



Press Release

For Immediate Release - 4/05/2026

LIVING HISTORY BRINGS WORLD WAR ONE BACK TO LIFE AT STOW MARIES GREAT WAR AERODROME

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome was a hive of wartime preparation at the weekend as groups of living historians demonstrated what life was like back in 1916, when the site was an active Royal Flying Corps base.

Now the best-preserved World War One aerodrome in Europe, the Accredited Museum's **WW1 Living History Weekend** on Saturday and Sunday turned the clock back to when Stow Maries was home to 37 Squadron Royal Flying Corps, defending the country against German Zeppelins and Gotha bombers.

Visitors enjoyed interacting with the different groups of living historians on site, all specialising in different aspects of Great War history. Quite literally "learning the ropes", some museum-goers took the opportunity to join members of 399 Detachment, Royal Naval Division as they demonstrated the birth of battlefield casualty care and the little known-story of the "RND", Churchill's very own band of 'Sailors-on-Shore'. The living history group represented a camp of Sick Birth Attendants, refreshing their skills before heading to the frontlines.

Leon Seccombe and the 54th Field Ambulance, part of the WW1 Medical Services Living History Society, treated visitors to an explanation of the treatments available for wounded servicemen once they had been brought back from the Frontline, while Neil Bond from Past History appeared as a British Army Chaplain for those in need of a blessing. The Lufberys RFC Living History Group were in attendance as Royal Flying Corps personnel. The event also featured guest appearances from Kelsey Ellington, known on Instagram as The Flying Historian, and author David Dunford, signing copies of his new book *Ogres in the Sky: Zeppelins Over Essex in the First World War*. Another extra special treat was the visit of Mr Richard Vary in his famous Fokker Triplane, in the paint scheme of the infamous 'Red Baron'.

Ian Flint, Chief Executive Officer of Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome, comments: "The weekend, bathed in gorgeous Spring sunshine, gave visitors a window into the past to see what life was like when Stow Maries was at its busiest, ready for war in the air and on the ground."

The next event, on Saturday 16 May is **The Stow Maries Motorbike Show**, when around 200 bikes will be displayed on site, and visitors can enjoy a barbecue, bar and bike-themed

trade stalls. Then, on Sunday 24 May, one of the highlights of the year is **Wings and Wheels**, when hundreds of vintage cars will be joined by historic aircraft displaying overhead (weather permitting), creating a fantastic family day out.

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2/... The Stow Maries Motorbike Show tickets cost £12 for adults, children 0-10 free, children 11-15 and concessions £9, available online or on the gate. Tickets for Wings and Wheels must be booked online: Adults £25, children 6-15 £12, children 0-5 free, family 2+2 £65, plus small booking free. Please note that The Airmen's Mess café is open to ticket holders only during both of these events.

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome is open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 10am to 4pm. The new family-friendly pricing structure for 2026 means that children aged 0 to 10 are now free on all standard admission days, and prices for adults and concessions have been frozen. For more information, to book tickets for any event or to sign up to the monthly newsletter, visit www.stowmaries.org.uk.

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Please credit all images to SMGWA. For more information or additional photography contact comms@stowmaries.org.uk

Notes for editors:

- 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.
- 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.