

SUPPLEMENT 7.

Liberator crash eyewitness.

A Friend of Ben Dunk the Author, Pat Hobbs (Nee: Streeter), who, sixty year's ago, was his table tennis and dance partner, when they both resided in the City of Chichester, in West Sussex, UK. Recently contacted him by E Mail. She had discovered him by chain of events and through a mutual acquaintance on the Internet. She described to him how their paths have sometimes crossed without knowing, including the following incident.

She surprised me by reciting her own experience on the 'Day the U.S. Liberator four engine Bomber, with three unexploded 1000 pound bombs on board, crashed on the Steam-Electric Laundry in the City of Chichester'.

(NB: Please refer to my Memoirs and 'So Many Secrets' Chapter 17 and Supplement 6. The latter is a reprint of: The Day the Liberator Crashed on Chichester, by Ken Green. Local Historian).

Pat described her personal experience at the age of twelve, when in the proximity of the doomed and crashed Liberator bomber, as follows:

Quote: "it was a Thursday afternoon. I was at a Girl Guide's meeting in the woods (Grounds of St. John's School) learning to 'Track'. This was for a badge of proficiency; I was very proud of my badges.

We were having fun. The next thing that happened; I was flat on my stomach with my hands over my head; it was raining earth. The noise and shudder had been horrific. I eventually got up and ran to find my friends. I can clearly remember nearly tripping over a very large sheepskin boot. (NB: See Nose Gunner, Sgt. Monroe Wolyn's description letter in Ken Green's booklet about his difficult ejection from the bomber).

My brother David's girl friend 'Sladey', was also at the meeting and she was nowhere to be found. Apparently she had been taken to hospital with a piece of shrapnel in her backside. Later we pulled David's leg when telling him about her condition.

I ran home, just across the road really. The family business was closed, no one was home and I could not get in. I needed someone to listen to me.

Eventually, I found my parents having tea with my Grandparents, nearby in North Walls. No body seemed very interested in my sudden appearance. It was later that evening I finally had a hug and was told not to worry about it. I was still alive.

I was upset because I had little or nothing to show for the crash. After all, "Sladey had gone to hospital with a piece of Shrapnel in her backside!

Our house had suffered from a large piece of metal that came through the roof: this caused the dining room ceiling to fall in.

I had no idea there were unexploded bombs on board!" End quote.

The stoical calmness of the British people in the face of adversity is well shown in the foregoing narrative. The presence of mind and fortitude of Pat; the nonchalance of her parents and Grandparents, who, continued having tea, even although they must have heard the large explosion and seen the black smoke in the sky; disturbing the normal day in their small city.