



FRONTLINE KENT

Anniversary tours for World War One and World War Two

Guarding the shortest sea crossing to Europe, Kent has been on the frontline of England's defence for centuries, and this role came to the fore in both World Wars.

Dover, 'Lock and Key of England', was one of the most important military centres in Britain in the Great War (1914–1918), and the county played a crucial part in pivotal episodes of World War Two (1939–1945): the Battle of Britain (1940) that raged over Kent skies, the epic evacuation of Dunkirk (1940) and covert operations to make the D-Day landings (1944) for the long-awaited invasion of Europe a success.

Tour for ten whole days on our exciting Frontline Kent itinerary, or choose days out to suit your own time frame. You'll find a compelling mix of daring missions and surprises (what was Dumbo doing on Romney Marsh?), tales of ingenuity and heroic human spirit.

Day 1: Secrets and Spies

Shh! Begin your tour underground in a secret town and spying from behind closed doors. Nothing is quite what it seems at first glance.

Morning Grab a lantern for a spooky start to your tour, plunging deep underground at **Chislehurst Caves**. In fact you should really feel safe! The maze of manmade tunnels was dug for chalk to use in lime burning and brick making when London was being built and stretches over six hectares, 30 metres beneath the woodlands. But during WW1 the hidden labyrinth served to store munitions for the Woolwich Arsenal and in WW2 it transformed into an underground town as one of the largest deep air-raid shelters in the country. Just picture it: over 15,000 people took refuge here at the height of the Blitz.



Afternoon After lunch and a cake in the café at Chislehurst Caves, make the short hop to **Hall Place & Gardens**, Bexley. On the outside it's a handsome Tudor country house; on the inside you will discover another secret world – because from January 1944 the US Army's Signal Corps 6811th Signal Service Detachment set up an intercept station here, codenamed Santa Fe. With the Tudor Kitchen and Great Hall filled with radio equipment, the Americans deciphered Luftwaffe signals and helped in the Enigma code breaking operation, 'Ultra'. Visit their new exhibition, opening September 13, 2014 and discover the secret life of war time Hall Place and the top secret story of the American code-breakers who lived there in 1944.

By the way: Beautiful red brick **Cobham Hall**, en route to your next destination, welcomed recuperating Australian servicemen during WW1. Today, the historic mansion is a renowned independent boarding and day school for girls. Also nearby but well hidden underground is **Gravesend Cold War Bunker**, in Woodlands Park to the south of Gravesend Town Centre. Built in 1954 as a command post to coordinate local emergency services in the event of nuclear attack, the 13 rooms – you can book a tour – are an eerie reminder of the chill winds of suspicion that blew even after WW2 had ended.

Day 2: Military & Maritime Medway

From formidable ships and tanks to poignant medals and memorabilia, the artefacts of war bring action on the frontline vividly to life.

Morning Embark on a compelling adventure around **The Historic Dockyard Chatham**, a hub and important port for the Royal Navy for over 400 years. Discover how the dockyard bustled with the building of vessels and engineering repairs in WW2, and clamber aboard HMS *Cavalier*: the Royal Navy's last operational Second World War destroyer, she served in the Arctic and Western Approaches before joining the British Pacific Fleet and is now preserved as a thought-provoking



memorial to the 143 British destroyers and 11,000-plus men lost at sea during the war. Afterwards, if you don't mind small spaces, find out what it was like to be a Cold War submariner, squeezing through HMS *Ocelot's* cramped compartments.

Sharp-eyed visitors might also spot locations around the dockyard where the popular TV series *Foyle's War* and the dramatic BBC recreation *Dunkirk* were shot. Then at 3 Slip – The Big Space explore the enthralling museum store of boats, tools and vehicles, including the *Overlord* small diesel locomotive that was among the first Allied locomotives to land in Europe after D-Day.

Change the mood for some quiet moments of reflection at **St George's Centre** (formerly St George's Church), Chatham Maritime. For many years St George's served the needs of the Royal Navy Pembroke Barracks and you will find many memorials that bear witness to the brave men and ships that sailed from Chatham in two World Wars.

