



<http://www.nkrs.org.uk/>

Issue 193

NKRS Newsletter

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Our next meeting will be at
The Hurst Community Centre, Room 15, Hurst Place, Bexley, Kent, DA5 3LH

2021 Events so far

31st August 2021 5th Tuesday meet at Robin Hood Bexleyheath see email 29/08/21

7th September 2021 Return to meetings at the Hurst Community Centre

21st September 2021 Return to meetings at the Hurst Community Centre

We are returning to meetings at the Community Centre from the 7th September

Protocol for Meeting

We have drawn up a Covid protocol for meetings which you will find on Page 2 of newsletter 192.

it is important that you read this before you attend. Many people act as if the threat from the virus is over but it is evident that it still presents a clear and present danger.

If you have any queries regarding the protocol please contact myself or any other committee member for clarification.

Initially the meetings will also be relayed on Jitsi to enable those unable or unwilling to attend to take part. The link used will be our normal Jitsi link.

<https://meet.jit.si/stepheng8jztnkrs>

Please note that Meetings and Jitsi meetings are open to all, not just members of the NKRS



The North Kent Radio Society Club Net

Since the resumption of meeting the club net will now take place every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month

Start at 8.30PM on 145.5 and then we move to a convenient clear channel.

Please feel free to join us whether you are a member or not you will be welcome

Lighthouses and Lightships Weekend 2021



I think all were agreed that it was an excellent day again this year.

We met for breakfast at the refurbished T Bone Café in Erith and reported to the site for 11 AM. As we have now had many years of experience of setting up the station it was soon assembled under the guidance of Frank G3WMR.

The weather was rather variable but not too much of a problem and a number of stations were worked in the UK and around Europe



Photographs by Andy Fribbens G8MLQ

This year's team consisted of Frank G3WMR, Andy G8MLQ, Steve G8JZT, John G8DOG (who came from Stourbridge for the event), Ian G7PHD, Phil G4EGU and myself G4YIB.

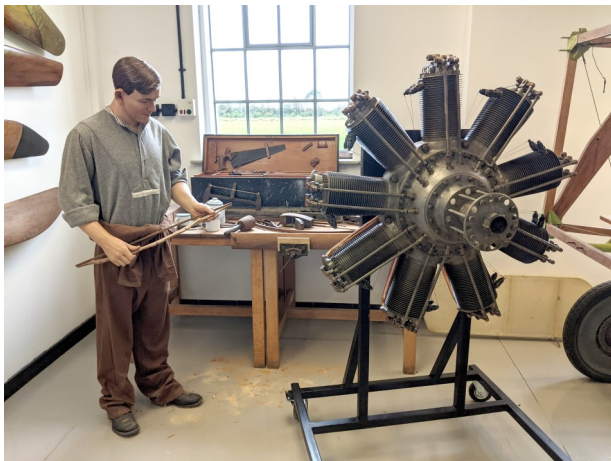
Thanks to Phil for the use of the generator.

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome



This is a photograph of a painting which hangs in one of the buildings

I first heard of the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome several years ago when sitting on Shooters Hill (perhaps for the windmills on the air event) we worked an amateur who was working there and on his way home. Move on a couple of years and the Sunday after our lighthouse event I had John G8DOG and his partner staying with us and we decided to pay it a visit. John is himself a pilot so I knew he would find it interesting.



The Aerodrome is located 3.7 miles (6 km) southwest of Maldon in Essex and is quite easy to reach from the A12.

The first German airship raids on Britain took place in 1915 when two Zeppelins attacked the coastal towns of Great Yarmouth and King's Lynn, Norfolk. In June 1917, the first air raid on Britain by huge Gotha bomber aircraft took place

Stow Maries was first surveyed as a possible aerodrome in August 1916, but it was not ready to accept aircraft until May 1917. The aerodrome was built as a direct response to the threat of German Zeppelin and Gotha bomber raids on the London area. It was built as part of a plan to site airfields from Dover to Edinburgh to prevent inland penetration of hostile forces. The intention of the location of Stow Maries was to intercept Zeppelins and Goth bombers coming from Europe and using the Thames and Crouch for navigation to carry out raids on London..



Stow Maries Aerodrome was established in September 1916, on twelve fields belonging to Edwins Hall and Old Whitmans farms and its first occupants were the BE 12b flight of no 37 Squadron moved in from their base at Orfordness, Suffolk to establish Squadron HQ at the Grange, Woodham Mortimer. A flight operated from Rochford and C flight from Goldhanger.



