



## Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team

### Press Release

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## Churchill's Secret Underground Army Honoured 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Auxiliary Units, July 4<sup>th</sup> Coleshill, Oxfordshire

July 4<sup>th</sup> marks the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the conception of a top secret army. The Auxiliary Units, formed by Colonel Gubbins under the orders of Winston Churchill, were to have been Britain's last hope of slowing a German invasion.

Between 3,000 and 5,000 local men and women from around the UK were recruited for this top secret work through the old boy network after which they signed the Official Secrets Act. Trained in sabotage and guerrilla warfare, they would have lived in underground bunkers and used explosives to destroy high-value targets such as ammo dumps and railway lines.

The English training HQ for these units was a large palladium mansion in sleepy Coleshill, Oxfordshire. Now 70 years on, the National Trust is hosting a large celebration of the bravery of these men and women on July 4<sup>th</sup> and the Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team (CART) are playing a large part in the days events.

*"We are organising a series of talks, from published writers on the subject, such as Owen Sheers, author of 'Resistance' to Q & A sessions from a surviving Coleshill trained Auxilier, Bob Millard"* describes Tom Sykes, CART's founder.

*"There will be lots to see including military vehicles, period catering, Living History re-enactments and displays, a stand run by the British Resistance Organisation as well as tours to an authentic underground bunker, known as an Operational Base. We have worked hard with the National Trust to ensure there is something for the whole family to see and learn"*

The Coleshill Auxiliary Research Team was set up due to the overwhelming response to a website Tom created, located at [www.coleshillhouse.com](http://www.coleshillhouse.com). The website is now the online authority on the Auxiliary Units and is added to almost every day.

*"The internet provides a national network for research into these brave men and women's activities and members of the public are supplying CART with new information almost daily. We can publish this in minutes and share findings with all the interested parties"* explains Tom.

The wider community is also involved with the day – The Halfpenny Brewery at Lechlade has brewed a special ale called "Auxilier", which will be on sale in the Radnor Arms, Coleshill as well as in the CART shop.

Everyone is welcome on Sunday, 4th July 2010 at Coleshill – the day starts at 10:30am and ends at 4pm. The National Trust will charge a £1 entrance fee which will be donated to the Help For Heroes charity.

For more info please visit [www.coleshillhouse.com](http://www.coleshillhouse.com) and click on 70<sup>th</sup> Year Event or contact the National Trust on 01793 762209.