Afternoon Uncover more military exploits at the **Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archives**, Gillingham, where a collection of more than a million objects evoke the story of the Corps, which has been involved in every conflict of the British Army across every Continent. Feel the hairs on your neck prickle in the WW1 Gallery where there's a reconstructed trench complete with sounds of explosions; follow the airborne, bridging and bomb disposal activities of the Corps in WW2. The museum's magnificent array of 6,500-plus medals includes 25 Victoria Crosses, each a reflection of breathtakingly courageous individuals and deeds.

Holdings of nearly 40 vehicles range from Bridge Laying Tanks to Lord Kitchener's Carriage (some are showcased at 3 Slip at Chatham), and a rare V2 Rocket from WW2 is now on display after 50 years in storage. The V2 was the first long-range ballistic missile to be actively used in combat.

By the way If you want to extend your explorations in the area, **Fort Amherst**, Chatham, provides fascinating insights into WW2 defences. Britain's finest Georgian/Napoleonic fortress was first built to guard Chatham's Royal Dockyard against land-based attack and during WW2 tunnels here were turned into the headquarters of the Anti-Invasion Planning Unit and Civil Defence. Relive the times in a reconstruction of the HQ as it was in 1939 and imagine how you might have coordinated civil defence for North Kent in the event of bombing! Riverside **Upnor Castle**, a rare example of an Elizabethan artillery fort, was also pressed into service as part of the Magazine Establishment and was damaged by two bombs that fell in the garden of Upnor House in 1941.

Day 3: Proud to Serve

Combine insights into regimental derring-do with a lighter, liquid tribute to the great WW2 Spitfire.

Morning Immerse yourself in the story of a famous local regiment at the **Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum**, housed within Maidstone Museum. Through the Great War 1914–1918 the Royal West Kent saw action in France, Flanders and Italy, and you can find out about their dramatic and harrowing exploits during the Siege of Kohima in WW2. Among the many treasures on view are four Victoria Crosses, the highest military decoration awarded for valour in the face of the enemy.

Afternoon For a little light refreshment drop in to **Shepherd Neame Brewery** in the market town of Faversham, where Britain's oldest brewer features 'Spitfire' among its award-winning tipples. The 4.5% abv premium Kentish ale was first brewed in 1990 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, in which the Spitfire played a crucial role, and to raise money for the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund. Go behind the scenes at the brewery to learn a little of the ancient art and 21st-century techniques of brewing – and wet your whistle as a prelude to delving further into Spitfire heritage tomorrow.

By the way Keep a look out all across Kent for **Shepherd Neame pubs**, if you fancy another glass of Spitfire with a bite to eat. Meanwhile fans of flying history might make a small diversion to the **Isle of Sheppey**, the 'Birthplace of British Aviation', and the Memorial to British Aviation that recalls the early pioneer airmen and events that took place here. Blue Town Heritage Centre, in a former music hall that was bombed in WW1, highlights the social history of Sheppey, which also has strong maritime traditions.



*En route between the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum and Faversham, you could additionally pay a visit to **Kent Life**, near Maidstone, where you can step back in time to period buildings that include an Anderson Shelter in case of air raids and a WW2 cottage (notice the sticky tape on the windows to reduce shatter and the water-ration line on the bath tub). Operations for the secret Petroleum Warfare Department, established to develop flame-throwing weapons during WW2, were directed from **Leeds Castle**, also near Maidstone. As the Len valley is a natural fog trap at Leeds there were experiments to perfect FIDO (Fog Investigation Dispersal Operations). Later, the historic castle was used as a military hospital.*

*The 4th Lord Harris, living at **Belmont House and Garden**, near Faversham, may have been too old for active service in WW1, but he was County Commandant of the Kent Volunteers Corps and served on the Executive Committee for the Kent War Memorial, which was erected at Canterbury Cathedral. The 5th Lord Harris, a Captain in the Royal East Kent Mounted Rifles and an ADC in the 25th Division, was awarded an MC in WW1, and during WW2 he took many photographs of war preparations, people and damage on the home front. His wife worked for the Red Cross and with Land Girls on the estate. An R.E. company was stationed at Belmont in 1940, largely confined to buildings in the stable yard, while Lord and Lady Harris lived for much of the time in the old kitchen area instead of the main house.*

Day 4: By Sea and Air

Get on the trail of bouncing bombs and scenes from the Battle of Britain.