The first aircraft arrived in May 1917 and were two BE 12a aircraft which were equipped to provide night fighter cover from the airfield. By 1917 A Flight also moved into the airfield from Rochford. Sopwith Pups and Sopwith Snipes replaced the BE12's in 1918 and later C flight moves to Stow Maries to unite the Squadron.



In April 1918, the aerodrome was handed over to the newly formed Royal Air Force, Some of the buildings were not yet finished, and it is thought that after the armistice in November 1918, works may have been halted, but some buildings were completed in December 1918. The base was abandoned in 1919 and reverted back to farm use with the buildings being used to house cattle and farm machinery.

The site was not considered suitable for use in

WW2 but the Germans did bomb it thinking it to be an active airfield. It is still in use today for aircraft to use on request.

In 2009, it was purchased by Steve Wilson with Russell Savory as tenant and restoration then began. In 2012 it was designated with Grade II Listed status and the following year the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Trust was formed to take ownership and preserve and develop it to its full potential.



Many of the buildings have been restored but it is a work in progress. It is now an excellent museum with a very good cafe.

One of the major factors of our visit was how pleasant the volunteers running the place are and the admission includes a very excellent guided tour which is not to be missed.

*"Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome is open from 10am-4pm every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. There's no need to pre-book!
They have lots of interesting Exhibitions for you to see, and also offer Tours lead by our guides who's knowledge and passion bring History to life!"*



The memorial of those who died at Stow Maris Aerodrome. Sadly most of these died in accidents and only a couple actually died in combat

ARRL Announces Partnership with Maglite



Not so popular in the UK but very popular in the US are Maglite Torches. They come in a whole variety of sizes from one that takes a single AAA cell to one that takes 4 D cells and perhaps bigger. You never see an American policeman without one on his belt.

It therefore came as no surprise to me to read in QRZ magazine that the ARRL and Mag Instrument, Inc., the US manufacturer of the Maglite® flashlight, have announced a partnership “based on common interests in equipping people to be prepared for emergencies and to serve their communities in extreme situations such as natural disasters.”

In the USA ARRL members provide a large number of operators trained in radio communications. They provide public service through the ARRL Amateur Radio Emergency Service® (ARES®). Maglite is the best known maker of US-manufactured high-quality flashlights that have a reputation for toughness and durability.

Bear in mind that the USA faces far more disasters from flood fire and wind than the UK or mainland Europe does so I quote from the QRZ article “Amateur radio operators help people in times of difficulty, often by supporting emergency communications when critical infrastructure is damaged, and by aiding first responders’ need to keep connected,” said Anthony Maglica, Founder, Owner, and CEO of MAG Instrument, Inc. “We manufacture a product that has been used in public safety for over 40 years, and we are very supportive of the incredible dedication of radio amateurs, so culturally this is a great alliance for both brands.”

“ARRL is delighted that Maglite recognizes the service and skill of ARRL members. This partnership will help us introduce amateur radio to more people,” said ARRL CEO David Minster, NA2AA.

Perhaps the RSGB could do something similar.

The MT Kent



I recently met some friends at Limehouse and prior to walking up the canal to Hackney we walked round the edge of the docks and there in the basin was parked the MT Kent.

We got chatting to the crew who invited us on board so we had a good look round. The crew were all long term river men (now retired) and were interesting people to talk with and while chatting we investigated the wheelhouse and engine room.

As impressed as I was with the vessel and the crew I decided to do some further research on the craft. See the next page.





The **M.T.Kent** moored at Canary Wharf

The **M.T.KENT** was built in 1948 by Richards Ironworks Ltd of Lowestoft for J. P. Knight of Rochester who had a fleet of tugs operating in the Thames Medway area. At the time of her launch in 1948 she was the most powerful single screw harbour tug in Great Britain with diesel propulsion and I think the first diesel tug on the Medway.

Her early life was spent ship handling at Rochester, Chatham and Sheerness but over the years she was to work in many places in the UK, carrying out coastal tows and a host of other duties. When the BP Refinery on the Isle of Grain (now closed and dismantled) was opened it was the **M.T.Kent** who assisted the first tanker to her berth.

