

'Bravest woman I know': Family share pictures of sister Mollie Evershed who saved lives of 75 servicemen as ship sunk during D-Day invasion

An elegant young woman from Soham dressed in a nurse's outfit in the 1930s had a promising life ahead of her.

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But little was it known that at 27-years-old Mollie Evershed would go on to become a D-Day hero as she managed to carry 75 men to safety on a sinking ship. Her niece, Christine Cranfield, was amazed to read about her story in the Ely Standard in April. She delved into the family photo album to find these images and share them with the paper.

In recent weeks Mollie's story has attracted national coverage, with her name and fellow Sister Dorothy Field being the only two women to feature out of 22,442 on a British memorial in Normandy. The former Ely High School pupil left her lifeboat to return to the HMHS Amsterdam after it struck a mine off Juno Beach.

Both Mollie and Dorothy went down with the ship.

Mrs Cranfield, 75, from Soham, who was a baby at the time of

Mollie's death, said: "She left school as a very bright pupil and then went on to train to be a nurse.

"I never knew much about her or her story until the recent news coverage.

"My family spoke little about her so although I knew she was my aunt there wasn't much more I could tell."

Christine's husband, Kenneth, went on to explain how they decided to sort out family photos to put a face to Mollie's name.

He added: "We found a picture of Mollie and her sister Peggy in school uniform.

"Then a paper clipping from The Daily Mail I believe, which honours her as 'the bravest woman' by the captain.

"It has been incredibly interesting to find out more about her."



The foundation stone of the memorial was unveiled by Theresa May and Emanuel Macron last Thursday (June 6).

It is in the village of Ver-sur-Mer overlooking the remnants of the 1944 floating harbour at Arromanches.

Both Mollie and Dorothy were awarded the King's

Commendation for Brave Conduct.

Mollie had lived with her parents in Soham and went to Ely High School from 1928 to 1932 before training as a nurse in Norwich.

She served with the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service that was one of the units deployed to Normandy

to help injured servicemen.

Mollie's name is also remembered on the Soham war memorial.

Her story was brought to life in audio thanks to former Ely High School pupil Christine Fuller earlier this year, as part of a unique project by the Normandy Memorial Trust called 75 Stories.

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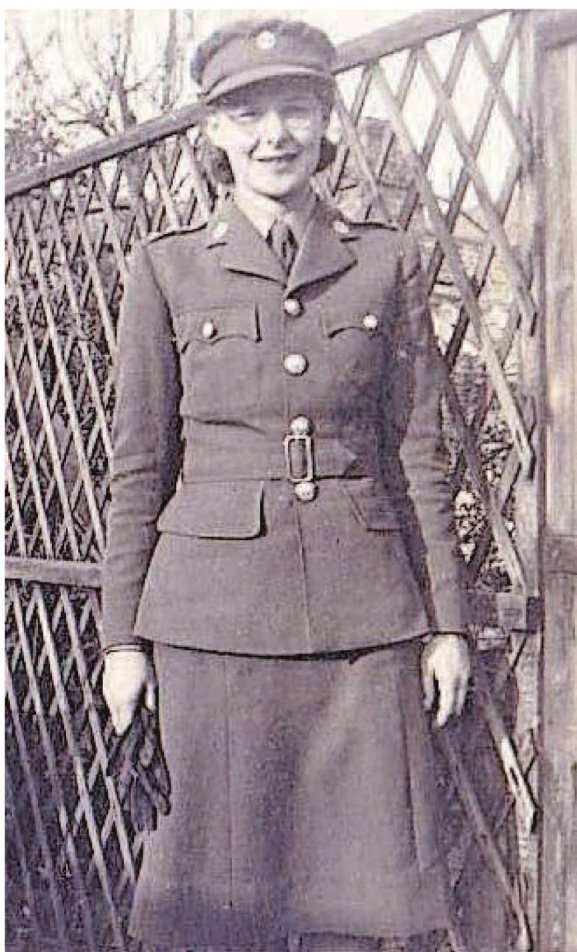
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Family share pictures of Soham's Sister Mollie Evershed who saved 75 servicemen as ship sunk during D-Day invasion. Pictured here with baby niece Christine in 1943, just one year before her death.

Pictures: CHRISTINE CRANFIELD



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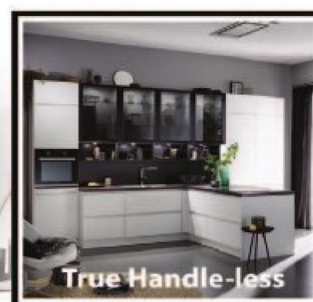
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