Morning Time, now, for an invigorating expedition to the coast and the quirky little fishing town of Whitstable, where it's claimed that the succulent reputation of local oysters tempted Julius Caesar to invade. Dive into lots more maritime history at **Whitstable Museum and Gallery** and browse intriguing memorabilia that shine a light on the experiences of local people during WW1, while reminders of rationing, bomb damage, the Home Guard and service abroad create a collage of life in WW2.

Then whisk along the coast to the alluring seafront of Herne Bay. Who would guess that in 1943 secret testing of the Barnes Wallis 'bouncing bombs' took place off the coast at Reculver before they were used in the now-legendary Dambuster raids on the Ruhr dams? You can view a prototype bouncing bomb in **Herne Bay Museum and Gallery**.

Afternoon The drama heightens at **RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum**, which is dedicated to the pilots and aircrew of WW2. "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few," Sir Winston Churchill said of the men who fought for supremacy of southeast England's skies in the Battle of Britain 1940. The tactical superiority of the RAF thwarted German plans for invasion, although RAF Manston bore the brunt of early action. At the museum you can admire one of the few surviving Spitfires with a wartime record, as well as an impressive Hawker Hurricane.



Discover more about Kent's major role in wartime flying at **RAF Manston History Museum** – it was at Manston that the longest and widest runway in southern England was built, to provide a safe haven to damaged aircraft returning from Europe: the FIDO fog dispersal system was deployed to enable landings in any weather.

By the way Travelling from Herne Bay to Manston, perhaps take in **Margate**: in the dark days of war, Sir John Betjeman described an earlier idyll of walking and dancing in this quintessential seaside town in his poem, **Margate, 1940**, concluding, "And I think, as the fairy-lit sights I recall, / It is those we are fighting for, foremost of all." You could also reawaken your inner child with a stop to enjoy the Airfix models at the **Hornby Visitor Centre** in Margate. Meanwhile, a short distance from Manston, you will find **Minster Abbey** – a part of which was requisitioned as an officers' mess for RAF Manston during WW2. At **Quex Park**, Birchington, Major Powell-Cotton gave his home for use as a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachments) hospital in WW1 and his own domestic staff took care of the cooking and laundry.

Alternative options for the day (or add another one to your itinerary!) include booking **WW1 and WW2 grave tours** around St Peter's, near Broadstairs, or joining a **RIB Request Boat Trip** from Ramsgate that takes in WW2 gun forts that helped protect the country against enemy fire. Hundreds of 'little ships' set out from Ramsgate Royal Harbour to rescue troops from the beaches of Dunkirk in 1940 and one of them, the motor yacht *Sundowner*, remains a famous resident of the harbour, where Ramsgate Maritime Museum makes a fascinating visit. Also worth a visit is **Ramsgate Tunnels**. First opened by H.R.H. The Duke of Kent on the 1st June 1939, a target date has now been set for the tunnels to reopen for Explorer tours on the 1st June 2014, exactly 75 years after their first opening.

Day 5: City to Castles

Relive the terror of the blitz on Canterbury, then make a drive past of some of Kent's impressive coastal defences.

Morning Head straight for the Blitz gallery in **Canterbury Heritage Museum** to see incredible pictures of the devastation caused when 3,600 fire bombs and 130 high explosive bombs were dropped on the city during the Luftwaffe's Baedeker raid of 1942. The raids were so named because they targeted buildings marked with three stars for their historic significance in the Baedeker tourist guides, a retaliation for the bombing of Lübeck Old Town. Also in the gallery is a Morrison shelter, displays of WW2 food and a *Memories of the Blitz* book that vividly recaptures personal experiences of the terror. The building that now houses the museum was used as a WW2 ambulance station.

The precincts of **Canterbury Cathedral** were heavily damaged by enemy action in WW2 and the cathedral's library was destroyed. But incredibly, the overall building survived the blitz, largely thanks to a brave team of fire watchers stationed on the roof, who quickly dealt with incendiary bombs as they fell – wander along to the World Heritage Site and enjoy the sublime architecture and treasures that



could so easily have been lost. The Great War Memorial in the walled garden, once the chapter bowling green, gives pause for reflection.

