

National Trust Press Release

For immediate release

Spitfire and Hurricane fly over iconic Chartwell to mark 70th anniversary

Visitors to the garden at Chartwell will be able to glimpse a rare sight on Friday 20 August as the Battle of Britain Spitfire and Hurricane fly over Chartwell, the former home of Sir Winston Churchill, near Westerham in Kent.

The flypast will mark the 70th anniversary of Churchill's "The Few" speech, which took place at Whitehall on 20 August 1940 – in the midst of the Battle of Britain. It was the speech that immortalised the young airmen facing peril in the skies above Kent. "Never," Churchill decreed, "in the field of human conflict has so much been owed by so many to so few."

Although Churchill and his family had been evacuated from Chartwell when war broke out, the great leader returned home to Westerham several times during the conflict in search of peace, space and inspiration.

It was the views across the Weald of Kent that had so captivated him when he first saw Chartwell. During the turbulent early years of the 1940s, those views and the landscape surrounding Chartwell became Churchill's motivation and served as a reminder of exactly what he was fighting to protect.

The historic planes will pass over Chartwell just after 1:30pm on the afternoon of Friday 20 August. Visitor services manager, Phoebe Vincent, says: "We're very excited about the flypast – the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight is so evocative. August is a busy month for us, but we'll welcome any visitors who want to come to visit the garden and share this special moment with us."

There will also be an opportunity on the day to buy tickets for the Battle of Britain anniversary concert, to be held at Chartwell on Saturday 4 September. The Spitfire and the Hurricane will be returning to Chartwell on that evening along with the Central Band of the RAF to commemorate the Battle of Britain and the sheer bravery and heroism of the airmen involved.

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For further information and photographs please contact Phoebe Vincent, Visitor Services and Marketing Manager, tel: 01732 861144, email: phoebe.vincent@nationaltrust.org.uk.

Attached photo shows the south front of Chartwell © NTPL / Flo Smith.

Notes to editors:

Chartwell is the former family home and garden of Sir Winston Churchill and is now owned, cared for and opened to visitors by the National Trust.

Chartwell, Mapleton Road, Westerham, Kent. TN16 1PS.

House open Weds-Sun, 11am-4pm until end of October 2010.

Garden, exhibition, shop and restaurant open

1 Nov – 28 Feb, Wed-Sun, 11am – 4pm

(closed 24 and 25 December)

Also open Mon 20, Tues 21, Mon 27 & Tues 28 Dec, 11am-4pm.

Garden admission prices:

Adult £5.90, child £2.95, family £14.75. NT members free.

Additional admission charge applies for house.