Discover Kenley’s WW2 secrets

Discover the WW2 features of Kenley airfield and uncover stories of hero pilots and brave young WAAFs. Learn about important events that took place here, the famous Spitfires and Hurricanes that called Kenley home during the Battle of Britain and how this period affected the local people who lived around the airfield.

Learn about the roles women had in WW2

Want to find out who were the spitfire pilots who flew from Kenley?
Runway
These runways have seen many a Spitfire or a Hurricane in their time! This is where planes would take off from to defend Britain where pilots scrambled and where the lucky ones and their planes would return safely home.

Blast pen
These blast pens kept the aircraft safe from bombs during raids from German planes. They were built very quickly to defend the aircraft and were made of cheap materials — it is very surprising they are still here today. They were used to house the planes and protect them from bomb impact.

Fuel dump
You are standing on a huge tank that was full of fuel and used to fill up the tanks of RAF vehicles on the airfield. You can still see bits of old pipes and equipment; lots of interesting things have been found here over the years!

Spitfires travel at a top speed of 584km/h which is much faster than the Germans fastest plane at the time.

Can you stand where a Spitfire would have stood?

Always remember that Kenley is an active airfield. So for your safety remain outside of the yellow line at all times and please read all on-site safety signage.

WAAFs were women that worked on the airfield and one of their jobs was to drive the vehicles; what other roles did women have in the war? Look at the pictures below for clues.
**Rifle range**
Can you see the brick damage created by RAF servicemen testing their ammunition and aligning the guns on their planes correctly? Many WW2 artefacts have been found here.

**Tribute**
Kenley would have been very busy with lots of people helping for the war effort from many different countries. Look at the tribute and count how many countries are mentioned. Lots of countries coming together to help defend Britain was an important reason why we won the Battle of Britain.

How many countries can you find on the Tribute?

Why do you think some holes are bigger than others?

Can you name the different roles needed on the airfield? Lots of different skills were needed when this was a fighter airfield.

Did you know that a Hurricane could be rearmed and refueled in 9 minutes.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of our site, not all our routes are accessible for wheelchair users or visitors with limited mobility. Please contact us at kenleyrevival.org for more information or alternative routes to see our heritage and natural features.

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Plant spotting guide

Stone crop
You might find this growing on the blast pens.

Sainfoin
This flower likes the chalky ground the airfield is built on.

Birds-foot-trefoil
This plant has many other funny names it is known by such as 'Granny’s toenails' or 'Eggs and Bacon'? If you could make up a name for this flower; what would you call it?

Sneezewort
This plant was used to help people sneeze not stop them.

How you can help
Want to get involved? Our fantastic volunteers help to run our project by undertaking oral history interviews, running school workshops, writing blog posts for our websites and much more! Visit kenleyrevival.org/volunteering to find out more information and how to get involved.

Sneezewort
This plant was used to help people sneeze not stop them.

Can you find any other plants growing on the airfield that are not on this list?

Learn More
The Kenley Revival Project aims to conserve and protect Britain’s most intact WW2 fighter airfield. As well as our Education programme for schools and family groups we provide; annual archaeology digs on site, a project website and online archive, regular events, an established volunteering programme and an oral history project. If you would like to take part or learn more please visit kenleyrevival.org for more information and to join our monthly newsletter for project updates, events and opportunities.

Our Wall
Read this poem written by BOB pilot William Walker who was stationed at Kenley during his time in the RAF.

Here inscribed the names of friends we knew, Young men with whom we often flew. Scrambled to many angels high, They knew that they or friends might die. Many were very scarcely trained, And many badly burnt or maimed. Behind each name a story lies Of bravery in summer skies; Though many brave unwritten tales Were simply told in vapour trails. Many now lie in sacred graves And many rest beneath the waves. Outnumbered every day they flew, Remembered here as just ‘The Few’.

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Can you read out this poem to someone in your group?