Afternoon If you haven't already lunched in Canterbury, treat yourself to a meal at **The Royal Hotel**, Deal, regally positioned on the seafront. You will be in illustrious company, as former wartime Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill visited the hotel on 15th August 1951 – an occasion recorded for posterity by a signed menu and photographs. (Lady Hamilton also stayed in 1801 while she waited for her lover, Lord Nelson, whose fleet was guarding the Kent coast against Napoleonic invasion.)

Then spend the rest of your afternoon skirting along the coast. When France fell in 1940, just 22 miles of sea separated Kent's east coast from opposing forces. There was a mass evacuation of civilians and troops were drafted in, with defences quickly constructed along the beaches and gun batteries installed at Sandown, **Deal Castle** and Kingsdown. **Walmer Castle** was stationed too. Fortunately, the invasion never materialised and many of the early evacuees returned to help as fire watchers and air raid wardens.

Round off your day by stretching your legs on the four-mile **Frontline Britain Trail**, an exhilarating circular walk from St Margarets-at-Cliffe that introduces the colourful local wildlife and history.

Stay **Walleth's Court**, an ancient manor at Westcliffe, boasts a recorded heritage dating back to Domesday in the 11th century and a rich history – not least its role in WW2 when the house was evacuated and a battalion of gunners moved in to man the guns nicknamed Winnie and Pooh that were sited on the hill overlooking the Channel. You can now revel in a classic British country house experience here and some guests even choose a heli-dine package: an aerial tour of White Cliffs Country in a luxury Jetranger or Longranger helicopter before lunch or dinner in the award-winning restaurant.

By the way Setting out from Canterbury to the coast, why not pass through the village of **Bridge** and keep your eyes peeled for the post office: Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, then living at **Broome Park**, Barham, sent his first dispatch from here in 1914. Incidentally, Broome Park is now a golf club.

Day 6: Fortress Dover

For centuries Dover has played a vital role in the defence of the country, its control of the Channel winning it the reputation of the Lock and Key of England. Today's visit unlocks the thrilling story of its crucial importance in both World Wars.

Morning Dover is now the busiest passenger ferry terminal in the world; stretch your imagination just a little and picture it throbbing with activity in WW1 when the harbour was home to the Dover Patrol of warships and fishing vessels that protected control of the Channel. The first bomb to be dropped on England fell near Dover Castle on Christmas Eve 1914 and as further attacks by warships, aeroplanes and zeppelin rained in, the town



became known as Fortress Dover. During WW2, the town became a prime objective of Hitler's invasion plans and, again, a fulcrum of military activity.

Step into the thick of one of the most dramatic episodes of WW2 at **Dover Castle**. By May 1940, Allied troops had become trapped on the beaches of Dunkirk and it was from the Secret Wartime Tunnels beneath the castle that Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay masterminded their audacious evacuation, codenamed Operation Dynamo. Walk through this hidden twilight world as spine-tingling special effects and real film footage recreate the gripping episode that saw all available 'little ships' cross the Channel to the rescue. Over 200,000 of the 338,000 men evacuated passed through Dover.

Continue your tour at the castle through the Gun Operations Room and Coast Artillery Operations Room, and discover the Underground Hospital where you can follow the hold-your-breath story of an injured pilot fighting for his life. Also in the grounds is the fascinating **Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment & Queen's Regiment Museum** featuring stunning sets and audio-visual. How about lunch in the Naafi Restaurant?

Afternoon Unpack more of Dover's epic wartime at **Dover Museum**, where a WW2 display includes a 1,000kg German bomb, replica VI, posters, images and a video presentation on the evacuation of Dunkirk.

Then take a stroll around the **Western Heights** and the network of footpaths to 18th/19th-century fortifications. During WW2 men were stationed here on anti-aircraft duties – look up to the skies and feel the adrenaline pumping as the Battle of Britain raged. The **White Cliffs of Dover** – ever famous in Vera Lynn's iconic wartime song – also offer superb walking. As you gaze out to sea maybe you'll see the ghost of Operation Fortitude played out in your mind's eye: the mock invasion launched from Dover at midnight on 5th June 1944 when motor launches carried balloons and reflectors across the Channel to create the impression of a huge convoy, and so detaining German divisions in Pas-de-Calais. Meanwhile, Operation Overlord was delivering 185,000 troops to the Normandy coast where the D-Day landings (6th June) took place for real, launching the long-awaited invasion of Europe.

