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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WWII 85th anniversary: WAAF veteran recalls Churchill 'wreathed in smoke'

As the nation commemorates the start of World War II 85 years ago, a WWII veteran, believed to be one of the last remaining women to have served during the Battle of Britain, has celebrated her 105th birthday.

Kay Thomas recalls being a plotter in the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) where she played a part in the key battle which foiled Hitler's British invasion plans.

Kay is now a resident at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe, where she celebrated her 105th birthday with a party attended by her family, on Saturday 31 August.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia, and also has Homes in Solihull and Surbiton. It has also launched new services reaching out into the community.

Kay is now living with dementia, but still has memories of that historic time. She was working as a plotter, 60 feet below ground in 'The Bunker' at RAF Uxbridge. The role of a plotter was a vital one, tracking enemy planes as they made their way to Britain on bombing raids. Receiving information from radar stations and the Observer Corps, they used a pusher on the end of a long rod to display the positions of the aircraft on a map drawn on a huge table. Senior officers would observe intently from the gallery above.

Daughter Sue said: "Mum remembers on several occasions Winston Churchill looking down on them, his 'face wreathed in cigar smoke'."

The centenarian was born in Southsea on 30 August 1919, less than a year after WWI had ended. She met husband Bill shortly after WWII, and they soon married. The couple lived in Ickenham, Hillingdon, and went on to have three children. Kay is now a great grandmother.

Daughter Sue said: "Mum is almost certainly one of the last remaining survivors of those servicemen and women who fought for our country in WWII, and one of the



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last remaining women to have served during the Battle of Britain. I'm glad she's now at a charity like Royal Star & Garter, which provides such loving care to our veterans. She had a wonderful party, and enjoyed celebrating her 105th birthday with her family and with other residents at Royal Star & Garter."

Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe is welcoming new residents. For more information on this, the new services it provides, or to work at the Home, go to www.starandgarter.org/hw

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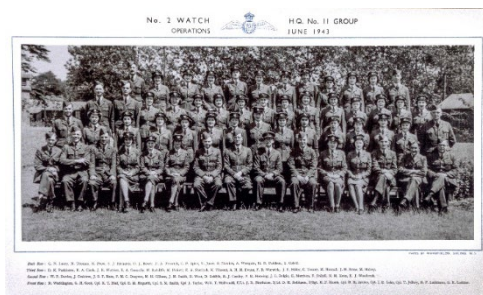
Captions:



Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay at Royal Star & Garter in High Wycombe



Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay (top row, centre), was a plotter in the WAAF during the Battle of Britain



Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay, née Prow, top row



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Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay at the map table in 'The Bunker' at RAF Uxbridge



Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay celebrating at Royal Star & Garter



Kay WWII 85th anniversary: Kay celebrating at Royal Star & Garter



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About Royal Star & Garter

Our charity provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

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Royal Star & Garter
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National Care Forum