

## **Light Bulbs Survive Bomb**

**A WW2 high explosive V1 Flying bomb devastated revolutionary 1898 working class housing but the Hornsey Journal reported that a least two electric light bulbs remained intact!**

My research focuses on the development of South View Road, off Nightingale Lane in Hornsey.

The 'Bomb Book' at Bruce Castle Museum is a huge register of all incendiary devices which fell on Hornsey during WW2. I discovered that early in the morning of July 29<sup>th</sup> 1944 a V1 Flying bomb was dropped. The devastating impact demolished seven houses and seriously damaged a further three, as well as stripping roofs off neighbouring houses in North View Road.

Records show that there were four fatalities (later to rise to six) and 37 injured including 10 critically.

According to the Hornsey Journal dated 4<sup>th</sup> August 1944, further details included eye witness accounts of the horrific incident. The headline read – **'An old woman dies and a publican escapes'**.

- A young mother threw herself over her baby to shield it from falling ceiling plaster. Both escaped unharmed;
- An Air Force officer was in bed when he heard the bomb approaching. He pulled the bedclothes around him and escaped injury although there was debris all around him;
- A young woman, who was covered with dust and plaster from her bedroom ceiling, groped around with her hands and found an electric light switch. To her surprise she found that the bulb was intact and the light went on immediately.
- A young woman who dug herself out of a pile of debris told a Hornsey Journal reporter that 'she did not know how she'd managed it'.
- Finally, another woman scrambling among the wreckage of her home picked up an unbroken electric light bulb.

Council Minutes revealed that 18 Council houses had to be pulled down to make the area safe and pre-fabricated, steel Nissen huts were erected in their place in July 1945, As part of the Council's post-war building campaign 13 new homes finally replaced the temporary properties in 1950. They now form part of the interesting mix of properties in the road.

My research to date has proved fascinating to me and I continue to piece together the history of the development of South View Road and its occupants.

**Alison Miller - February 2018**