Day 7: The Battle of Britain

Discover more of the story of the airmen whom Churchill paid tribute to as "The Few" and Air Chief Marshal Dowding called "My Dear Fighter Boys".

Morning Begin the day at **The National Memorial to the Few** at Capel-le-Ferne, high on the White Cliffs and a truly moving tribute to Churchill's 'Few' who fought to keep the country free of invasion. Fewer than 3,000 men of Royal Air Force Fighter Command were at the forefront of British resistance in the Battle of Britain waged between 10th July and 31st October 1940, with much of the action taking place over Dover and Folkestone – 'Hellfire Corner'. Their bravery and sacrifice is honoured by a Memorial that inspires quiet reverence: a seated airman looking out to sea,



surrounded by the badges of the Allied squadrons and other units that took part in the battle. A Memorial Wall lists their names and a replica Spitfire and Hurricane, the iconic machines that they flew to victory, stand sentinel.

Now a tranquil place, Capel-le-Ferne saw action in WW1, when airships were moored here. During WW2 a gun battery was constructed on site, with accommodation for personnel underground.

If you have time, make a recce of **The Women's Land Army Museum** at Little Farthingloe Farm, which features personal letters, uniforms and information highlighting the great efforts of women serving the country in WW2.

Afternoon Fire your imagination further at **Kent Battle of Britain Museum**, Hawkinge, home to the most important Battle of Britain artefacts on show anywhere in the country. The airfield where the museum is sited was the nearest Royal Air Force station to enemy-occupied France and just ten minutes' flying time away from Luftwaffe fighter airfields in Pas-de-Calais: a pulse-raising thought as you marvel up close at aircraft, vehicles, weapons and relics from over 600 crashed aircraft.

By the way A wander along the cliff-top promenade, *The Leas*, in **Folkestone** gives splendid views over the Channel. But turn back the clock to WW1 and the attractive scene changes to one of tumult: Folkestone was a main transit camp for troop movements to the front line in northern France. During WW2 many inhabitants were evacuated (but Churchill and Montgomery braved a visit), as Hellfire Corner became a target for long-range cross-Channel shelling by German shore batteries stationed along the French coast.

For an exciting flying experience you can scramble with a Spitfire or Hurricane, flying right alongside in a helicopter for thrilling aerial views and breathtaking scenes over Battle of Britain Country. Book with **Action Stations!** Postling.

Also, visitors to the area in summer might like to add the annual **The War and Peace Revival** to their itinerary, held at Folkestone Racecourse (16-20 July 2014).

Day 8: PLUTO, Dumbo and Romney Marsh

Strange things have always happened around the mysterious landscapes of Romney Marsh and wartime was no different – as you will soon find out.

Morning What could be more innocent fun than a jaunt on the **Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway**, the lovely 'mainline in miniature' that runs from Hythe across the marsh to the eerie Dungeness shingle headland? Yet this very railway had another purpose in WW2: requisitioned by the War Department, it was used during the building of PLUTO, the Pipe-Line Under The Ocean that carried much-needed fuel to the advancing Allied armies in France following D-Day.



Prototypes for the pipeline were tested in May 1942 across the River Medway, and the codename for the pipeline that ran across Romney Marsh to Dungeness and then undersea to France was 'Dumbo'. Browse RHDR's 1940s Museum at New Romney for the story of the railway's wartime exploits. You can also see a replica of the world's only miniature armed train that was specially created for use at the time. Along with the Mulberry Harbours that were constructed after D-Day, Operation PLUTO is considered one of history's greatest wartime feats of engineering.

Afternoon Tour the atmospheric landscapes of Romney Marsh and you will uncover all manner of covert wartime operations. Along the **Royal Military Canal**, Hythe, try out the 'acoustic mirror' which is a modern interpretation of the concrete 'listening ears' built around the area in the 1920s and 1930s to detect incoming aircraft. Explore **Dymchurch Martello Tower** – such towers were built to repel potential hostilities from Napoleon and were pressed into service during WW2 following the evacuation of Dunkirk when the threat of invasion was growing. Also keep your eyes peeled for remnants of Dumbo – where the pipeline crossed drainage ditches it ran above ground. Pumping stations for PLUTO were disguised, maybe as a chapel or bungalow, and some still exist, including a bungalow (now two storeys) at Lydd-on-Sea. Dungeness Lighthouse remained unlit during the war, of course, but it was still struck by fighter planes.

