

bomber over Kenilworth and suddenly the engine note changed and went up a knotch. My father said "he's dropped a land mine". We knew you then had to wait while it floated down on it's parachute, not knowing where it would land. It landed and exploded on the hotel at the top of the square, up the road from us. Father was in the wardens, A.R.P, in the rescue section so he was off straight away. I still have his tin hat with R on for rescue. We didn't see him for several days. People were staying at the hotel from Coventry to avoid the bombing and most were killed. Land mines were very large, it caused a lot of damage to the top of the square. One of our hobbies was looking for bits of shrapnell on our way to school in the morning. This was bits of anti-aircraft shells. The boy with the biggest chunk was the winner!

I remember walking up Priory Road to the senior school one lunch time when I saw a German bomber in the sky on my right, it was being machine gunned by a hurricane fighter plane, more than likely from Honily aerodrome. Whether he missed or not I do not know but the blighter got away!

Before the D Day landings a colossal amount of equipment had to be prepared and stored. On our bike rides in the countryside it was nothing to see stack of shells piled at the side of country lanes waiting for the day.

At the age of 13 at the senior school several of us older boys were called out of the classroom one day. We met a couple of men from the A.R.P who told us we would be taught how to handle incendiary bombs. They had a couple of live bombs which we handled with care! They then proceeded to throw one at the ground till it went off and then showed us how to blanket it with sand bags and make it safe. Under no circumstances put water on it, that would make it explode!!

I then went to the Technical College in Coventry to continue my studies because I wanted to get into engineering. One of the subjects was the German language. This was about the end of the war and there were many German prisoners of war who were working all over the place and would travel on a Midland Red bus. I used the same bus to get to Coventry and so we practised our Deustch. They were quite happy about this.

Latterly, during the war, I joined the Leek Wootton boy scouts. My pal then was Brian Dawtrey whose father ran the caravan builders between Leek Wootton and Kenilworth. He was into ferrets and had the nets and had permission to go rabbiting over the local farms. Brian had a 16 bore and I had an old 4.10 hammer gun. We sold most of our catch in the village for 2/6d. This started me off on a lifelong interest in shooting and wildlife.

During this time I got my camping badge. We had a great Scout Master named Dennis Dee. We would pack our little tent and food for the weekend and he would give us our instructions to go over countryside map reading to the airfield at Honily. When you get there count the aircraft and then make your way back. Do NOT be