-gothic tower situated in the Castle Woods in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Built on Shooter's Hill, it is one of the highest points in the region, and offers spectacular views of London. The 19 acre Eltham Palace site is now dominated by the stylish house built in the 1930s for the Courtauld family. It combines the great hall of the medieval royal palace with an Art Deco home.



By kind permission of Severndroog Castle

Severndroog Castle was built as a memorial to Sir William James by his wife Lady Anne. William James was the Commander-in-Chief of the East India Company Marine. His most famous exploit was in 1755 when he destroyed a fleet of 'pirate' ships on the island fortress Survanadrag (Severndroog) on the west coast of Malabar, India. The gothic-style castle is 60ft in height with three hexagonal turrets. Over the years, the castle has changed hands many times. The two most notable uses were by General William Ray and his team, who used the building to conduct the first ordnance survey of southern Britain, and when it was used as a watch tower during the Second World War.



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The **Eltham Palace** site is now dominated by the stylish house built in 1933–6 for Stephen and Virginia Courtauld. They incorporated the great hall – the most substantial survival from the medieval royal palace – into the design. Like the house, the palace's 19 acres of gardens feature both 20th-century and medieval elements. We shall take an audio tour of the Palace.

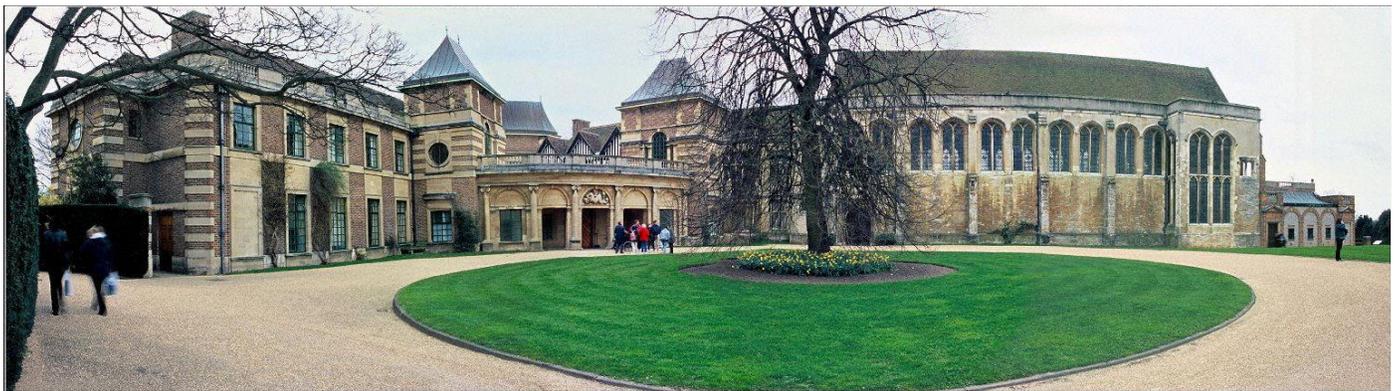


Photo by Nick Blackburn - Own work, CC BY-SA 2.5, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1228581>

The great hall, with its magnificent oak roof, was built for Edward IV in the 1470s for court dining, entertaining and receptions. Intending the great hall to be used as a music room, the Courtaulds had a minstrels' gallery added at one end. Much of the 1930s work represents Stephen Courtauld's (and his architects') concept of what a medieval great hall should look like. Stained glass was added to the hall windows in 1936. The roundels

depict the badges of Edward IV, and the glass in the bay windows depicts some of the great owners of the palace, from Bishop Odo to Edward IV and his queen, Elizabeth. Henry VIII spent much of his boyhood in Eltham Palace.

Where and when to meet: We gather in the café at Severndroog Castle from 11:00 am. Should the café be closed, we gather in the entrance. The address is Severndroog Castle, Castle Wood, Shooters Hill, London SE18 3RT.

Getting to Severndroog Castle.

By car from the M25: The Castle is 20 min from the M25. Leave at J2 signposted for central London and Lewisham and join the A2. Take the slip road off the A2 signposted Falconwood. Turn right at the end and follow the road to the next junction, turning right on to Welling Way. At the next junction turn left on to Shooters Hill, pass the Memorial Hospital on the left and take the first left after Craigholm. Look for the brown heritage signs. There is no on-site parking, but there is a parking just a short walk from the Castle in Castle Wood. It can be found along a narrow lane running from Shooters Hill just above Christ Church School, a distance of about 100 yards.

By public transport: Train: Network south east to Welling, then a 489 or 86 bus from bus stop D towards Shooters Hill Then see below. **Tube:** Jubilee line to North Greenwich, then a 486 bus to Shooters Hill alighting at the Memorial Hospital near the Castle. Walk downhill a few 100 m and turn left at the brown heritage sign into the castle grounds

For an interactive map click on <http://www.severndroogcastle.org.uk/visitor-info.html#map> .

Getting to lunch at Eltham Palace: Taxis will be arranged if there are insufficient lifts offered by kind participants with cars. Alternatively, walk back to Shooters Hill, turn left down the hill and left at the bottom into Well Hall Road. Catch a 161 bus to Eltham Palace.

Getting home by public transport: Eltham Station is not far from Eltham Palace where trains run to central London stations. A 161 bus runs from just outside the Palace to the Station.

Lunch: Eltham Palace café.

Timetable (times approximate)

11:00 – 11:30	Assemble at Severndroog Castle
11:30 – 12:30	Tour the Castle
12:30	Depart for lunch at Eltham Palace
13:00	Arrive at Eltham Palace for lunch
14:15	Commence audio tour of house and gardens (audio hire included in your payment)
16:00	Refreshments at the Orangery and depart.

Size of party: 25 max

Cost: £18.00 or, for members of National Heritage, £5.00 – they'll need proof of membership. These sums do not cover a share of a short taxi transfer if required.

Contacts: Before the day contact Tony Colclough at tonycolclough@tiscali.co.uk or on 020 8398 0766. On the day contact 07930 171307. **Late arrivals:** Ring Tony on 07930 171307.