

**NAYLAND with WISSINGTON  
COMMEMORATES THE  
80th ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
END OF WORLD WAR II**





## World War II

The Second World War, fought from 1939 to 1945, was the deadliest war in history and involved more than 30 countries around the globe. More than 50 million people lost their lives during the war. Lest we forget.

The war began in Europe on 1st September 1939, when Germany invaded Poland. Great Britain and France responded by declaring war on Germany. The war between the USSR and Germany began in 1941 with the German invasion of the Soviet Union. The war in the Pacific began in 1941 when Japan attacked the American Naval base at Pearl Harbour and other American, Dutch, and British military installations throughout Asia.

World War II officially ended in Europe after Allied armies converged on Berlin in 1945, Adolf Hitler committed suicide and Germany surrendered on 8th May 1945; this was known as Victory in Europe Day (VE Day).

The conflict continued with Japan until the formal signing of the surrender by Japan on 2nd September, aboard the United States' battleship Missouri anchored in Tokyo Bay. This was celebrated as Victory in Japan Day (VJ Day).





# Nayland & District Royal British Legion

present

An evening of music, songs, readings & themed supper  
to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2



military wives  
& Choirs  
Wattisham

## Sunday 31st August

at Nayland Village Hall

Tickets: £17 (including themed supper\*)

available from [naylandevents.org](http://naylandevents.org)

Doors open 5.30, bar and brass band from 6pm

Choir and readings from 6.30pm

Interval for supper

WW2 exhibition on display, commemorative book on sale £8

\*Tickets must be purchased in advance to guarantee your supper

Proceeds to the RBL Poppy Appeal



## 80th Anniversary of the end of WW2

While the anniversary of the end of the Second World War is officially the 2nd September, in Nayland the 80th Anniversary commemorative event was held on Sunday 31st August.

Entertainment featured the Breckland Brass Band and Wattisham Military Wives Choirs; there was an interesting display of artefacts by the 'Land Army Girls' and a display of local memorabilia.

A commemorative book entitled '*Nayland with Wissington Remembers 1945*' collated by Mary George and Wendy Sparrow went on sale with proceeds going to the Poppy Appeal.

Descendants of Lt Charles F Gumm Jnr, a US pilot killed when his plane crashed in Nayland, were guests for the evening.

The event attracted a full house of supporters who enjoyed the evening, raising about £2,000 for the Poppy Appeal.

Many thanks are due to all those involved in creating this successful event and all those who came along.





## Nayland & District Royal British Legion

present

**An evening of music, songs, readings and  
themed supper to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup>  
anniversary of VJ Day and the end of WW2**



**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August**  
at Nayland Village Hall



## Programme of the Evening

**Doors and bar open**

Choose your table place and buy a drink

**Welcome and introduction**

**Performance by Breckland Brass Band**

Conducted by Dr Marie Blakey-Stoppard

**Performance by Wattisham Military Wives Choir**

Conducted by Jennie Francis

Readers: Nayland Village Players John McCarroll and Jim Bond

**Interval**

Themed Supper served to your table, bar open

Accompanied by the Breckland Brass Band

**Performance by Wattisham Military Wives Choir**

Please join in if you can!

**Breckland Brass Band close the evening**

**With special thanks to:**

The Nayland Ladies Catering Corps

Nick Moriarty for technical support

Our skilful readers; Iain Wright and Justin Dowding for logistics and  
running the bar, Emily Kendall 11+ for their kind donation.

We are grateful to the Nayland Community Council for their  
sponsorship of the Nayland Remembers 1945 booklet





The Wattisham Military Wives Choirs





The Breckland Brass Band





## Breckland Brass Band Goes from Strength to Strength!

Breckland Brass Band is now rehearsing at the state-of-the-art music room at Thetford Academy. We would love you to come and join us, whether you are a returning brass player or someone wanting to start. We can help. Rehearsals are Wednesdays 7-9pm at The Thetford Academy, with a beginner's training band on Mondays at 3-4pm from September 2025.

Breckland Brass Band takes part in many exciting projects. We have recently collaborated with the Music Scholars at Thetford Academy, The Norfolk Music Hub and The Britten Sinfonia on the 'Dragon's Breath' project to provide beginner brass tuition to 35 girls, breaking the mould on gender expectations.

