



INTRODUCING AUXILIARY UNITS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Coleshill Estate, now owned by the National Trust, was, during the Second World War the Headquarters of Auxiliary Units the secret British Resistance Organisation. The Estate is open to the Public on certain days during the summer months. The National Trust and CART volunteers show parties around explaining how the Estate was used and taking them down into the underground Replica Operational Base. This includes children accompanying their parents and they get a thrill out of it. Their ages vary, the youngest to-date being 3 months (and one of the eldest a 91-year ATS veteran who had served at Coleshill, saw it for the first time).



SECRETS & SPIES – SCHOOL VISITS

A school approached the National Trust and asked them to devise a programme to encourage children to write stories. This has since developed into school visits. The National Trust devised a programme whereby children could experience what happened on the Estate and the training that was undertaken.

They get the chance to experience a day preparing to go underground as Britain's secret Resistance did, and train as they did at Coleshill during the Second World War. Giving them simple tasks, such as Investigating codes, find dead letter boxes and visit the underground Operational Base. Camouflage and secrecy obligatory.

Originally part of the course took them up to the original Operational Base, but as years went by it was realised, that to enable the children to have a better experience a new O.B. should be built and kitted out. During 2011 National Trust volunteers built the replica and it was opened by Bob Millard, an Auxilier.

The course is split into eight different tasks and consists of:

1. Taking the memorial tree trail,



2. dressing up and crawling under camouflage nets,



3. Visiting the Guardhouse,



4. going down into the Operational Base,



5. Looking through Wartime items - a handling exhibition,



6. Aircraft recognition,



7. Code breaking and finally searching for dead letter boxes.



A wonderful day enjoyed by the children.



Photographs kindly provided with by Even Swindon Primary School.

Contact enquiries about visits. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/Buscot-and-Coleshill-Estates>
or phone [01793 762209](tel:01793762209)