

FILM BRINGS WAR BACK TO VILLAGE



■ On cue: Nayland residents working as extras await the filming of *Black Tuesday*

A CONVOY of American military vehicles led by 140 black GIs were welcomed by flag-waving locals as they marched into an East Anglian village yesterday.

The previous day there had been trouble at the local fairground with fights breaking out between residents and servicemen.

The scenes helped tell the story of *Black Tuesday*, a £2.5 million joint production by the BBC and leading American cable company Home Box Office.

For the past week, Nayland and Stoke-by-Nayland on the Suffolk-Essex border, have taken on the role of a fictitious English village called Brackenbury.

The production is a love story with a background of racism, and tells how villagers combat the culture-shock of large numbers of black servicemen arriving in their midst during the Second World War.



■ Key roles: Beatty Edny and Courtney Vance on the set at Nayland

Passions rise as 'yanks' are back

Initially their arrival is greeted with enthusiasm – as a banner proclaiming “Welcome Coloured Yanks” showed when hung across Nayland’s main street yesterday.

To turn the clock back half a century, pre-war cars were parked in the road, windows taped up to combat “bomb damage”, and sandbags lodged against buildings.

But the story turns sour when a young wife becomes pregnant by a black serviceman while her husband is away fighting for his country.

Lead roles are taken by American and British actors, including Courtney Vance – who was recently in the *Hunt for Red October* – as the GI; Ciaran Hinds – who was in the BBC adaption of Jane Austen’s *Persuasion* – as the wife; and Kerry Fox – who starred in *Angel at My Table* and *A Village Affair*.

American servicemen based at Mildenhall and Lakenheath yesterday took the roles of their war-time predecessors as they marched into Nayland. They joined dozens of local residents who have also featured as forties-costumed extras at £50 a day.

The fairground scene was shot at Stoke on Saturday, and the facade of the Nayland’s Mill Stores became the Roxy Cinema last week. But the interior shots of the “flicks” were shot several miles away in the Empire Cinema at Halstead.

Screening will be around the turn of the year, said producer John Smithson.

■ Terry and Susan Atkins, of the Village Stores in Bear Street, Nayland, complained business, including sales of Sunday papers, had been ruined by yesterday’s activities.

Mr Smithson said the production’s locations manager would visit the shop to discuss the possibility of compensation.