

Memory of Kibworth Bombing

(The night when WW2 bombs fell on Kibworth Beauchamp)

By Dennis Clarke

Following their defeat by the RAF in the Battle of Britain in the summer of 1940, the Germans mounted air attacks on London and English cities.

On the 14th November they made a devastating attack on Coventry and the lights in the sky from the fires could be seen from Kibworth, some 25 miles away.

Five nights later on the 19th, in the late evening, the air raid siren mounted on the top of the Johnson and Barnes hosiery factory in Fleckney Road, Kibworth Beauchamp, began wailing to advise the people that a raid was possible.

Few people had air raid shelters and in such circumstances it was recommended that people should take cover, either under the stairs or beneath the living room table. Accordingly, my mother and I (aged 15) and Nippy, our Siamese cat, took refuge under the table but my father, being courageous, or contrary, declined to join us.

After a while there was the sound of aeroplanes, with intermittent throb of engines typical of German bomber aircraft of that time, followed by the shriek and thud of many falling bombs. My father, who had been outside, rushed in with a very white face! After awhile, the siren sounded again with the 'All Clear'.

The next morning I visited the site where no fewer than fourteen bombs had fallen. This was the field some 100 yards south of the built up houses off Fleckney Road, immediately behind the recreation ground and to the west of the footpath to Smeeton Westerby. There were series of craters but little, if any, damage.

It was believed that the target for the bombs was either the village street or perhaps a row of poultry houses in the field where the bombs fell and whose roofs reflected in the moonlight. Another suggestion was that the crew were jettisoning their bomb load prior to returning to Germany. We shall never know.

Details of the raid are scarce because the local press were not allowed to publish them, or the locations of towns and villages where bombs fell. To the best of my knowledge these were the only bombs which fell on Kibworth in World War 2.

Written in October 2010 by Dennis Clarke