An Open Rehearsal was held in July, as part of Brass Band England's Brass Band Week, celebrating the brass banding movement annually and promoting banding locally to all ages. Members and guests enjoyed playing alongside children from the academy, who are already showing great promise and talent. We were also lucky to have Neil James Media & Tiger Photo UK join us on the evening to capture the pure joy in the room. The busy summer season will have included performances at the South Suffolk Show, Thetford Academy, Weeting Steam Rally, Charles Burrell Centre, Walsham Le Willows Open Gardens, and Nayland VJ Day celebrations.

Originally formed as Green's Works Band, Brandon in the 1950s. The band has a rich tradition and is held in many people's hearts through family connections over the years. Current band members include those with relatives, who played for the band for over 60 years.



## Wattisham Military Wives Choir



Being a member of a military wives' choir is about so much more than just singing! It is a place to go every week to meet up with ladies who really understand what it is like to live the military lifestyle and to not know where you might be next week or next year, or where your other half might be... because they are living the same life! The choir is a welfare support for all women in the military community including wives, girlfriends, fiancé's, mothers, sisters, veterans and serving personnel. It is also open to civilian employees who provide a direct welfare service to military personnel and their families. There are over 2,000 women in 74 choirs across the UK and overseas that get together weekly to sing, share and support. As well as our own music selections, we also have a core repertoire of music that is available across the choir network, meaning that if you get posted somewhere new and join a choir you will already know a lot of the songs!

Wattisham was set up in January 2012 by Sally Wilkinson, whilst her husband was deployed in Afghanistan. She was inspired by Gareth Malone's BBC television series "The Choir" and, after witnessing how much a group of women could achieve in such a short space of time, wanted to see if she could recreate the same level of support and success for the wives of Wattisham. Sally found a choirmaster through an internet search, persuaded the padre to let the choir use the base church, organised help with childcare so members could attend even if their husbands were away, started a Facebook group and the rest is history.

Wattisham Military Wives Choir are now celebrating 13 years since the official formation of the charity. We've come a long way and through it all we have used the power of singing to bring women in the military community closer together.

We didn't expect to approach this milestone with a lockdown and virtual rehearsals! But 2020 didn't stop us. In fact, we've grown as a network in the face of adversity.

We are so proud to be a part of a network that has been the subject of a feature film, released records, commemorated military history such as the WW1 centenary, VE day as well as leading annual Remembrance Day Celebrations in Hadleigh. Recently we have sung as part of a joint choir with Honnington and Marham at Sandringham for the late Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations, alongside Katherine Jenkins.

Last year a couple of ladies were chosen to go London to record a song written especially for King Charles' birthday - called "November Sunday" and a couple of other ladies were invited to Buckingham Palace to sing it to King Charles and Camilla in December. Last month 2 ladies sang at The Coach maker's dinner in London and in October 8 of us are singing at the Menin gate, again with members of Honnington and Marham choir.

As a choir, Wattisham Military Wives Choir celebrates a decade of singing, laughing and supporting each other. There are no auditions and no pressure to perform. We are a welcoming group of women who simply want to sing and use our shared experience of military life to look out for each other. If you would like to join us then please get in touch.







































Nayland's RBL Chairman, Robert Dossor, was MC for the evening









There was an interesting display by the Land Army Girls









## THIS WAS A STANDARD WEEKLY RATION FOR ADULTS

Bacon or ham - 4 ounces

Milk - 3 pints

Sugar - 8 ounces

Other meat - to value of one shilling and two pence,  
equivalent to two chops

Tea - 2 ounces

Butter - 2 ounces

Eggs - 1 fresh per week,

Cheese - 2 ounces plus, tinned dried egg

Margarine and cooking fat - 4 ounces each

Preserves - 1 jar per month

Sweets - 12 ounces per month, for example, 12 wrapped  
sweets per week



A stark reminder of food rationing during WW2:  
Spam, corned beef and cheese were forms of protein during the War years.