Brenzett Aeronautical Museum is a must, too: packed with wartime equipment, remains recovered from air crash sites and other memorabilia. There's an exhibition on the Women's Land Army – the museum is housed in what was once their hostel (look for the graffiti they left behind!).

Day 9: Homes of Heroes & Heroes of the Home Front

Take a train journey and visit a museum or wonderful historic home for inspiring stories of personal valour and dedication.

Morning Sit back for another adventure through time on **Kent & East Sussex Railway**, whose vintage steam and historic diesel trains chug through 10.5 miles of scenic countryside from Tenterden to Bodiam. At Bodiam Station you can view the restored passenger luggage Van No. 132 that bore the remains of three WW1 heroes from Dover to London as they were being repatriated from Europe. The first sombre mission, in May 1919, brought home the body of nurse Edith Cavell, who was shot in 1915 for assisting Allied soldiers to escape German capture when she was working in Belgium. Also in 1919 the Cavell Van, as it became known to railwaymen, carried merchant seaman Captain Charles Fryatt, whose ship had daringly evaded a U-boat in 1915. The following year he was captured and shot.



But perhaps Van No. 132's most poignant duty came in November 1920, when it conveyed the remains of The Unknown Warrior, to be laid to rest in Westminster Abbey in honour of all those who gave their lives in the Great War. Inside the van at Bodiam today you will find a replica of the Unknown Warrior's coffin.

Afternoon Options now include a rummage around delightful **Cranbrook Museum**. The Military & War Room showcases lots of intriguing local artefacts from both World Wars: tin hats, uniform, radios and relics of those who served the country on the home front, the Civil Defence, Home Guard and Women's Land Army. Among the photographs are some of the Royal Observer Corps, which was founded in 1925 and has special local resonance. The Corps came into being following successful trials in 1924, when temporary observation posts covering the Weald of Kent were linked by a communication system to an operations room above the telephone exchange in Cranbrook's High Street. Post groups successfully tracked aircraft of 32 Sqn from Biggin Hill.

Alternatively, set course straight for **Penshurst Place & Gardens**, near Tonbridge, the enchanting home of the Sidney family since 1552. Over the centuries, family and home have had many captivating stories to tell, not least during both World Wars. Seek out the family photographic exhibition, for example, which features the heroic deeds of the present Viscount De L'Isle's maternal grandfather: Field Marshal Viscount Gort VC DSO** GCB CBE MVO MC, who gave outstanding active service in the Great War and who, in the direst danger and at the critical moment, made the solitary decision to withdraw the British Expeditionary Force at Dunkirk in 1940. The action saved the greater part (330,000 men) of the BEF to return to Normandy in 1944.

Discover, too, how Penshurst Place suffered and was restored to splendour. Unoccupied for the entire winter 1944/45 and with many of the windows broken by doodlebugs, the house and its treasures were beset by damp; the gardens, though valiantly cared for by head gardener Mr Stacey and partly maintained by local prisoners of war, were also in a sorry state. Postwar, a market garden was created to provide some income to the estate and the present Lord De L'Isle's father – Major Sidney, later The Right Hon 1st Viscount De L'Isle and 6th Baron De L'Isle and Dudley VC KG GCMG GCVO – and his wife Jacqueline (daughter of Field Marshal Lord Gort) dedicated their lives to the remarkable renaissance of Penshurst Place that you can enjoy to this day.

By the way Visitors to the area might like to look out for that must-have title at the **Aviation Bookshop** in Royal Tunbridge Wells. Many historic properties besides Penshurst Place were affected by WW2: **Tonbridge Castle**, for instance, grew anti-tank pill boxes at each end of the south curtain wall and **Chiddingstone Castle** became a billet for Canadian forces who left graffiti behind in the flag tower (tower not open to the public). **Chartwell**, near Westerham, opens the door on the personal life of Sir Winston Churchill.

Day 10: A Final Salute

Make the most of your last day to honour brave men and their iconic flying machines, and efforts to keep their airfield safe.

