



Lincolnshire Remembrance

Every memorial has a story. Help uncover it.

LINCOLNSHIRE MEMORIES AND MEMORIALS TRAIL

# HIGH FLIGHT

A cycle route visiting some of the historic RAF sites around RAF Digby



## Introduction to the route

This cycle route passes by two RAF stations RAF Digby and the former RAF Metheringham. There are opportunities to visit both sites but you will need to co-ordinate this carefully as the visiting times are limited for both sites.

During the Second World War RAF Digby was home to Hurricane and Spitfire squadrons and to Douglas Bader, Guy Gibson, and pilot poet John Gillespie Magee. The airfield hosted the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Operations Room and billets were at nearby Blankney Hall.

RAF Metheringham became home to 106 Bomber Squadron in 1943 despite it being far from complete. Although they only had one week to settle in, the squadron was fully operational in time for the start of the Battle of Berlin in November 1943. In total the squadron lost 59 Lancaster bombers by the end of the war, flew 5,834 sorties and lost over 1,000 airmen. The squadron remained in Metheringham until 1946, when the airfield was decommissioned.

“

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth  
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;  
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth  
of sun-split clouds, — and done a hundred things  
You have not dreamed of — wheeled and soared and swung  
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there,  
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung  
My eager craft through footless halls of air....

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue  
I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace.  
Where never lark, or even eagle flew —  
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod  
The high untrespassed sanctity of space,  
— Put out my hand, and touched the face of God. ”

John Gillespie Magee Jr.

# HIGH FLIGHT

— MEMORIAL TRAIL —

## Useful Information for visitors

### **STARTING POINT**

Ashby de la Launde a village west of Digby, and east of the A15 and B1191 roads.

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### **TOILETS**

Toilets at Metheringham Airfield Museum and Digby Lima Operations Room, as well as cafes and pubs on the route

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### **PARKING**

On road parking in village – please park considerately.

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### **ORDNANCE SURVEY MAPS**

OS Maps: OS Landranger (1:50 000) 121 and  
OS Explorer (1:20 000) 272 and 261

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### **ROUTE LENGTH AND TIMINGS**

Route length: 14 miles / 23 km

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### **TERRAIN**

Undulating, all on road riding, B roads and unclassified roads, some with fast moving traffic.

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### **REFRESHMENTS**

Scopwick – Royal Oak public house and Metheringham, cafes and pubs

# CYCLE ROUTE

— DIGBY TRAIL —



1

## War memorial in the churchyard of St Hybald

The route begins at Ashby de la Launde. Before setting off visit the war memorial in the churchyard of St Hybald, at the end of Church Avenue. The population of Ashby in 1914 was 210, 35 people volunteered but only 14 returned.

2

## Digby village

From Church Avenue turn right and follow Main Street towards Digby village.

3

## Village Lock-up

At the junction with the B1188 **(Be cautious as this junction has fast traffic)** turn right and then immediate left into Church Street in Digby village. Continue through Digby village to the Buttercross and Red Lion pub. Turn left here into North Street. You will have passed a curious round building on Church Street, which covers a well, but is believed to have functioned as the Village Lock-up and dates from the 16th Century.

4

## Church of St Clement

Continue along North Street to Rowston village. At Rowston you pass the church of St Clement (the war memorial is inside the church here) and then turn right into Church Lane and follow the quiet lane to Kirkby Green.

5

At the junction in Kirkby Green turn right on the B1191 and follow this road over the railway to the junction with the B1189.

6

## Metheringham Airfield Visitor Centre

Turn left towards Metheringham and after a short distance there is a left turn to Metheringham Airfield visitor centre.

7

Return to the B1189 and follow this road to Metheringham.

**(Caution is needed as this road can be busy and fast at times)**

8

## Metheringham War Memorial

Follow the B1189 road past Metheringham Station (Moor Lane / Station Road). There are cafes, pubs and shops in Metheringham on the High Street. Pause by the War Memorial which is a statue of a soldier in a small garden, just near the middle of the High Street.





9

## Blankney village

Opposite the Scarf and Goggles Inn on High Street turn into Drury Street and follow this road out of the village to Blankney, an estate village with very distinctive houses.

10



## The Holy Cross Church

Turn left at the junction and travel on the B1188 for 2km to Scopwick.

**(Caution this road has high traffic speeds)**

Then turn left into Main Street, Scopwick, by the Royal Oak pub. Then follow the beck through the village to find The Holy Cross church. The churchyard contains a war memorial for the village. Follow the sign on the church wall to find the War graves. There are many war graves for the Royal Canadian Airforce including that of the pilot and poet John Gillespie Magee.



11



Return to the Royal Oak junction with B1188, turn right and then left into Heath Road (B1191) back to Ashby de la Launde (4km).

**(Caution this road has high traffic speeds)**



## RAF Digby Lima Sector Operations Room

### Cuckoo Lane RAF Digby

#### Details for visitors:

Free Guided tours leave at 11am sharp. The tour takes in some of the old station buildings, a Spitfire, and the bunker itself. The tour is available each Sunday, May to October (No need to book).

**Please don't be late or you won't be able to access the site.**

Toilets are available but no cafe. Please be sure to bring photographic ID.

Further Details may be obtained from the Visits Coordinator:

**Telephone:** 01526 327272 (8am - 5pm Monday to Friday) (ask for museum tours).

**Website:** [www.visitlincoln.com/things-to-do/raf-digby](http://www.visitlincoln.com/things-to-do/raf-digby)



## Metheringham Airfield Museum

The museum is open March to October on Wednesdays, weekends and bank holidays. Please check website for accurate opening times before visiting.

#### Address

The Visitor Centre, Westmoor Farm, Martin Moor, Metheringham, Lincoln, LN4 3WF

**Contact:** [www.metheringhamairfield.co.uk/contact-us1.html](http://www.metheringhamairfield.co.uk/contact-us1.html)

**Website:** [www.metheringhamairfield.co.uk](http://www.metheringhamairfield.co.uk)

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— MEMORIAL TRAIL —



This route was compiled by Digby RAF Airplay Youth Group working with Lincolnshire Memories and Memorials project.

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This route has been checked by Sustrans for safety.

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