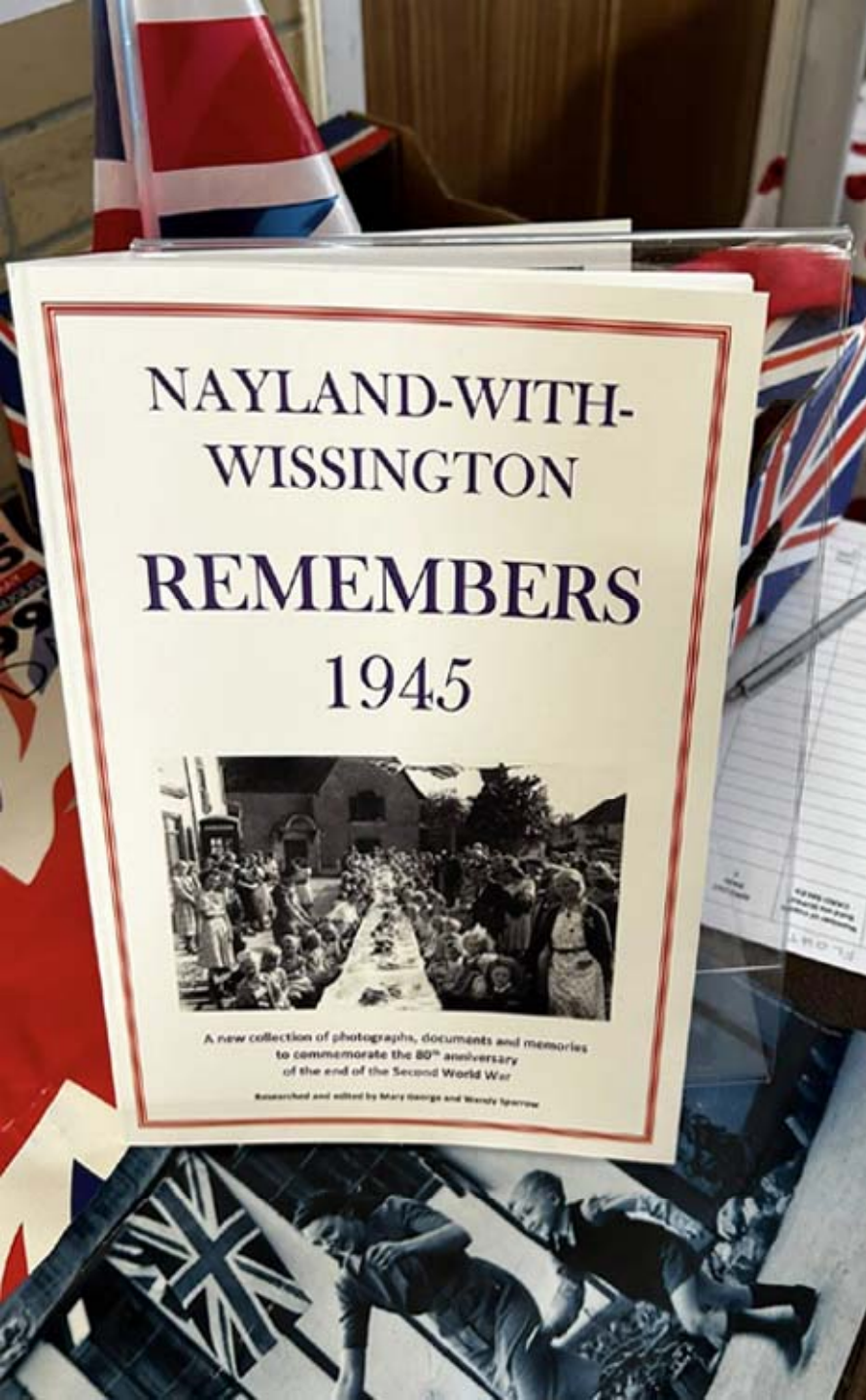


A display of local WW2 memorabilia and the 'Remembers 1945' book











# NAYLAND-WITH-WISSINGTON REMEMBERS 1945



**A new collection of photographs, documents and memories to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War**

**Researched and edited by Mary George and Wendy Sparrow**

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The book contains personal letters, photographs, documents, and memories commemorating the six local men who were killed and telling the stories of men and women who served in the Armed Forces or on the Home Front during WW2. It also records the hardships suffered by civilians who 'did their bit' and their joyful celebrations at the end of WW2.

## Nayland with Wissington Remembers 1945

Following on from books produced for previous anniversaries Mary George and Wendy Sparrow have compiled 'Remembers 1945'.

This is a new collection of photographs, documents, personal letters and memories commemorating the six local men who were killed and telling the stories of men and women who served in the Armed Forces or on the Home Front during WW2.