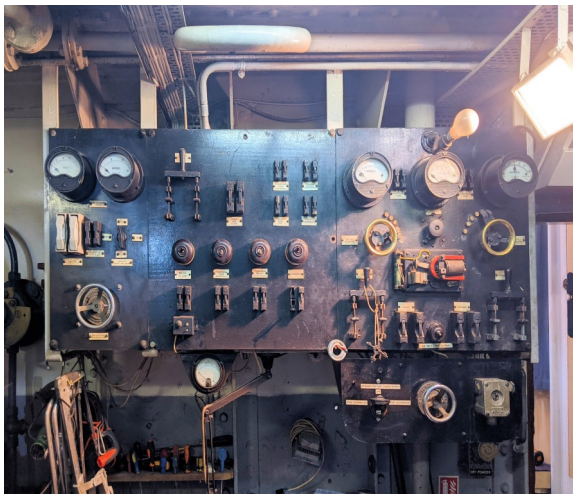
In 1968 she transferred to Scotland along with a number of Knight tugs and in the 70's she was a familiar sight round Scapa Flow on hire to Costains

for the construction of an LPG jetty. By 1988 the Kent had returned south, taken out of service and was laid up at Chatham before being taken over by S.E.T.S., The South Eastern Tug Society in 1995. S.E.T.S. bought her for £1.00 on the understanding that she would be preserved and restored.

In late October 1995, **M.T.Kent** was moved to her existing berth in No. 1 Basin, Chatham Dock adjacent to the Ship and Trades restaurant (I used this restaurant a number of times pre covid and it was excellent.). On 20 June 1998 the main engine was started for the first time since 1987 and run ahead and astern whilst secured alongside the quay.

The **M.T.Kent** is fitted with a British Polar 5 cylinder diesel, 850bhp and I am told it is the last example of this engine still in existence. (picture on right)

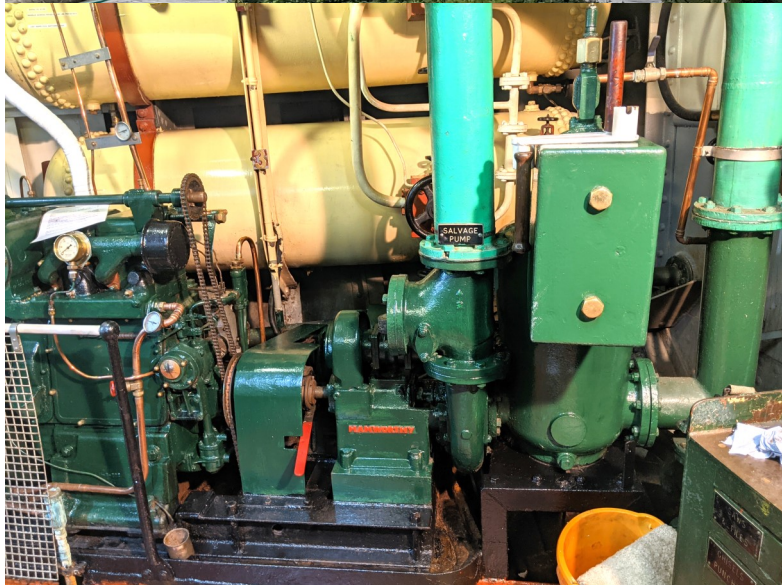




The **M.T.Kent** is a well known attraction at various festivals around the east coast of England, and across the sea in the Netherlands and Belgium.

In 2012 the Kent was part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on the River Thames, and in 2013 the Kent was a performer in "The Ships Opera" also on the Thames . (I have written about this in a previous newsletter)

The South Eastern Tug Society maintain her in running order and make occasional trips up the Thames and over to mainland Europe. Visitors are welcome on board by prior arrangement.



The South Eastern Tug Society aims to preserve and maintain a collection of historic tugs and allow them to be used to further study this area of maritime history. The society has a base within the former Royal Navy Dockyard at Chatham where its small but growing collection is permanently on display. More information from <https://mtkent.org.uk/>

Please note the external photographs of the **M.T.Kent** are taken at Canary Wharf.

Thorne (well claw) in the Rose



The above is not included for any reason other than that I like the picture.

The kitten looks bigger in the photograph than she did in real life when I photographed her sleeping on a friend's bed.

That's all for this issue be good to see you at our first meeting for a long time or at the Robin Hood on the 31st August 2012

The final picture is of a couple Lions of London from "The Tusk Trail" which I may write more about in another newsletter.

That's All

Dave