Morning **Shoreham Aircraft Museum**, Sevenoaks, pieces together the stories behind hundreds of aviation relics excavated from crashed WW2 British and German aircraft: engines, propellers, instruments, bombs and other artefacts from Spitfire, Hurricane, FW190, Ju88 and Do17 to name a few. Study eye-witness accounts, letters and photographs, then look again and see the 'twisted metal' in a fresh, new, moving light. Paintings by renowned aviation artist Geoff Nutkins add dramatic interpretations of events surrounding the exhibits.



Afternoon Full-scale replicas of a Hurricane and Spitfire welcome you to **Saint George's Royal Air Force Chapel of Remembrance**, Biggin Hill. The last RAF unit left Biggin Hill in 1992 after 75 years here and the chapel commemorates this tenure as well as the 454 Allied aircrew killed while operating from the sector in WW2. Step inside the chapel – the interior retains something of the appearance of the first station church that was built from three wartime huts but destroyed by fire in 1946 – and share its special atmosphere of tranquillity. There are fine stained glass windows and interesting artefacts.

Check for open days and tours at the new **Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar** based at the famous WW2 RAF aerodrome. The venue is dedicated to the continued safe operation of several magnificent WW2 Supermarine Spitfire fighters, each with extensive wartime histories, so that current and future generations may admire them up close and see them in the air. It is also home to several other period aircraft.

By the way On the surface, few traces of WW2 remain at the Hart Dyke family's **Lullingstone Castle and The World Garden**, Eynsford, but dig a little and lots of colourful stories come to the surface. The 70th and 72nd (Chemical Warfare) Companies of the Royal Engineers were billeted here, then the Royal Army Medical Corps took over Lullingstone for training purposes – you can still see bullet marks in the brickwork of the house where live ammunition was used (and the eagle-eyed might spot a doodle left by the Army on one of the paintings inside the house).

A decoy airfield was constructed in the fields beside the gatehouse to distract attention from nearby Biggin Hill and Guy Hart Dyke still recalls planes dropping bombs along the valley, aiming for the dummy airfield to the west (blowing out the stained glass window of the church) and the railway line to the east. The air raid shelter was at the bottom of the garden and thanks to his mother, who always found time to tuck a bottle of sherry under her arm when the sirens sounded, he never felt anxious, he says! Kent War Agricultural Committee requisitioned the garden as a kitchen garden – one wonders what they would make of Tom Hart Dyke's imaginative World Garden that now occupies the site in glorious style.

Travel to Kent for your Front Line adventure with **P&O Ferries**. Choose from one of the 46 daily Dover – Calais sailings for a relaxing and refreshing journey, arriving in just 90 minutes. For travel partners including tour operators and travel agents P&O Ferries offers a quick, direct route to booking ferry crossings online, including a multi user login facility.



Find out about routes and more at www.poferries.eu

For more information and up to date events see
www.visitkent.co.uk/frontlinekent



Further information

Day 1: Secrets and Spies

Chislehurst Caves <http://www.chislehurst-caves.co.uk>

Hall Place & Gardens, Bexley <http://www.hallplace.org.uk>

Cobham Hall <http://www.cobhamhall.com/>

Gravesend Cold War Bunker <http://www.gogravesham.co.uk/see-and-do/thedms.aspx?dms=13&venue=3093673>

Day 2: Military & Maritime Medway

The Historic Dockyard Chatham <http://www.thedockyard.co.uk>

St George's Centre, Chatham Maritime <http://www.visitmedway.org/attractions/st-georges-centre-p656241>

Royal Engineers Museum, Library & Archives, Gillingham <http://www.re-museum.co.uk/>

Fort Amherst, Chatham <http://www.fortamherst.com/>

Upnor Castle <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/upnor-castle/>

Day 3: Proud to Serve

Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment Museum, Maidstone Museum

<http://www.museum.maidstone.gov.uk/queensown/>

Shepherd Neame, Faversham <http://www.shepherdneame.co.uk>

Kent Life, near Maidstone <http://www.kentlife.org.uk>

Leeds Castle, near Maidstone <http://www.leeds-castle.com>

Isle of Sheppey <http://www.visitsheppey.com/index1.php>

Swale www.visit-swale.co.uk

Belmont House and Garden, near Faversham www.belmont-house.org

Day 4: By Sea and Air

Whitstable Museum and Gallery <http://www.canterbury-museums.co.uk>

Herne Bay Museum and Gallery <http://www.canterbury-museums.co.uk>

RAF Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Memorial Museum, Manston <http://spitfiremuseum.org.uk/>

