



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Award-winning museum attracts educational grant.

March 12th, 2025: Popular local museum Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome has attracted the support of a newly established foundation to help it boost educational visitors.

The treasured museum has developed a strong reputation for its educational visits. Schools and colleges have enjoyed site and its various workshops, with topics covered ranging from science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) to local History and creative writing.

Most schools take a cross-curricular approach, though, says Asst Curator and Educational co-ordinator Suzanne Wood.

“We find that whatever the age of the student, they prosper in with an overall visit plan, taking in elements of numeracy, literacy and other topics.”, says Suzanne. “While we do have specific sessions that we develop with our educational partners, we are celebrated for the flexibility we can offer.”

The museum, which is battling for its survival against the devastating effects of roadworks in 2024 as well as escalating costs, has received plenty of requests for educational visits in 2025. The first began before the site re-opened to the public in February and they continue throughout the year.

Now, all this hard work has caught the eye of the newly formed Spencer West Foundation. The Foundation, established by international law firm Spencer West in late 2024, reflects the firm’s vision that companies should be active participants in their communities, not just business entities.

Spencer West Partners opt in to donate a percentage of their fees to positive change in the communities of the 20 jurisdictions the firm has a presence in worldwide. Many Partners have been agents for change in their communities for years. They are the firm’s worldwide eyes and ears when it comes to identifying opportunities to make a difference.

The Foundation has recognised that one of the major issues preventing schools and colleges taking advantage of museums like Stow Maries is the lack of transport links that service them. To help, the Foundation has granted an undisclosed sum to the museum to manage on their behalf, to help pay towards transport costs.

Stow Maries couldn’t be happier.

“When there is such limited transport available, it falls to the shoulders of the parents to deliver and collect the students,” says Suzanne.

“This is not possible for all students. Coach hire costs are also high – and the school has to pass these onto the parents, due to ever-decreasing budgets. Having some of these costs met is a fantastic thing for all the families.”

Spencer West Foundation Trustee Ian McDowell said, “The Foundation’s trustees are thrilled this grant will increase access to the transport students and young people rely on to enjoy the community benefits the Aerodrome brings.”

“Spencer West has direct ties to the community and significant experience and expertise in the aviation and technology sectors, so it’s wonderful to support the museum which shares so much in common with what our Partners are involved with every day.”

Schools or groups wishing to take advantage of this grant should approach Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome directly, via an e-mail to info@stowmaries.org.uk, as part of their group booking process.

The museum opens to the public every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Private bookings are available on other days. To plan your visit on a regular opening day, go to www.stowmaries.org.uk . For details of the events taking place at the museum in 2025, check <https://www.stowmaries.org.uk/events>.

All proceeds from opening to the public and all events directly funds the ongoing work to preserve and protect Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome and support its battle for survival.

The museum, situated between Chelmsford and Maldon in the Essex countryside, features the largest collection of Royal Flying Corps buildings in the world. It was the base of 37 (Home Defence) Squadron Royal Flying Corps, which was tasked to protect London from raids by German Zeppelin airships and Gotha heavy bombers.

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, Hackman’s Lane, Purleigh, CM3 6RN is open from 10am until 4pm, on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. www.stowmaries.org.uk

Ends

Further information from Ian Flint on info@stowmaries.org.uk

Notes for editors:

- Essex County and Maldon District Councils led the acquisition of the site for the nation in 2013, following a generous grant from the Heritage Memorial Fund. It was placed in the care of Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, a registered charity.
- Today the museum, still an operational airfield, is supported and maintained by over 100 volunteers. It is open each Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10am until 4pm
- More information about Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome can be found at www.stowmaries.org.uk

About Spencer West

Spencer West is a full-service international law firm with over 360 partners globally, in 17 jurisdictions. Known for its innovative, collaborative, and partner-led approach, Spencer West combines global reach with local expertise – delivering exceptional legal solutions across corporate, commercial, real estate, litigation, dispute resolution, and private client matters and supporting communities worldwide through grants from its

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