The book also records the hardships suffered by civilians who 'did their bit' and their joyful celebrations at the end of WW2.

It was on sale at the WW2 Commemorative event on 31st August and will be on sale at Forget Me Not shop (2 Birch Street) price £8.



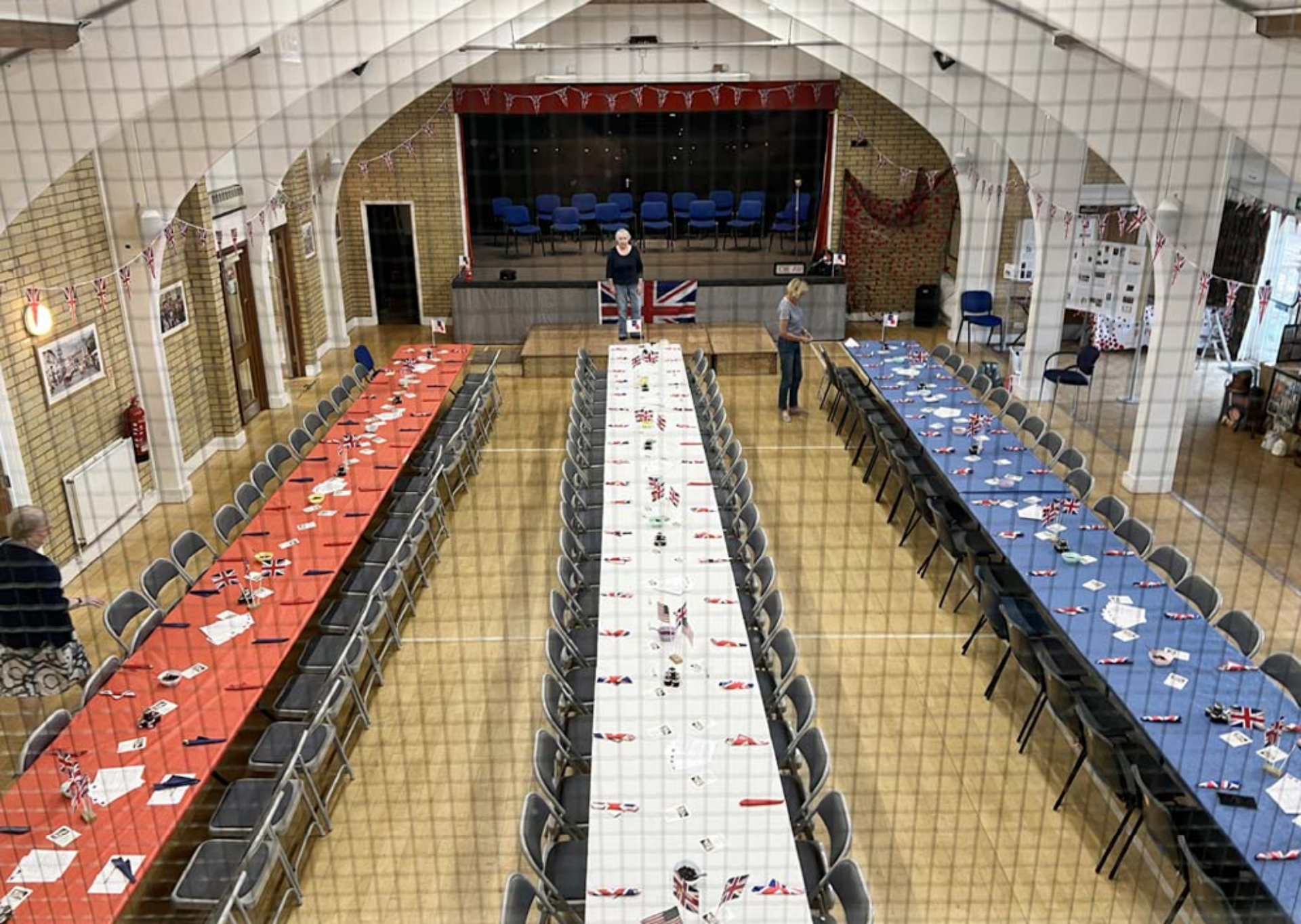


Behind the Scenes

Keeping everyone fed and watered – there was no rationing at the bar!