RAF Manston History Museum, Manston <http://www.rafmanston.co.uk/>

Margate <http://www.visitthanet.co.uk/>

Hornby Visitor Centre, Margate <http://www.hornby.com/hornby-visitor-centre/>

Minster Abbey <http://www.minsterabbeynuns.org/>

Quex Park, Home of the Powell-Cotton Museum, Birchington <http://www.quexpark.co.uk/>

St Peter's WWI and WW2 Graves Tours, St Peters <http://www.villagetour.co.uk/>

RIB Request Boat Trips, Ramsgate www.ribrequest.co.uk

Ramsgate Maritime Museum <http://www.ramsgatemaritimemuseum.org/page3.html>

Ramsgate Tunnels <http://www.ramsgatetunnels.org/>

Day 5: City to Castles

Canterbury Heritage Museum <http://www.canterbury-museums.co.uk>



Canterbury Cathedral <http://canterbury-cathedral.org>
Royal Hotel, Deal <http://www.theroyalhotel.com/>
Deal Castle, <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/deal-castle/>
Walmer Castle <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/walmer-castle-and-gardens/>
Frontline Britain Trail, St Margarets-at-Cliffe <http://www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk/>
Wallett's Court, Westcliffe <http://www.walletscourthotelspa.com/>
Bridge <http://www.bridgevillage.org.uk/jcwebfiles/bridgevillage/pages/history.htm>
Broome Park, Barham <http://www.broomepark.co.uk/pages.php/index.html>

Day 6: Fortress Dover

Dover Castle <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/dover-castle/>
Princess of Wales's Regiment & Queen's Regiment Museum, Keep Yard, Dover Castle
<http://www.armymuseums.org.uk/museums/0000000082-Princess-of-Wales-s-Royal-Regiment--Queen-s-Regiment-Museum.htm>
Dover Museum <http://www.dovermuseum.co.uk>
Dover Western Heights <http://www.doverwesternheights.org/>
The White Cliffs, Dover <http://www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk/>

Day 7: The Battle of Britain

The National Memorial to the Few, Capel-le-Ferne
<http://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org/the-memorial/the-site-at-capel-le-ferne/>
The Women's Land Army Museum, Dover
<http://www.visitkent.co.uk/explore/thedms.asp?dms=13&GroupId=2&venue=3060376>
Kent Battle of Britain Museum, Hawkinge <http://www.kbobm.org/index.htm>
Action Stations! Postling <http://goactionstations-px.rtrk.co.uk/>
The War and Peace Revival, Folkestone Racecourse (16-20 July 2014)
www.thewarandpeacerevival.co.uk

Day 8: PLUTO, Dumbo and Romney Marsh

Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway <http://www.rhdr.org.uk/pages/history.html>
Dymchurch Martello Tower
<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/daysout/properties/dymchurch-martello-tower/>
Brenzett Aeronautical Museum, Brenzett <http://www.brenzettaero.co.uk/>

Day 9: Homes of Heroes & Heroes of the Home Front

Kent & East Sussex Railway <http://kesr.org.uk>
Cranbrook Museum <http://www.cranbrookmuseum.org/index.htm>
Penshurst Place & Gardens, near Tonbridge <http://www.penshurstplace.com>
The Aviation Bookshop, Royal Tunbridge Wells <http://www.aviation-bookshop.com/>
Tonbridge Castle <http://www.tonbridgecastle.org>
Chiddingstone Castle, Sevenoaks
<http://chiddingstonecastle.org.uk/>
Chartwell, Westerham <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/chartwell/>

Day 10: A Final Salute

Shoreham Aircraft Museum, Sevenoaks <http://www.shoreham-aircraft-museum.co.uk/>
St George's RAF Chapel of Remembrance, Biggin Hill <http://www.bbm.org.uk/BHchapel.htm>



Biggin Hill Heritage Hangar <http://bigginhillheritagehangar.co.uk/>

Lullingstone Castle and The World Garden, Eynsford <http://www.lullingstonecastle.co.uk/>

Transport/Carrier Contacts

P&O Ferries www.poferries.com

