



## The Friendly Invasion – Exploring American Heritage in East Anglia - Launch Invitation

For those interested in the lives and experiences of US servicemen in Britain during WW2 and media who have an interest in US ancestry, military, heritage, history and US tourism in Britain.

Come along to the Imperial War Museum Duxford Aerodrome in Cambridgeshire for a Launch Event on the 20<sup>th</sup> February (10am – 2 pm) for “The Friendly Invasion” an exciting new collection of itineraries across the East of England.

**Free entry to the museum and aerodrome, networking opportunities and refreshments.**

**Guest speaker is Donald L Miller who is working with Stephen Spielberg and Tom Hanks as a military consultant and is author of "Masters of the Air" upon which the forthcoming HBO TV series is based on.**

**RSVP to [event@visiteastanglia.net](mailto:event@visiteastanglia.net) or call 07766055095**

Monday 20 February 2017 marks the very day the first US General, Ira Eaker, arrived in the UK to take command of the US Army Air Force. To commemorate this occasion, Visit East Anglia, together with the IWM, will be hosting an extra special event. This event will launch the new ‘The Friendly Invasion’ product and bring together local people who have done so much to keep the memory of the US airmen and ground crew alive these past seventy-five years, alongside tourism and heritage organisations, media, invited guests and US forces personnel.

The story of the US Air Army in East Anglia is important and captivating. More than twenty-six thousand men gave their lives here in defence of freedom, including Joe Kennedy Jr., eldest son of the Kennedy family and until fate intervened, possibly destined to be the future President of America.

What’s more, from Royal connections to film stars (Jimmy Stewart & Clarke Gable served with the Air Army in East Anglia), war brides to warm beer, quiet lanes to city sights, there’s something for everyone in this story.





East Anglian tourism organisations will be launching a new product in North America to highlight this heritage and encourage more US visitors to the region. Highlights of the itineraries include: Imperial War Museum in Duxford Aerodrome, City of Cambridge, University of Cambridge, King's College Chapel, The American Cemetery, Lavenham - The Swan - US Airman's Bar, 453rd BG museum, Norwich Castle, Cathedral and the Forum which hosts the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, Thorpeness Golf Club, Hotel Hylands House, Chelmsford Cathedral and more.

'The Friendly Invasion' commemorates the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 180,000 American servicemen arriving in the region, and will package a range of East of England experiences, including themed events and tours of the airbases.

The Friendly Invasion Project Manager Ann Steward said,

'In every village, town and city in East Anglia there's a story to share about this important time. The social and landscape impact alone is something we have not experienced before, or since. To have the opportunity to take this story out to audiences across the world is a new, essential, and exciting challenge. What's more, it will give us the opportunity to show people our wonderful history, set alongside the renowned hospitality of the Friendly Invasion itself.

'Seventy-five years ago the world came to East Anglia. In 2017 we'd like to welcome them back.'

East Anglia is one of a number of successful applicants to benefit from the £40m [Discover England Fund](#), a central government funded programme of activity, supported by match funding by partners in the public and private sectors.

Administered by VisitEngland, the Fund will see a programme of activity to ensure England stays competitive in the rapidly growing global tourism industry, by offering world-class English tourism products to the right customers at the right time.

For further information contact [event@visiteastanglia.net](mailto:event@visiteastanglia.net) or call Ann 07766055095