All ready for the evening





The doors are open





Monday 1st  
September 2025  
5:45pm for 6pm



.. **Nayland Needs**  
**YOU** ..

Join us for a moment of reflection @ Nayland's War Memorial  
as we welcome relatives of First Lieutenant Charles F. Gumm Jr.

After a short moment of reflection we will walk to the Anchor, via  
Court Knoll, with our American friends - who leave Nayland @ 7:45pm



# Nayland Remembered Lt Charles F Gumm Jr



On 1st September Nayland remembered Lt Gumm joined by some of his descendants visiting from America. Villagers met at Lt Gumm's memorial bench beside Nayland War Memorial for a moment of reflection and a short ceremony was held, with Revd Stéphane Javelle, members of the United States Air Force, Nayland's Legion Standard Bearer, David Wiles and bugler, Yo Burgess of the Boxted Silver Band. A wreath was laid.

There was a timely rainbow over Court Knoll as everyone arrived at the location of the crash that took Lt Gumm's life. Richard Turner, from Boxted Airfield Museum, read witness accounts in the official military accident report.

His family descendants visited St James' Church, where there are tributes to Lt Gumm.

Ashley Otto, one of Lt Gumm's descendants, said, "We wrapped up the evening at the Anchor Inn with the amazing residents of Nayland who continue to honor Lt Charles Gumm. We met a young boy who did a school project on him. Sir Bob Russell and Emily Cartlidge, the wife of the local MP attended the whole event. I am beyond thankful for the love and hospitality of the Nayland people and community for keeping Uncle Charles' memory alive."







# Hero pilot to be remembered

**Chris Morris**

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An American fighter pilot, who made the ultimate sacrifice, will be remembered during a special ceremony tomorrow.

The Nayland and District branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) will be holding a short ceremony to acknowledge the heroism of USAAF Lieutenant Charles F Gumm.

Lt Gumm's career ended unexpectedly on March 1, 1944, when the P-51 Mustang he was flying on a cross-country flight to Goxhill crashed shortly after becoming airborne, when its engine lost power at 800 feet.

Gumm, then aged 23, could have parachuted to safety but chose to stay with the plane, which crashed into an open field.

Realising that he was over Nayland and that if he bailed out his plane would crash and claim innocent lives, he decided to remain with his plane to steer it away from the village and attempt a forced landing.

It crash landed on the banks of the River Stour near Court Knoll. His Mustang is thought to have hit a tree, throwing him out of the cockpit and killing him instantly.

A memorial bench was built close to the Nayland war memorial in

2001. The Nayland and District Royal British Legion will lay a poppy wreath there at 11am tomorrow.

Lt Charles 'Chuck' Gumm was born in Spokane, Washington on October 29, 1920. He was a relative of the entertainer Judy Garland. He graduated from John R Rogers High School in 1939, before attending Gonzaga University.

In 1942, following the US entry into the Second World War, and shortly after marrying his high school sweetheart, Muriel Wiley, Gumm left university to volunteer for the USAAF. He joined the 354th Fighter Group of the 355th Fighter Squadron to train as a pilot.

He was posted to Boxted Airfield, Station 150, in the village of Langham, on the Essex-Suffolk border.

The Air Ministry named airfields after the nearest village or town. However, with an airfield in Norfolk already named Langham, the airbase was named after the next nearest village of Boxted.

Lt Gumm is buried in his home town of Spokane, Washington, where he is still remembered. He received the air medal and three oak leaf clusters.

He was also awarded, posthumously, the silver star, the soldiers medal and the distinguished flying cross for gallantry in action. He was the leading ace for his squadron, with 7.5 victories to his credit.

Lt Charles Gumm will be remembered in Nayland tomorrow.

Picture: American Air Museum







Descendants of Lt Charles Gumm with members of the US Air Force and Standard Bearer David Wiles





Villagers braved the weather to pay their respects





Revd Stéphane Javelle gave a short service, Darius Laws organised the tribute





Members of the United States Air Force laid a wreath, a rainbow appeared over Court Knoll









Richard Turner, from Boxted Airfield Museum, read witness accounts in the official military accident report; one by Gilbert Talbot, pilot of another plane on the mission, and one by the Revd Canon of Nayland, LJ Wright.





The evening concluded at The Anchor Inn sharing memories and a British pint with our American visitors