

[Fyns Amts Avis](#), section ÆRØ,
See [photos in the original version in Danish](#):

Acting American Ambassador visits grave in Marstal

*Caption: On Tuesday acting American
Ambassador Stuart A. Dwyer visited Marstal.
Photo: Mathias Hjort.*

On Tuesday acting American
Ambassador Stuart A. Dwyer visited
Ærø to commemorate an American
Sergeant who is buried in Marstal.

**24 AUG 2021 at 20:00, by
Mathias Hjort mahjo@jfmedier.dk**

Marstal: Representatives of the
American Navy and the Royal Danish
Navy, a historian of air war, and the
Mayor of Ærø are standing on the
parking lot at Marstal Cemetery. The
navy dressed in uniforms with the flag of
their country, and also the civilians are
formally dressed. They have come to
honour the American Sergeant Jack
Elwood Wagner who crashed with his
plane between Ærø and Langeland in
1944. His body was found weeks after
the crash at Eriks Hale, Ærø, and today
he rests in Marstal. The people present
and a team from TV2 are only waiting for
a single participant – the acting

American Ambassador to Denmark
Stuart A. Dwyer. Shortly after he arrives
with his team in a four-wheel drive BMW,
and then the ceremony can commence.

There are only a few American graves
from World War II left in Denmark, and
one of them is in Marstal, so Mayor Ole
Wej Petersen has appeared in honour of
the occasion.

- The local community wanted to have it,
and his family had no objections. Then a
Danish family who tended the grave,
actually wrote to the widow of the
deceased airman. She was only 19
years old, as he was himself, and she
had a new-born baby, so Wagner had
not become a father when he died, but
he became one some time after his
death. Residents of Marstal and the
family tended the grave, and today the
municipality has taken over, Ole Wej
Petersen states.

*Caption: [A number of wreaths were laid](#) on
the grave of the deceased American
[Sergeant Jack Elwood Wagner](#).*

Photo: Mathias Hjort

The Mortensens who tended Jack
Elwood Wagner's grave, were invited to
visit former President Ronald Reagan,
according to historian Anders Straarup.

- Due to their old age, 80 and 84, they
declined the invitation when they were
invited in 1984. Now the municipality
looks after the grave and always has a
fresh flag on it, states Anders Straarup

who also attended the ceremony.

Strengthens the bond between the countries

When Stuart A. Dwyer has arrived, all
persons present start walking towards
the plot followed by cameras from a
number of directions. The acting
Ambassador gets information about
details of the story of the fallen Sergeant,
and the wreaths were laid followed by a
minute of silence. Stuart A. Dwyer has
visited a number of American graves in
Denmark, and every time he is struck by
the strength of the personal bonds
between Denmark and the U.S.A.

*Caption: Earlier a family tended the
American grave. Today it is the Municipality
of Ærø. Photo: Mathias Hjort*

I have had the privilege to visit a number
of graves all over Denmark, and these
visits have been some of the most
moving parts of my activities during my
whole stay here. The personal accounts
and the way these plots have been
maintained over the years reflect the
close personal bonds and the sacrifices
we have made that unite our two
countries. I think it is very moving to hear
these accounts and tributes, in our
everyday life they are important
reminders because we often forget
thinking about the past and its
consequences, states the acting
Ambassador, who visits Ærø for the first
time.